

# Gospel Oak Weekly Newsletter

## w.e. 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025



### UPCOMING DATES

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July - Trust Big Sing, Arrow Vale High School

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July - Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July - School Production

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July - Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July - Year 12 Work Experience

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July - Coach Bright Graduation - Uni of Birmingham

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> July - Trust 6<sup>th</sup> Form Quiz and Sports Day

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July - Parent / Carer Forum

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July - Nest and Parc Opening

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July - Sports Day

### ASSEMBLY THEMES

Assembly focus this week was Mental Health Awareness

w/c 07<sup>th</sup> July = Rewards Assembly

w/c 14<sup>th</sup> July - Enrichment and Work Experience Week

Please take the time to talk to your daughter and/or son about what they have learnt in Assembly.

YEAR 7

YEAR 8

YEAR 9

YEAR 10

SIXTH FORM

LETTERS

COMMUNITY

## MESSAGE FROM MISS MIDDLEHURST, SENIOR VICE PRINCIPAL

It has been a very busy week! Well done to our wonderful Year 10s on completing their Work Experience week; there has been so much fantastic feedback from the employers about how much the students have learnt and how well they have conducted themselves. There have been many similar comments about our Year 7-9 students who have been out on visits to places such as Twycross Zoo, Go Ape and Weston-Super-Mare to name just a few, and our Y7-9 students who stayed in school for enrichment learning lessons. On Wednesday and Thursday we were delighted to welcome our new Year 7s as we hosted the 'Year 6 Induction Days'.

Alongside all of this, preparations continue for our school production of Annie; we are very much looking forward to next Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings; tickets are still available to buy and students should go to Reception if they wish to buy any. It is a great week for celebrating all of the brilliant work that goes on in Performing Arts both within and beyond the curriculum as a number of our students will travel to Arrow Vale to participate in the 'Big Sing' on Monday.

Our Year 12s will be participating in Work Experience next week and we wish them well as they continue their preparations for successful futures after their time at school ends. When it comes to preparation for life after school, several of our Year 10s will be bringing their Coach Bright experience to an end as they attend their 'graduation' at the University of Birmingham and tour the site; this is another example of the wider learning opportunities at school.

And a very big well done to a group of our Year 10 GCSE PE students who had an excellent first day of developing their trampolining skills. I would also like to reassure parents and carers that our PE staff ensured breaks, shade and access to more water during the very hot weather this week. Do, please, keep reminding your daughter and/or son to fill up water bottles at break and lunchtime and to have sun cream with them as needed.

As always, please let us know if you have any questions or need any support; please use [Gospel Oak School - Contact Us](#)

# YEAR TEAM UPDATES

YEAR 7

★ Year 7 Weekly Highlights: Enrichment, Excellence & Expectations! 🏠🎒🌱

What an incredible week it's been for Year 7! With smiles all round and experiences to remember, our students have truly made the most of Enrichment Week 2025 🎉. From coastlines to rollercoasters, it's been full of fun, friendship, and fantastic behaviour.

## 🎒 Enrichment Week Adventures

Our Year 7s have had the chance to explore a range of exciting destinations, and the energy all week has been electric! Whether soaking up the sea air at Weston Super-Mare, braving the rides at Thorpe Park 🎢 and Drayton Manor 🎢, monkeying around at Go Ape 🐒, enjoying the wild side at Twycross Zoo 🐼, or having a more chilled-out day at the cinema and bowling 🎳, our students have embraced it all with positivity and enthusiasm. The way they conducted themselves has been a credit to both the school and their families—well done, Year 7!

## 🗣️ Tuesday Morning Meeting – The BASICS & Our Values

Before the trips began, we used Tuesday morning to reflect on how we represent Gospel Oak in the wider world. We revisited our non-negotiables, known as the BASICS:

- B – Be on time 🕒
- A – Attend every day 📅
- S – Show respect to yourself, your environment, the community, your peers and staff 🙌
- I – Instructions followed first time 🎯
- C – Come equipped and ready to learn 📚
- S – Smartly dressed in the correct uniform 👔

We also discussed how our school values should shine through on every trip: Respect, Aspire, and Pride.

These three simple words hold powerful meaning and help guide our students in their behaviour, attitude, and ambition—whether they're in the classroom or out in the community

## 👕 Uniform Reminders

As we approach the final stretch of the school year, we've noticed a few old habits creeping back in. Please remember: no trainers, leggings, hooped earrings or bracelets should be worn to school. Expensive items like belcher bracelets are not allowed, and the school cannot be held responsible for loss or damage. Let's finish the year looking as smart as we started! 📦✅

## 🎯 Attendance & Progress

A huge well done to 7F for last weeks outstanding 99% attendance—a brilliant improvement that sets the bar high for the rest of the year group 📈🌞. As always, we're aiming for 95%+ attendance, low behaviour points, and 100% effort in lessons. Let's keep that momentum going!

## ★ Student Ambassadors Supporting Ocker Hill Parents' Evening ★

This week, a fantastic group of our students had the opportunity to visit Ocker Hill and support with their Parents' Evening. Our students were outstanding representatives of the school, helping to guide families and offering valuable insights to Year 5 pupils and their families as they begin thinking about their big move to secondary school in September 2026.



## 🕒 Nearly Year 8!

It's hard to believe, but Year 8 is just two weeks away. This year group has achieved so much and made us incredibly proud—but the journey doesn't stop here! We want every student to continue growing, working hard, and setting the right tone for the rest of their time at Gospel Oak. Here's to finishing the year strong, together! 💪★

Mr Bowser and the Year 7 Team



## YEAR 8

As we approach the final stretch of the year, it's amazing to reflect on just how far Year 8 have come. With only **two weeks left** until they move up to Year 9, Mr Johnson, Mr Marrs and Miss Smith want to say how incredibly proud they are of the progress, maturity, and enthusiasm shown by the year group. This week has been nothing short of unforgettable! 🙌

Our enrichment week was packed with **amazing trips** that gave students the chance to relax, try new things, and bond with their peers. At **Thorpe Park** 🎢, students faced their fears and had an adrenaline-filled day of rollercoasters and laughter. Over at **Drayton Manor** 🦒, they combined the thrill of the rides with time spent in the zoo, seeing animals up close and enjoying the sunshine. The **cinema and bowling** 🎬🎳 trip was full of fun, as students showed off their skills on the lanes and enjoyed a movie with friends.

For those who love a challenge, **Go Ape** 🌲🧗 provided the perfect adventure — swinging through the trees, tackling rope courses, and pushing themselves to new heights. Meanwhile, our budding animal lovers had a brilliant time at **Twycross Zoo** 🦁, where they explored the world of wildlife, asked questions, and learned more about conservation. And who could forget the classic seaside escape to **Weston-Super-Mare** 🌊💡? With arcades, beach games and a stroll along the pier, it was a nostalgic day of seaside fun that many students had never experienced before.

Throughout the week, Year 8 have shown excellent behaviour and represented Gospel Oak School with pride. Staff on every trip have praised their **respect, kindness, and energy** — with many students saying things like, “We never had anything like this at my old school!”

To top it all off, students were treated to front-row seats at **Gospel Oak's Got Talent** 🎤, and the talent on display was truly inspiring. Rishab Jain wowed the crowd with his **mind-blowing magic tricks** 🎩, Lexi-Mae Smith gave a **show-stopping vocal performance** 🎵, beautifully accompanied by Lilly-Joy Whitehouse on the piano 🎹, and Harry Billingham gave us all goosebumps with his moving rendition of “**Lay Your Head on My Shoulder**” 🎶

It's been a week full of achievement, laughter, talent and unforgettable moments. We couldn't be prouder of Year 8 — you've shown what you're capable of, and you're more than ready for the next chapter.

Let's finish the year strong! 💪📖

Mr Johnson and the Year 8 Team



Happy Fifth Week of Summer 2 Y9 Family! I cannot believe we are only now a few weeks away until our transition into KS4. Our options will be starting in September and our two-year pathway towards those results at the end of Y11 will soon be here. It is crazy how much you have achieved over the last 3 years at GOS so far, too much to mention here but so much still to look forward to over the next 2 weeks and we can't wait to be a part of that journey and continue making the memories together as our family! ✨

So, what can we celebrate this week? Year 9 students were lucky enough to be an audience for the Gospel Oak's Got Talent show and wow, it really was incredible! 🌟 Students were honoured to see such amazing performances from singing, dancing, magic and even an insight into a sneak peak of the school production 'Annie!' Students commended and recognised their peers from across the school stating they were "so brave to stand up and perform in front of the crowd" and they should be "so proud" of themselves! We were surprised to see some super star judges front row giving the positive praise and recognition, so a big thanks to Bruno (Darcy T), Alesha (Josepha C), Amanda (Miss Ralph) and most importantly the big man himself Simon Cowell (Mr Bhatti)!



Following the great success of our in-school talent show, we embarked on taking that success out of school and into the public as we conducted our 2-day enrichment, rewards trips! The days were packed with amazing experiences and opportunities from the beaches of Weston Super-Mare, the high ropes of Go Ape, the thrills and fear of Drayton Manor and Thorpe Park, the competition and chill of Cinema and Bowling and finally the immersive life of a zookeeper at Twycross Zoo! Amazing memories made and more details, reviews and pictures to follow next week! 🥂

Now as always, as we look ahead to the next few weeks we need to ensure we remind ourselves that in order to succeed and achieve we must follow the BASICS, get it right and show that 10/10 attitude and mantra that we follow every day! Our family is built on respect, kindness, care but also effort in everything we do and put our mind to – So let's continue to show this!

Let's keep this hard work and effort up and show everyone why we are the #BestYearTeam

We have got you, so you have got to keep giving back to us!

Miss Ralph and the Year 9 Team

# YEAR 10

What a week Year 10 !

Thank you Olivia D, Emilie A and Josh B for showcasing your talent in our very own Gospel's Got Talent, simply breath taking...



Thankyou Treasure E, Tomi A, Katlyn R, Evie F, Max A, Tru M, Luke R, Jess B, Tom R and Honor W for smashing the trust Sports Day against multiple schools where we were crowned champions !



And thankyou Jay R, Tom R, Szymon S, Oliver J, Luke R, Tru M, Caiden T, Callum G, Max A, Roman H, Oli B, Nate M, Kelvin G, Ollly S, Evan P, Gerald, Kian G, Hughie P for working their socks off and getting into the Year 10 cup final. Although many voices were totally lost after all the side chanting.



From the calls and staff visits, work experience is also proving to be a success from both the students and the staff. What an incredibly talented and hard-working year group. To say we are proud is an understatement. Let's take some of this passion and sporting talent to our very last Sports Day 😊 July 17th And of course our Musical talent to our whole school production Annie on Tues-Thurs 8-9th July.

Last few weeks now and we will officially be Year 11, scary but very exciting.

What an epic end to Year 10 thankyou and well done everyone

Miss Malkin and the Year 10 Team

# Summer Term Parent Support Series

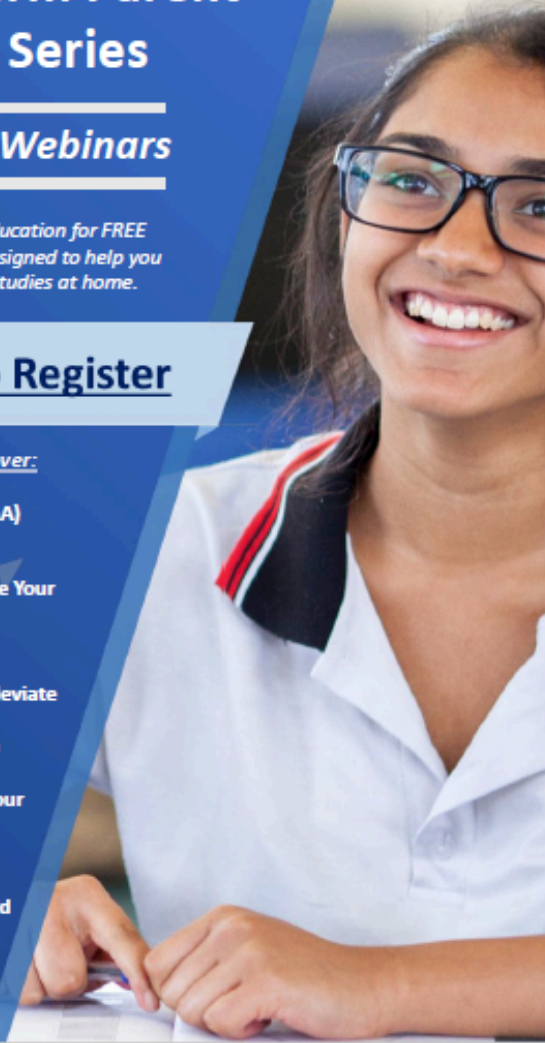
## Free Parent Webinars

Join us and Elevate Education for FREE  
60- minute webinars designed to help you  
support your child's studies at home.

[Click here to Register](#)

### In the Summer Term, we'll cover:

1. **Ask Me Anything (Live Q&A)**  
- 6<sup>th</sup> May @6:00pm (BST)
2. **How You Can Help Improve Your  
Child's Memory**  
- 20<sup>th</sup> May @6:00pm (BST)
3. **How to Help Your Child Alleviate  
Stress**  
- 17<sup>th</sup> June @6:00pm (BST)
4. **How to Get (And Keep!) Your  
Child Motivated**  
- 1<sup>st</sup> July @6:00pm (BST)
5. **How You Can Set Your Child  
Up for Success**  
- 15<sup>th</sup> July @6:00pm (BST)





## SIXTH FORM

Year 12 students are continuing to work hard in their studies.

We look forward to seeing the new year 12 cohort on Friday for the transition day.

A reminder to be logging on and completing your online learning.

We are still taking applications for anyone that would like to join the Gospel Oak 6th Form..

Your sincerely,

Mr Bala  
Associate Assistant Principal Post 16



Year 12 student of the week – Reece P  
Year12 attendance – 87%

### Events –

4th July – Year 11 into year 12 Transition day

8th – 10th July - Year 12 Work Experience

11th July – Trust University challenge and sports day

14th August – A level results day



To: All Parents/Carers

## Gospel Oak School

Bilston Road  
Gospel Oak  
Tipton  
West Midlands DY4 0BZ

T 0121 556 1351

F 0121 506 7833

W [www.gospeloakschool.co.uk](http://www.gospeloakschool.co.uk)

**Our Ref:** SBO.KH.3324

4th July 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: Pharmacy First**

We are writing to inform you about an important health initiative in our local area called Pharmacy First, launched by the NHS Black Country Integrated Care Board.

Pharmacy First is a new service designed to help your son/daughter and young people access quick and convenient healthcare for common illnesses and minor ailments, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, ear infections and skin conditions. Instead of needing to see a doctor for these issues, you can visit your local pharmacy where trained pharmacists can assess your son's/daughter's symptoms, provide advice and supply appropriate medicines if needed.

**Why is this helpful?**

- It saves time and avoids unnecessary trips to the doctor or emergency services.
- Pharmacists are highly qualified healthcare professionals who can manage many common health concerns safely.
- It helps reduce pressure on GP surgeries, allowing doctors to focus on more complex cases.

**Who can use Pharmacy First?**

This service is available to your son/daughter and young people registered with a GP in the Black Country area, including those attending our school. It is simple to use and free of charge under the NHS.

**How to use Pharmacy First?**

If your son/daughter feels unwell with a minor illness, you can take them to any participating local pharmacy. The pharmacist will assess their condition and, if appropriate, provide treatment or refer you to another healthcare service if necessary.

We encourage all parents/carers to consider using this service for minor health issues to ensure your son/daughter gets timely care. For more information, please visit the NHS Black Country website or speak with your local pharmacist. [Pharmacy First :: Black Country ICB](#)

Thank you for your continued support.

**MissSBott**  
**Senior Vice Principal**



# LET'S GET WALKING!

## FRIENDLY & FREE

KAMBLETS  
**WELLBEING WALKS**  
Sandwell Stride  
**HEALTHY SANDWELL**  
www.healthysandwell.co.uk

**WHY WALK?**  
A BRISK DAILY WALK IS SO GOOD FOR YOUR HEALTH, IT CAN REDUCE THE RISK OF PREVENTABLE DISEASES SUCH AS DIABETES, DEPRESSION AND HEART DISEASE. THESE WALKS ARE FUN, FRIENDLY AND SOCIAL. WE'D LOVE YOU TO JOIN US!

WHERE?	WHEN?
SHEEPWASH LOCAL NATURE RESERVE, TIPTON	FRIDAY 10-30AM
ST PAULS COMMUNITY CENTRE, TIPTON	MONDAY & WEDNESDAY 10-30AM
HILL TOP PARK, WEDNESBURY	THURSDAY 10AM
PRIORY WOODS LOCAL NATURE RESERVE, WEST BROM	TUESDAY 10-30AM
SANDWELL PARK FARM AND SOTS HOLE, WEST BROM	THURSDAY 10-30AM
WARLEY WOODS, SMETHWICK	THURSDAY 10AM
BRANDHALL COMMUNITY HUB, OLDBURY	THURSDAY 1-30PM
LIGHTWOODS PARK, SMETHWICK	1ST AND 3RD MONDAYS 1-30PM
SHERWOOD HOUSE MEDICAL PRACTICE, SMETHWICK	WEDNESDAY 10AM
WARRENS HILL LOCAL NATURE RESERVE, ROWLEY REGIS	WEDNESDAY 10-30AM
BRUNSWICK PARK, WEDNESBURY	MONDAY 10-30AM
WEST SMETHWICK PARK, SMETHWICK	THURSDAY 11AM

FIND OUT MORE BY SCANNING THE QR CODE  
OR CALL 0800 011 4656



**DISCOVER AND CREATE LOCAL WALKS ON THE FREE GO JAUNTLY APP**

LOOKING FOR A WAY TO KEEP ACTIVE AND EXPLORE?

BECOME A SUPER WALKER!

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BEING MORE ACTIVE, CALL 0800 011 4656 OR VISIT [WWW.HEALTHYSANDWELL.CO.UK](http://WWW.HEALTHYSANDWELL.CO.UK)

Download on the App Store  
GET IT ON Google Play

Go Jauntly Sandwell HEALTHY SANDWELL

## Get active with Women's Walking Cricket Group

Free!

For women aged 50 and over

Every Thursday 10am-11.30am  
Thimblemill REC, Thimblemill Road, Smethwick, B67 6NR

All sessions are adapted with a softer ball, just wear comfortable clothes and enjoy!

Improve your physical and mental wellbeing with walking cricket!

To book or find out more please call us on 0121 437 0033 or email [wellbeing@ageuksandwell.org.uk](mailto:wellbeing@ageuksandwell.org.uk)

Sandwell ageUK  
Let's change how we age

STAFFORDSHIRE CRICKET

## PARK YOGA

WEST SMETHWICK PARK SANDWELL

FREE Outdoor Yoga Every Sunday  
9.30am - 10.30am  
4th May - 14th September

Look out for the Park Yoga flag

Park Yoga is for everyone!

No need to book. Bring a mat or towel. Stay hydrated, bring water. Don't forget sun cream.

VENUE PARTNERS  
Active Black Country

HEALTHY SANDWELL  
We find the support you need

[www.parkyoga.co](http://www.parkyoga.co) [hello@parkyoga.co](mailto:hello@parkyoga.co)

Sandwell Vision 2030

## fis.sandwell.gov.uk

Scan the QR Code to access the FIS Hub

Helping you to find the services, support, and activities available to you in Sandwell

Find family support, Sandwell Local Offer, funded childcare places and local family services in Sandwell for all age groups

Sandwell Family Information Service

Sandwell Family Information Service

## Real strength is knowing when to talk.

If you are fighting with low mood, anxiety or grief, we can help.

No judgment—just support, real conversations, and practical tools to help.

We're in your corner!  
<http://bit.ly/TTPSandwell>

COMMUNITIES IN SYNC

SCAN ME

This initiative is funded by:  
NHS Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

## Talking Therapies Plus

Feel healthier and happier with Sandwell COMMUNITIES IN SYNC

Sandwell Talking Therapies Plus is a free and confidential counselling service for individuals 18 and older who reside in Sandwell.

We provide support for mental health challenges like anxiety, stress, depression and bereavement.

We have therapists who can speak a range of languages, are kind and understanding, and they never judge you.

We help you in the way that works best for you either by phone, video, email and face-to-face in a community location you are comfortable with.

Tell us what you're going through – we're here to help you feel better.

How to get our help

Step 1: Reach out  
You can self-refer, or ask your GP, health professional, or community organisation to refer you online at [www.comunitiesinsync.info/our-services/ttplus](http://www.comunitiesinsync.info/our-services/ttplus)  
We will call you back on the number you give or contact our Single Point of Access from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm by phone on 07717 680965

Step 2: An initial chat  
We'll quickly find out if our services are right for you with an initial phone call. During this call, we'll plan how we can best help you feel better.

Step 3: Begin your therapy  
After the assessment, we'll suggest the best therapies for you and aim to start quickly, always keeping in mind what works best for you. We can also advise on help you can access while you are waiting for your therapy.

## Join for FREE! Home Library Services

A FREE Home Library Service for Sandwell residents who can't get out to the Library because of:

- Disability or visual impairment
- Requires short or long term library provision due to illness or injury
- Have difficulty in carrying materials to and from the library
- Full time carer who can't access the library because of individual circumstances
- Sandwell residents living in their own home, nursing home or living in sheltered accommodation

Outreach Library Services  
316 High Street, West Bromwich, B70 8DZ

For more information please contact us on:  
**0121 569 2600**  
[specialneeds\\_library@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:specialneeds_library@sandwell.gov.uk)  
[www.sandwell.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/libraries)

**Sandwell**  
Metropolitan Borough Council

# Tenant and Leaseholder Conference

Being a good neighbour. We've all got a part to play

**Where: Council Chambers**    **Saturday 5 July**    **10.30am - 3.30pm**

Come and have your say and hear from senior leaders

For more information and to sign up, please visit: [www.sandwell.gov.uk/tenant-conference](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/tenant-conference)  
Or scan the QR code:




**Flower MenoPower**

**The Kaleidoscope Group**

If you are affected by heavy menstruation and/or the menopause then join our 10 free workshops designed to help you explore effective ways to manage your symptoms. Learn how nutrition and physical activity can support your well-being and discover the benefits of yoga & auriculotherapy.

Starting Thursday 5th June

**Thursday's**  
10am - 12 Noon

321 High Street  
West Bromwich  
West Midlands  
B70 8LU

0121 565 5605  
[tce@kaleidoscopeplus.org.uk](mailto:tce@kaleidoscopeplus.org.uk)



**Better Housing Better Health**  
The Warmth & Wellbeing Service



## HOME ENERGY ADVICE

Better Housing Better Health (BHH) is a charity working locally to improve your domestic warmth & wellbeing. In a preventative approach, our free helpline provides you with a single point of contact for services, advice and financial support in order to help improve the energy efficiency of your property.

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

Our team of experts can work with households to apply for grants and funding to help with your home energy. Schemes like the Warm Home Discount can take £150 off your bills and ECO Funding can replace heating systems as well as install insulation. Call us to see if you're eligible and start the process.

**WE ARE HERE.**

GET IN TOUCH  
**0800 107 0044**  
[WWW.BHHB.ORG.UK](http://WWW.BHHB.ORG.UK)



**Let's Talk**

**Black Country Healthcare**  
NHS Foundation Trust

### Our 1-1 Feedback

**Susan (Client):**  
"I cannot thank you and your services enough for your support... my confidence has grown, and my anxieties lessened to the point I can now leave my home and join in with the outside world again."

**Alan (Community Mental Health Nurse):**  
"My client regularly attends the virtual coffee mornings and quizzes. You have signposted him to a men's group and another social support group, I can tell they like the groups and they have significantly improved their social network."

**Feedback from 'Coffee at the Molineux'**

"Brilliant afternoon, looking forward to the next one."

"I really enjoyed the session and in such a nice environment."

"Time was flying by. It was lovely"

"I enjoyed meeting everyone. It was a fantastic time."


**Pictures from our Walk & Talk Sessions**

Together with you to achieve **healthier, happier lives**

Find us on social media by searching: "Black Country Job Support"



**Better Housing Better Health**  
The Warmth & Wellbeing Service




## HOME ENERGY ADVICE

If you're worried about paying your energy bills, want to know how to make your home warmer or need advice on accessing financial support, Better Housing Better Health are here to help. We're a charity working locally to improve residents' domestic warmth and wellbeing and improve the energy efficiency of your property.

**BETTER HOUSING BETTER HEALTH CAN HELP WITH:**

- ENERGY BILL SUPPORT
- HOME ENERGY VISITS
- FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
- PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER

**GET IN TOUCH**  
**0800 107 0044**  
[www.bhbh.org.uk](http://www.bhbh.org.uk)



**Let's Talk**

**Black Country Healthcare**  
NHS Foundation Trust

### Let's Talk Service

**Being active and making connections with others is an important part of our health and wellbeing.**

Let's Talk can help to identify what support you would like to access and to make connections in your local community.

**The Let's Talk Vocational Specialist will:**

- Offer one-to-one support tailored to your needs, including appointments in local venues.
- Support you to find groups that interest you, and in accessing services until comfortable to do so independently.
- Encourage you to join onto our virtual and face to face group sessions
- Help you to build confidence and independence.
- Encourage you to build your social connection.

**Who is eligible for this service**

The Let's Talk service aims to support individuals who are experiencing isolation and loneliness:

- Aged 18 years or over.
- Living in Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall, or Wolverhampton

Interested? Contact us on:  
[bchft.letstalk@nhs.net](mailto:bchft.letstalk@nhs.net)    01922 608500 / 01922 922443

**FREE HOME ENERGY VISITS**

A trained home energy advisor can install free small energy-saving measures such as draught-proofing and LED light bulbs, advise on bills and debt, help you understand your heating system, and much more during a free home energy visit. They will assess your property and signpost you to other services that can help you save money and stay warm in your home.

All advice is free, confidential, and tailored to the resident. To speak to one of the team, please call the number below weekdays between 9:00am and 5:00pm.

**GET IN TOUCH**  
**0800 107 0044**  
[WWW.BHHB.ORG.UK](http://WWW.BHHB.ORG.UK)





## Holiday Activities - Oldbury

Sandwell Holiday Activities offer exciting opportunities for children who live or go to school in Sandwell to take part in activities during school holidays. There is lots of choice right across Sandwell with different activities happening in each town. Activities are for children aged between school age 5-16 years.

Summer activities will run from Monday 21st July 2025 – Saturday 30th August 2025 (excluding Sundays and Bank holidays)

If your child is eligible for HAF then you will have received an email or text with a HAF activity voucher containing unique HAF codes for your child and a link that enables you to book activities. If your child does not meet the criteria, you can find other activities on our website (some may have a charge attached) visit <https://holidayactivities.sandwell.gov.uk/>

You can access activities anywhere in Sandwell but here are some activities available in your local area:

**KIDS Specialist Provision at Langley Park Lodge** - Stimulating fun for the whole family. Activities focused around the social, physical, sensory and emotional needs of children with SEND.

**Oldbury United at Portway Lifestyle Centre & Ormiston Sandwell** - Offering multi-sports such as football, dodgeball, basketball, athletics and dance.

**Genius! Tuition at Lightwoods Primary Academy** - Consists of different activities including science experiments, arts and crafts activities and sports activities.

**Warrens Hall Riding School at Oakham Road** - The activities include stable management, lunch, pony grooming, and horseback riding. We also offer craft and sensory activities.

**The Albion Foundation at Portway Lifestyle Centre (SEND) & Ormiston Sandwell** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities for children.

**Earls Gymnastics at Earls Gymnastics Centre** - Children will have the opportunity to participate in a number of gymnastic activities as well as themed arts and crafts.

**4 Community Trust at Burntree Primary** - A range of activities, arts & crafts, drama, dance, cooking, healthy eating, nutrition workshops, sports, digital games, social play plus many more!

**Ideal For All at Salop Drive Market Garden** - Welly to Belly! Activities focused around the social, physical, sensory and emotional needs of the children / young people with SEND.

**Lion Farm Action Centre at St James Church & Lion Farm Action Centre** - Children will have the opportunity to participate in workshops, indoor games, arts and crafts!

**Sandwell Children's Trust - Metsec Buildings** - Specialist provision for children we care for, includes a range of activities such as arts and crafts, outdoor trips and much more!

**Sandwell Youth Service at Lion Farm Action Centre** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities.

**Sports Plus at Tividale Hall Primary & Perryfields School** - Providing a wide range of fun and exciting sports!

Go Play Sandwell - FREE play for all ages <https://goplaysandwell.co.uk/>

Stay Social Like us on Facebook @SandwellHAF



## Holiday Activities - Rowley

Sandwell Holiday Activities offer exciting opportunities for children who live or go to school in Sandwell to take part in activities during school holidays. There is lots of choice right across Sandwell with different activities happening in each town. Activities are for children aged between school age 5-16 years.

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You can access activities anywhere in Sandwell but here are some activities available in your local area:

**CNC Dance at Unit 8, Hill Crest Trading Estate** - Dance classes including gymnastics, tumbling, street, contemporary, jazz and disco freestyle.

**Sporting Spirits at Rowley Learning Campus** - A variety of multisport activities such as football, cricket, tag rugby, and badminton as well as creative arts and crafts.

**Oldbury United at York Road** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities.

**RB Active at Hurst Green Primary** - Activities include football, basketball, tennis, fencing, archery and much more!

**4 Community Trust at Temple Meadow Primary** - A range of activities, arts & crafts, drama, dance, cooking, healthy eating, nutrition workshops, sports, digital games, social play plus many more!

**Sporting your Futures at Bearmore Playing Fields** - A range of multi-sports and activities such as football, tennis, dodgeball, archery, golf, hockey, fencing, boxing, tag rugby, handball, rounders, cricket, badminton and dance alongside arts, crafts, air hockey and many other enriching activities.

**Sandwell Youth Service at Britannia Park** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities in the Park.

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## Holiday Activities - SEND

Sandwell Holiday Activities offer exciting opportunities for children who live or go to school in Sandwell to take part in activities during school holidays. There is lots of choice right across Sandwell with different activities happening in each town. Activities are for children aged between school age 5-16 years.

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Here are some of our SEND specific activities across Sandwell:

### Exclusive provision for children with SEND:

**KIDS Specialist Provision** - Provide borough wide activities focused around the social, physical, sensory and emotional needs of the children / young people with SEND. Activities will take place at Wednesbury Leisure Centre, The Chestnut Carvery, Langley Park Lodge, Brook St Community Centre, Odeon, New Square, West Bromwich, Spacehoppas Play Zone, Good Sheppard Church and Sandwell Valley Park.

**Fantastic Journeys at Windmill Community Centre** - Fantastic Journeys is a social enterprise providing a multi-sensory music and movement session for children with additional needs.

**The Albion Foundation at Portway Lifestyle Centre** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities for children with SEND.

**4 Community Trust SEND at 4 Community Trust Hub in West Bromwich** - Offer a range of activities, arts & crafts, drama, dance, cooking, healthy eating, nutrition workshops, sports, digital games, social play, themed activities, sensory play plus much more.

**Real Arts Workshop at Wednesbury Library** - Bespoke creative experiences including Art, Crafts, British Sign Language (BSL), and Music/Sign Song, designed to challenge and engage learners.

### Inclusive provision to meet SEND needs:

**Ideal For All at Salop Drive Market Garden & Barlow Road Community Garden** - Welly to Belly! Activities focused around the social, physical, sensory and emotional needs of the children / young people with SEND.

**Warrens Hall Riding School at Oakham Road** - The activities include stable management, lunch, pony grooming, and horseback riding. We also offer craft and sensory activities.

**Forge Mill Farm at Forge Lane** - Activities will include exploring the forest and farm, and nature-based crafts, in a safe, fun environment designed for young people with SEND.

To contact the providers or find out more search SEND on our website!

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## Holiday Activities - Smethwick

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You can access activities anywhere in Sandwell but here are some activities available in your local area:

**Fantastic Journeys at Windmill Community Centre** - Fantastic Journeys is a social enterprise providing a multi-sensory music and movement session for children with additional needs.

**Limitless Academy at West Smethwick Park** - Boxing, fitness circuit, roller skating, dodgeball, soft archery and badminton.

**Community Connect Foundation at North Smethwick Resource Centre** - Providing activities such as dodge ball, football, trekking, music and much more!

**RB Sports Activities at Crooketts Community Primary** - Children will have the opportunity to participate in multi-skills, football, dodgeball, fencing, archery, and arts and crafts.

**4 Community Trust at Victoria Park Primary & Uplands Manor Primary** - A range of activities, arts & crafts, drama, dance, cooking, healthy eating, nutrition workshops, sports, digital games, social play plus many more!

**ELP Sports LTD at Sandwell Aquatics Centre** - Providing sports and games which will promote healthy physical lifestyles.

**Stepping Stones In The Community at Oxford Road** - Activities include arts and crafts, painting, snooker, board games, healthy cooking, free play, outdoor sports and day trips.

**West Smethwick Enterprise at Little Steppers** - Activities include community visits, green space trips, weekly sports and games, healthy cooking, sensory play, show and tell and keep fit workshops.

**Holly Lodge at Holly Lodge High School** - Activities include a wide variety of mental and physical challenges led by qualified professionals, focusing on skill building and social development, plus a reward trip!

**Sandwell Youth Service at Victoria Park** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities.

**Centre Spot at Windsor Olympus Academy** - Sports and physical activities such as football, multi sports, dodge ball, basketball, craft sessions and much more!

**Keys Community Association at Victoria Park Skills Centre & SAFS** - Activities include sports clubs, healthy eating clubs, social interaction clubs, daily physical activities, fun questionnaires, and education on fitness and healthy eating.

**Bears' Playhouse at Thimblemill REC** - Arts and crafts, smoothie making, football skills, and invigorating relay sessions.

**MSDT at Brasshouse** - Activities include multi-sports, a creative hair academy, play academy with arts, and storytelling.

**Premier Education at St Gregory's Catholic Primary School** - Activities include archery, fencing and curling!

**Sports Plus at Devonshire Junior Academy** - Providing a wide range of fun and exciting sports!

**AFSCS at Victoria Park Skills Centre** - Activities include arts, crafts, and healthy eating & music workshops!

**The Abrahamic Foundation at Smethwick High Street** - A diverse range of activities that cater to every interest and age group. Providing activities such as cooking and sports, there's something for everyone.

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## Holiday Activities - Tipton

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You can access activities anywhere in Sandwell but here are some activities available in your local area:

**KIDS Specialist Provision at Brook St Community Centre** - Stimulating fun for the whole family. Activities focused around the social, physical, sensory and emotional needs of children with SEND.

**Awesome Dance & Performing Arts at The Coneysre Centre** - Fun, active sessions where kids learn popular TikTok dance moves, enjoy music, and make new friends!

**4 Community Trust at Jubilee Park Community Centre & St. Mark's Church** - We offer wide range of activities like arts & crafts, drama, dance, cooking, healthy eating, nutrition workshops, themed activities, sensory play, water play, plus, many more!

**ELP Sports LTD at Joseph Turner Primary School** - Providing sports and games which will promote healthy physical lifestyles.

**Life in Community at Brook Street Community Centre** - Activities include the Kidz Easter Party at Brierley Hill Civic, the Easter Fun Factory, and "It's an Easter Circus" featuring circus skills with Steve the Juggler.

**Sandwell Leisure Trust at Tipton Sports Academy** - Plenty for your children to get stuck into with various sports activities such as tennis, football, basketball, athletics, dodgeball, cricket, badminton, netball and team games.

**Sandwell Youth Service at Coneysre Arts Centre & Victoria Park** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities.

**Time Step Dance at Coneysre Arts Centre** - Family Pantomime The Pirate and the Crocodile, summer festival at Coneysre Centre with DJ, pony rides, circus skills, bubbles, animal man, TikTok dance, sensory zone, bouncy castles and much more!

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## Holiday Activities - Wednesbury

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You can access activities anywhere in Sandwell but here are some activities available in your local area:

**Pilot IMS Ltd. at Wodensborough Orimston Academy & Wednesbury Leisure Centre** - Join us for fun filled days of adventure, crafts, games and cooking! Every day will be filled with new activities for young people to engage, learn and most importantly have fun! We have everything from multi sports, cooking, arts & crafts, dance and much more!

**KIDS Specialist Provision at The Chestnut Carvery & Wednesbury Leisure Centre** - Physically and mentally stimulating fun for the whole family. Activities focused around the social, physical, sensory and emotional needs of the children / young people with SEND.

**Friar Park at Millennium Centre** - Activities include football, tennis, hockey, basketball, and more. Sports day and cooking and learning about nutrition. Sensory "Fruit Around the World" tasting session, growing herbs and fruits. Arts & crafts, puzzles, games, daily mile challenge, outdoor and sensory play.

**Real Arts Workshop at Wednesbury Library** - Bespoke creative experiences including Art, Crafts, British Sign Language (BSL), and Music/Sign Song, designed to challenge and engage learners.

**Ideal For All at Barlow Road Community Garden** - Welly to Belly! Activities focused around the social, physical, sensory and emotional needs of the children / young people with SEND.

**Sandwell Youth Service at Brunswick Park** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities in the Park.

**Centre Spot at Wednesbury Rugby Club** - Sports and physical activities such as football, multi sports, dodge ball, basketball, craft sessions and much more!

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## Holiday Activities - West Bromwich

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If your child does not meet the criteria, you can find other activities on our website (some may have a charge attached) visit <https://holidayactivities.sandwell.gov.uk/>. You can access activities anywhere in Sandwell but here are some activities available in your local area:

**KIDS Specialist Provision at Good Sheppard Church, Sandwell Valley, Odeon Cinema, & Spacehoppers Play Zone** - Physically and mentally stimulating fun for the whole family. Activities focused around the social, physical, sensory and emotional needs of the children / young people with SEND.

**Grove Vale at Grove Vale Primary** - Children will take part in fun, age-appropriate activities in a secure setting.

**The Future of Sport CIC at Shireland CBSO Academy** - Activities will include football, basketball, dodgeball, badminton, athletics, and trampolining.

**EPIC CIC at Wood Lane Community Centre** - Activities will include yoga, meditation, healthy eating and multi-sport sessions.

**Jam Coding at The Phoenix Collegiate** - Activities will include coding workshops, game-building, Minecraft, and robotics to develop creativity, communication, collaboration, and confidence.

**Great Bridge Community Forum at Farley Park Lodge** - Activities will include storytelling through drama and art, games and sports!

**The Albion Foundation at George Salter Academy & Sandwell Academy** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities!

**Dynamic Kids CIC at Kenrick Park Community Centre & Bustleholme Fe** - Activities will include sports and games, cooking, food tasting, gardening, creative music, crafts, dance, art, forest school, bike rides, STEM & crafts.

**4 Community Trust SEND at 4 Community Trust Hub in West Bromwich** - Offer a range of activities, arts & crafts, cooking, healthy eating, sports, digital games, social play, themed activities, sensory play plus much more.

**ExcelRB at West Bromwich Leisure Centre** - Activities include tag games, swimming, open sports play, fundamental skills, ball games, arts and crafts, team building, and team sports.

**Rabbit and Moon Childcare at Harvills Hawthorn Primary** - Activities will include arts and crafts, cricket and history role play!

**Forge Mill Farm at Forge Lane** - Activities will include exploring the farm and forest, den building, nature art, animal encounters, tent pitching, traditional games, and campfire marshmallow roasting.

**Aspire Active Camps Ltd at Yew Tree Primary School** - Activities will include multi-sports, active learning sessions for maths and English, and healthy eating and lifestyle crafts.

**Yemeni Community Association at Lodge Community Centre** - Packed with activities that are fun, enjoyable and educational!

**Sandwell Young Carers at The Old Vicarage** - Specialised provision offering play, arts and crafts, and sports activities.

**Sandwell Youth Service at Redhouse Park** - Providing a wide range of multi-sports and many other enriching activities.

**Centre Spot at West Bromwich Leisure Centre** - Sports and physical activities such as football, multi sports, dodge ball

**Ace Coaching at Hatley Health Academy** - Activities will include football, dodgeball, basketball, tennis, cricket, benchball, hockey, archery, nutritional education and crafts.

**SADWICA at Beches Road** - Children will take part in fun, age-appropriate activities in a secure setting, including days out

**Premier Education at St John Bosco Primary School** - Activities include archery, fencing and curling!

**G.A.P Entertainment CIC at G.A.P Entertainment Studios** - Performing arts sessions, consisting of dance, drama, and music!

**Sports Plus at Lyng Primary School, Hamstead Junior School & Yew Tree** - Wide range of fun and exciting sports activities!

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As summer approaches, many young people lose access to the structure and support they get during term time. That can mean more time spent alone or online, and not always in the healthiest ways.

We know local organisations like yours play a vital role in supporting young people over summer, but the demand can be challenging. That's why Kooth provides free, safe and anonymous mental health support for young people, available at any time.

We're also offering free webinars for young people and families on topics like smartphone safety and healthy relationships, plus practical resources you can share in your settings.

Your free July resources

### KoothKlass Live stream webinars straight to your classroom

We're still here over the summer: Let's talk about loneliness and healthy relationships

A 30 minute webinar for young people aged 11+ on tackling loneliness and building healthy relationships. [Book here](#)

Social media and online safety- your wellbeing matters

Join us as we share our Kooth guidance on staying safe when online and using a smartphone. [Book here](#)

### KoothTalks Families Free webinars for parents and carers

Helping young people stay safe on smartphones and online

Find out how parents can support online safety for their children and how Kooth keeps young people safe. [Share with parents](#)

**Free Staff Training**  
Connect with your local engagement lead.



We'd love your thoughts on our newsletter! [Share your feedback here](#)

We are the largest provider to the NHS for digital mental health services and the largest contributor to the MHSDS. Our youth and adolescent service is available to over 62% of all children and young people in the UK. Our adult service is available in over 20 regions across the UK. Alongside this, we deliver pioneering research and work to establish the evidence base for Kooth to contribute to best practice in digital mental health innovation - which is really important to us. As a BACP-accredited service, we have developed bespoke, clinically validated measures around peer-to-peer interaction and a single-session therapeutic model. Review us on Trustpilot [update your references or unsubscribe](#)

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Kooth - Merchant Sq - London, London W2 1AY - United Kingdom

# Have you ever thought about fostering?

Caring for a child is the most rewarding and challenging thing you can choose to do.

With Sandwell Children's Trust you can count on a highly experienced team that will guide and support you on your fostering journey. It's why we're 'Sandwell's Biggest Family'.

We are Sandwell's Fostering Service, which means we work on behalf of Sandwell Council, and we only work with Sandwell children.

Unlike many Fostering Agencies, we are a not-for-profit fostering service.

We are committed to improving the lives of children and young people, so if you have the space in your home and the love in your heart, we'd like to ask you to consider fostering. It might be alongside your current job, or fostering might be the answer to your next move in life. Fostering can be flexible to fit around you and your family's needs, whether it's a loving home for a night or a lifetime.

## Care to join us?

If you want to know more about a rewarding job that's home based and gives you a tax-free income, get in touch through our website or call us for a chat. We'll be more than happy to help you take your first step into fostering with Sandwell.

[fostersandwell.co.uk](https://fostersandwell.co.uk) ☎ 0800 358 0899



## With our communities to achieve the best for the Black Country

Dudley Sandwell Walsall Wolverhampton

Issue 1 - June 2025

### Welcome from Laura Brookes Associate Director of Partnerships, Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Welcome to our 'With our communities' update sharing news, events and opportunities from our work with our partners in health and social care; voluntary, community, social and faith enterprise organisations; and our communities.

In this update, we want to share stories from our communities and our trust, the Black Country Lead Provider/Commissioner for Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism. This is our newsletter, and we welcome ideas and contributions from all of you reading this. Please get in touch if you have news, events or opportunities you would like to share with our network in this newsletter.

We were pleased to confirm continuation of Wider Determinants of Health (WDH) funding for our voluntary sector partners for an additional six months from April 2025. Within the challenging financial context, we remain committed to continuing to prioritise funding and support for these important community initiatives wherever possible.

A little about me. As the Associate Director of Partnerships, I have an important role in developing relationships and partnerships with a range of organisations and people across the Black Country.

I work for Kuli Kaur-Wilson, Chief Strategy and Partnerships Officer and Deputy Chief Executive Officer who I know many of you will know well. I also manage a wonderful team of colleagues in employment services, recovery college, specialist commissioning and health equity.



We understand that each of our Black Country places; Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton are different from the others and part of my role is connecting with partners in each area to develop mutually beneficial relationships, gain local understanding and help get mental health, learning disabilities and autism on the agenda in each place.

I am a mental health nurse by background so have experience of working alongside people who have experienced mental health illness, and their families and carers. I've held different managerial and clinical leadership roles and helped to develop community mental health teams.

Despite living close to the Wolverhampton Wanderers ground, I'm a proud West Bromwich Albion fan. Born and bred in the Black Country, I spend my weekends exploring it with my husband and our pugs, usually with a pint and a bag of scratchings as the end goal! Want to know more about me? Read my [Behind the Badge](#) feature on our website.

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### Lead provider/commissioner and wider determinants of health Laura helps explain the jargon!

As the lead provider/commissioner of mental health, learning disability and autism services in the Black Country, we take a whole population approach to commissioning services to meet the needs of the Black Country population.

This includes bringing together partners across the Black Country system to support the development and commissioning of pathways of care across health and care. This means working in partnership with others to co-design and co-develop services across multiple organisations.

We all know that demand for mental health services is ever increasing, and local people have told us how challenging it is to be waiting for support or not being able to access specialist mental health support because they are 'not unwell enough'.

As lead provider/commissioner we have a responsibility to make decisions about how to best support our communities by understanding their needs and designing support, in partnership with local voluntary and community organisations where that is more appropriate. This might include offering funding or building connections between organisations. [Watch a video](#) about the difference being lead provider has made.

Wider determinants of health (WDH) are a range of social, economic and environmental factors which impact directly on the health (physical and mental) of the population. We know only 20% of health outcomes are influenced by clinical care. 50% is influenced by social, economic and environmental factors (WDH) and 30% by lifestyle choices. If we can make an impact on the WDH then we can make a real difference for people. Learn more about WDH on the [NHS website](#).

### Spotlight: Stories of success from Sandwell

Congratulations to our community partners in Sandwell, including lead organisation [Communities in Sync](#) (CIS), for the incredible success of the Wider Determinants of Health (WDH) Sandwell project.

Black Country Healthcare was proud to fund this project and to continue the funding for six additional months from April 2025.

Since the start date, 17 local organisations have provided support to 2,100 people across Sandwell. Capturing the truest sense of partnership, 406 people were cross-referred and 1,350 people were onward referrals for additional support, demonstrating how organisations have worked together to ensure people received the right support.

This support saw 3,033 interventions including budgeting support, cooking lessons, community cohesion sessions, craft and coffee sessions, counselling, digital access to health, employability support, ESOL provision, gym classes, immigration advice, mental health advocacy services, pre-school services, sound relaxation sessions, walking groups, wellbeing sessions, and wrap-around support.



95% of participants said it has made a positive difference to their lives and 98% would recommend the support to others.

“Knowing that there is support available to help me with my emotional and physical needs has been so beneficial in helping me get through one of the toughest periods of my life.”

Participant

Continues

With our communities

2

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The changes I have made to my life with everyone's help have been massive. I do positive activities that are good for my physical and mental health every single day!

Participant

As a trust we are proud to work with our partners in Sandwell and recognise the incredible difference that partnerships between the NHS and voluntary, community, social and faith enterprises can have for local people.

CIS are sharing some of the case studies from this project on their website and highlighting stories from Sandwell on their social media. Follow them on X (twitter) @commsinsync and using #wdhsandwell to hear more stories from Sandwell.

### Spotlight on Sandwell: Communities In Sync



Communities In Sync (CIS) are a dynamic partnership of quality health, social care and wellbeing providers working together to improve the lives of people in Sandwell.

CIS creates a single point of contracting, with the responsibility for setting up and managing sub-contracts with individual consortium member organisations, all of whom have met a strict quality threshold. The combined turnover of member organisations is £7m with over 350 employees.

CIS also has access to a wide range of recognised community assets located throughout Sandwell, which combined with the grassroots and user-led nature of the member organisations ensures extensive reach into communities not easily accessible by mainstream and statutory providers.

“

Working regularly with other local organisations fosters information exchange, peer learning and peer support. Working so closely on services also necessitates that best practise is shared and implemented into new services to shape delivery and transferable service models. This is good for the sector, the local community and the people who will be using our services.

Pat Johnson

Chief Executive Officer  
Sandwell African and Caribbean Mental Health Foundation Trust

“

WDH Sandwell is a fantastic example of the third sector working collaboratively to meet the complex needs of our diverse population. I'd like to say a huge thank you to our funder (BCHFT) and our 17 delivery partners have worked tirelessly to address the needs of our residents in a holistic and empathetic manner.

Nav Rai  
Chief Executive Officer  
Communities In Sync

“

Being a member of CIS is incredibly beneficial to us as it not only offers potential opportunities through their local knowledge but enables and supports us to work on contracts as a group, which may be out of our reach as a sole provider.

We certainly reach more diverse communities that need our support and work with a wider range of partners than we would do without being part of CIS. We find CIS incredibly supportive, thorough and professional.

Khatija Patel  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ideal For All

Continues  
With our communities

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Working with CIS has allowed us to reach communities that traditional NHS services have not. We can offer support to people in their local neighbourhoods and through VCSE (voluntary, community, social enterprises) and charitable organisations that they trust. This has helped us to provide an offer that is more flexible, creative, culturally sensitive and high quality.

Also, CIS have been able to mobilise projects quickly and cost effectively. Multi-partner projects allow for shared accountability, shared learning and integration that benefits communities and citizens with choice and timely support.

Laura Brookes  
Associate Director of Partnerships  
Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

“

Partnership working is now an essential requirement for any modern charity. Being a member of CIS and working with other members means that we have pre-formed partnerships which enables us to act quickly and operate with agility when new opportunities arise. The work of CIS in supporting these partnerships has been essential to Age UK Sandwell's continued development.

Steve Thomson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Age UK Sandwell

CIS want to grow their social impact and by 2028 want to see a resilient network of charities equipped to tackle complex challenges and build healthier, more equitable communities across the Black Country and Birmingham. Read more about their ambitions in their Strategic Plan for 2025-2028.

### Spotlight on Sandwell: Maternal health and prenatal care event

In March, the Trust supported an event organised in Oldbury by [The William Wilson Turner Foundation](#) which focused on maternal health and prenatal care for Black and ethnic minority women.

The event highlighted the significant disparities in maternal health outcomes for these groups compared to white women.

National studies indicate that Black women are five times more likely to die during pregnancy and childbirth, while Asian women are twice as likely.

In Sandwell, 48.3% of all births are to women from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds, significantly higher than the national average of 23.3% (Sandwell Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2020).



Continues  
With our communities

A case study presented by Joan Blaney, CEO of the William Wilson Turner Foundation, brought to life the often-overlooked experiences of black and ethnically diverse women during pregnancy and childbirth, inadequate maternity care, lack of culturally competent services, and broader health inequalities (Head of the Royal College of Midwives).

The Trust's Lead Governor, Elsie Gayle gave the opening talk. Elsie is part of the Midwife Mimosa Midwives Group and Secretariat Black Maternal Health All Party Parliamentary Group. Health professionals, maternity service providers, and local women also shared their experiences and insights.

The role of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Specialist Midwives in the Black Country was highlighted. These midwives advocate for equitable maternity services, provide cultural competence training, and engage with local communities to improve services. Their aim is to help improve Black and Asian women's maternal health and ensure that every woman in Sandwell receives the care she deserves.

Many pregnancy-related complications that lead to hospital admissions or worse outcomes are preventable with the right interventions, including early engagement with maternity care, better community support, improved health literacy, and culturally appropriate services.

Feedback from attendees included language barriers, pain threshold misconceptions, confusing medical jargon, and trust issues. Areas for action were agreed upon, such as interpreter assistance, clear communication, inclusive engagement, empowerment, equality in treatment, and community collaboration.

Feedback from attendees included language barriers, pain threshold misconceptions, confusing medical jargon, and trust issues. Areas for action were agreed upon, such as interpreter assistance, clear communication, inclusive engagement, empowerment, equality in treatment, and community collaboration.



“

I learnt that women of colour are not always treated fairly and in order to transform the narrative we need to speak up and be the change for the next generation.

One thing I will take away from this workshop is to not keep quiet and make sure my voice is heard as we should be treated equally no matter what colour we are

Kaddy Fairin-Hall  
Attendee

### Spotlight on Sandwell: The William Wilson Turner Foundation

The William Wilson Turner Foundation was established in 2022 in memory of Dr. William Wilson Turner, MB BCH, a GP of over 40 years, who was a passionate advocate for preventative medicine. Its mission is to work in collaboration with others to empower individuals with skills and resources, provide holistic health education, and promote involvement in healthy activities.



Continues  
With our communities

Joan Blaney, CEO of the foundation, and his widow, herself a nurse, has received funding and support from the Black Country Integrated Care Board (ICB) and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to run workshops for Black and ethnic minority groups in Sandwell.

These workshops included topics such as cardiovascular health, mental health and resilience, digital literacy, diabetes, and alcohol and substance misuse awareness. They were funded by the ICB and supported by the Trust, and local community sector organisations such as [West Bromwich African Caribbean Resource Centre](#), [The Dorothy Parkes Centre](#), [Black Country Housing Group](#), and [Kaleidoscope Plus Group](#).

“

When it comes to maternal health, silence is not an option. Tackling inequalities begins with honest conversations and continues through meaningful collaboration.

This event in Sandwell was not just a workshop—it was a call to action

Joan Blaney  
Chief Executive Officer  
The William Wilson Turner Foundation

Read the [Foundation's Healthwise Prevent and Prosper Report](#) about the workshops.

### Talking Therapies Plus

The Trust is proud to be working with community and voluntary organisations to provide a Talking Therapies Plus service across the Black Country.

The service aims to support underserved communities across the Black Country; those people who may not have previously accessed support or who have not had the same recovery when compared to others accessing the service. This may include: Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups; refugees and migrants; LGBTQ+ people; older adults; deaf and hearing impaired people; and men.

It does this by taking a flexible, creative and culturally appropriate approach to delivering Talking Therapies, for example, providing access to therapists with a range of language skills and matching service users to therapists with the same background.

Counselling and therapy is delivered by community organisations in places familiar to, and trusted by, the people who choose to access the service (e.g. GP practices, community settings, voluntary organisations). People will be able to choose which area of the Black Country they receive their treatment allowing greater flexibility. They can also access emergency support, courses through the Trust's [Recovery College](#), and additional support such as: digital training and equipment; advocacy; pre-counselling engagement and more.



Some services are provided by The Trust and some by community or voluntary organisations. The service is a partnership between the Trust and community and voluntary sector partners across Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton. In each area a lead organisation represents different community organisations in their area and works with the Trust to deliver the service. These are:



Continues  
With our communities



Communities In Sync is proud to be supporting Sandwell residents who are struggling with their mental health. We believe that by supporting residents in a responsive, flexible, and person-centred manner, combined with addressing the individual's underlying needs (e.g. finances, physical health, future aspirations), helps to make a real difference to the lives of those we support.



Through our partnership with the Trust we, at Aspiring Futures CIC, are reaching out to people who might have struggled to access conventional talking therapies. This programme is flexible, accessible and meet diverse needs of our communities



#### What type of support might people receive?

After an assessment people will receive personalised support that may include:

- Group and one-to-one counselling in their language
- Bereavement support
- Domestic abuse support
- Peer support for young men
- Support in the outdoors and local neighbourhood centres

Counsellors speak a range of languages including:

- French
- Gujarati
- German
- Hindi
- Italian
- Polish
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Patois
- Punjabi and more.

They will also meet people wherever they feel comfortable, for example, a local community centre.

#### How do people access the service?

The voluntary and community lead organisations in Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton will be promoting the service to communities and groups in their area.

Some communities they hope to reach are:

- Central and Eastern European communities
- People from African, Caribbean and dual heritage
- Asian women
- South Asian communities
- Young men
- Women and girls affected by female genital mutilation
- LGBTQ+ communities

#### What difference will this make?

People will have choice and culturally appropriate support that meets their individual needs and circumstances. There will be reduced waiting times, especially where interpreters are required, and support offered during your wait and longer-term. People will benefit from a diverse, culturally appropriate and skilled team, and locations and resources, across the voluntary and community sector and NHS.



With our communities

## Our commitment to reducing racial inequalities The Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework

Over the next few months, you will start to hear a lot more about **The Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF)**; NHS England's first anti-racism framework for all providers of mental health services (not just the NHS).

The aim of PCREF is to hold organisations accountable for being anti-racist in the way it provides mental health support.

The Trust is an early adopter of this framework (amongst the first NHS Trusts in the country to start using it) because it reflects the commitment we have already made to our patients, service users, staff and communities; to be active in achieving the Best for the Black Country.

"Those that feel it, know it".

This was part of the feedback that came from one of the first community conversations that we had about PCREF. We really wanted to hear from communities, patients, carers and staff working clinically. So, during autumn 2024, we held community conversations in each Black Country locality; Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, as well as online.

These conversations between organisations, advocates and trust staff were uncomfortable and difficult at times, but mostly people told us they felt hopeful, energised and inspired to stay involved with the PCREF work and be part of the next steps.

All the feedback we received has been used to develop the **Black Country Healthcare PCREF improvement plan**. This plan sets out where we will start the work of eliminating racial inequality from our services.

This work won't be easy and will take many years, but this plan is our shared starting point based on what is most important to our communities and patients; transparency, accountability, partnership working.

Maybe most importantly, valuing the experiences of patients, carers and communities by listening, valuing their perspective and taking action when we are given feedback.



Community organisations and advocates have been essential in bringing patient and carer feedback to us. Understandably, patients and carers often don't want to complete our surveys and come to our events. But through the expert support and trusted voices of the community organisations, their voices and experiences have been part of this process, and we want to thank them for their time and for sharing their experiences and ideas.

The improvement plan was approved by the Trust Board in May, and you can read more of our Board's reflections, along with a personal reflection from community leader Jessie Allen on our [website](#).

We will keep you updated on progress, including how you can get involved in this important work. If you would like to be included on our PCREF mailing list, please email: [bchft.pcref@nhs.net](mailto:bchft.pcref@nhs.net).

With our communities

### Meetings and events

The **Black Country Mental Health Stakeholder Advisory Forum** is a regular forum and network for organisations and advocates to work alongside each other to co-design and co-deliver mental health support, making a positive difference to the mental health and wellbeing of our Black Country communities.

Learn more in the [forum leaflet](#) and email [bchft.bcmhstakeholdergroup@nhs.net](mailto:bchft.bcmhstakeholdergroup@nhs.net) to receive an invitation.

Future meetings are:

- Friday 18 July 2025, 1-4pm
- Friday 24 October 2025, 1-4pm
- Friday 23 January 2026, 11am-1pm

### Learning and resources

The **Recovery College** provides an educational learning environment for people who have an interest in, or personal difficulties with, mental health. Their courses celebrate our successes and build on existing skills and strategies rather than highlighting problems or failures.

Courses are free of charge and open to anyone, aged 18 and over, registered with a GP in the Black Country.

Learn more on their [website](#) or email [info@therecoverycollege.co.uk](mailto:info@therecoverycollege.co.uk) to get in touch.



### News from...Dudley

**Dudley Place partnership** has an engaging newsletter bringing together news and events from around the borough. If you'd like to get 'The Place to Be' in your inbox email: [dqft.place.comms@nhs.net](mailto:dqft.place.comms@nhs.net).

### Be well - quick links

- [Help in a crisis](#)
- [Healthy Dudley website](#)
- [Sandwell All-Age Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services Directory](#)
- [Walsall Wellbeing Directory](#)
- [Wolverhampton Information Network](#)

### A final note from our... ...Chief Strategy and Partnerships Officer, Kuli Kaur-Wilson

I really hope you have enjoyed this With our communities update. As Laura mentioned in her introduction, we welcome contributions. Have you something to share with our network of organisations and individuals? Would you like us to feature your organisation or a particular project, initiative or event? Please get in touch with us.

We will be back soon with another update. Until then, thank you for everything you do for our bostin' Black Country communities.

