

greetsgreen

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2005

Settling in
Local residents' re-housing news

Getting involved!

HOW TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY



Issue 19

Front cover: Sandra Thompson is delighted to have moved from Claypit Lane to the new Trident scheme on Wood Lane.

The Greets Green magazine is distributed to every household in the New Deal for Communities area, and to other NDCs nationally. If you live in the Greets Green NDC area and do not receive a copy then please call us on **freephone 0800 953 0215**.

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এ তথ্যাদি অনুবাদে আপনার সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হলে,
দয়া করে ইথরেঞ্জী জানেন এমন একজন বন্ধু বা
আত্মীয়কে আমাদেরকে 0800 953 0215 এ
নাম্বারে ফোন করতে বলুন।

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तो कृपा करीने अंजेल ओषता ज़ेठ मित्र के कुटुंबीजनने
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إن رغبتم بالحصول على مساعدة على ترجمة هذه
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الأسرة ممن يتحدثون اللغة الإنجليزية الاتصال بنا على
الهاتف 0800 953 0215 .

welcome

Welcome to issue 19 of the Greets Green Magazine.

With so many things happening throughout the Greets Green area, now's the ideal time to get more involved in your local community. That's why this issue's main feature is all about 'Getting Involved' – pop along to your local Neighbourhood Forum, the Have Your Say workshops or Community Health Forums, or why not join one of the many local community groups and clubs on your doorstep?

Over a 100 local people found a great way to get involved by becoming stars in the Civic Life film at the Town Hall in May. See the centre spread for the full story.

There are lots of people within the community who can help and support you if you are interested in getting more involved. Greets Green's new Older People's Champion, Maggie Turner, who's profiled in this issue, is keen to make older people's voices heard. Bob Lloyd, our new Neighbourhood Support Officer, is leading the Partnership Team of Neighbourhood Support Workers to encourage involvement and your new Neighbourhood Representatives are ready to represent your views. What are you waiting for?

Happy reading!

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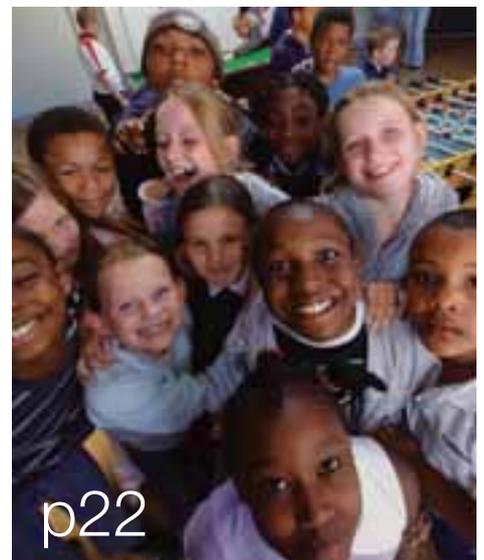
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YOUNG GREET'S GREEN

- 20** **Young Greets Green**
News from Greets
Green's young people



Whether you want to help improve your neighbourhood, make your voice heard, shape local services or just get out and about and meet some new people, there are so many ways to become an active member of your community in Greets Green.

GE

TEAM OFFERS NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT

A new Neighbourhood Support Officer is making it even easier for local people to make their views known.

Bob Lloyd joined Greets Green Partnership in June to manage the team of Neighbourhood Support Workers who work with various groups and individuals throughout the area to ensure their voices get heard.

The team comprises Simon Ware, Harshad Patel and Sam Watts, although Sam is currently Acting Diversity Officer while Ruphsana Nahar-Qayyum is on maternity leave. Sam will return to her original role in late October. A fourth Neighbourhood Support Worker is currently being recruited.

"The main aim of the team is to encourage local involvement and capture local people's voices," explains Bob. "We appreciate that different people want to get involved in different ways and so we're keen to offer a whole variety of opportunities.

"We've just started street surgeries where we leaflet an area and if

anyone wants to see us and talk to us, they stick the leaflet in their window on a certain day. We then return to the area and call on people who have it displayed."

Bob says that getting involved is about much more than just expecting residents to come to meetings. "It's all about us going out to the places people are at – whether that's at home, at community centres or wherever. We'll be out and about throughout the summer, visiting local groups to find out local views.

"Part of our role is ensuring that people are happy about taking issues up and having their say. We're there to support them and to put them in touch with others who can offer help."

Bob is also responsible for overseeing the Neighbourhood Forums, managing the Community Fund project and running the Neighbourhood Representative elections. Plus, he's working closely with the Events Steering Group to plan future community events.

And Bob certainly practises what he preaches. He lives in Tipton where he's involved in various residents' groups and local community groups. Before joining Greets Green Partnership, he worked in public and patient involvement for Rowley Regis & Tipton Primary Care Trust. This involved looking at what people like about local health services and then putting together an action plan.

o The Neighbourhood Support Team is currently in the process of moving from Claypit Lane and hopes to open a community resource where residents can drop in. To get in touch with the team in the meantime, call freephone 0800 953 0215.

**Greets Green's
Summer Fun Day
... full report and
photo gallery in
our next issue**



Bob Lloyd (left) and Simon Ware out and about in Greets Green.

T INVOLVED!

Health views shared

As Greets Green residents are the local experts on health issues, they're the ones being asked what services are needed through the new Community Health Forums.

The Forums are held on the second Wednesday of every month and provide an opportunity for residents to come along and find out more about local health services and health theme projects, as well as influencing future developments in Greets Green.

Launched in May by the Neighbourhood Health Management Team, the Forums are proving a big success with a broad range of local people sharing their views. Members of many communities including the Pakistani, Yemeni, Irish, Bangladeshi and African Caribbean communities have all joined in, along with members of the Youth Forum.



The first Forum explored the health issues which exist in Greets Green and the factors which impact on poor health. Several issues were raised, particularly around access to local health services, for example residents not being able to see their own GP.

To address these issues, Jayne Hosell from PALS (Patient Advice & Liaison Service) and Dr Manir Hussain, Head of Medicines Management & Prescribing, were invited to the second Community Health Forum. They explained more about their services, with Manir providing details about the role of the pharmacist and Greets Green's Care @ the Chemist scheme.

On 6th July, the third Forum was held at the new Lyng Centre for Health & Social Care when Forum members were able to have a good look at some of the departments.

 The topic for each Community Health Forum is decided by the participants themselves and all residents are welcome to come along. The next Forums will held on 14th September and 12th October. Watch out for details of the venue or call Sally Sandel on 500 2488.

JOIN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Neighbourhood Forums are now up and running throughout Greets Green, enabling you to find out more about local issues, share your concerns and meet your Neighbourhood Representative.

The Forums are Oakhouse, Hamblets, Lodge, Carters Green, West Bromwich Central and Swan Village Action Group. They meet approximately every six weeks but no meetings will be held in August. Watch out for the new meeting programme which will be out in September.



**Want to know more?
Call Bob Lloyd
on freephone
0800 953 0215**

FIRST HERO

In the June/July issue of the Greets Green Magazine we put a call out for community heroes and received an excellent response.

Our very first community hero is Robert Payne who has been delivering this magazine since it was first launched. He's recently completed his final delivery and was presented with a special award by Ally Allerson, the Partnership's Executive Director, for his superb efforts.

Robert is also actively involved in his local Neighbourhood Forum and regularly attends Greets Green Partnership Board meetings as an interested resident. He's always keen to help others and keeps an eye on a number of his elderly neighbours to check that they are all right.

Katherine Hewitt, Community Empowerment Theme Leader, said: "Robert has taken part in various consultation sessions and his ideas and opinions are often valuable. He's a wealth of local information."

 Do you know someone who deserves to be recognised for the work they do in your community? Write to Simon Ware, Neighbourhood Support Worker, Greets Green Partnership, Court House, 335-337 High Street, West Bromwich B70 8LU or call Simon on 0800 953 0215 or 07810 850851.



YOUR NEW REPS

After months of election tension, we can now announce your new Neighbourhood Representatives!

A big thank you to everyone who put themselves forward for election and all those who voted for who they'd like to see represent their views. The new Representatives will share local people's comments and concerns with Greets Green Partnership Board and ensure that residents are at the heart of decision making. If you would like to contact your Neighbourhood Representative, call Greets Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.

RE-ELECTED



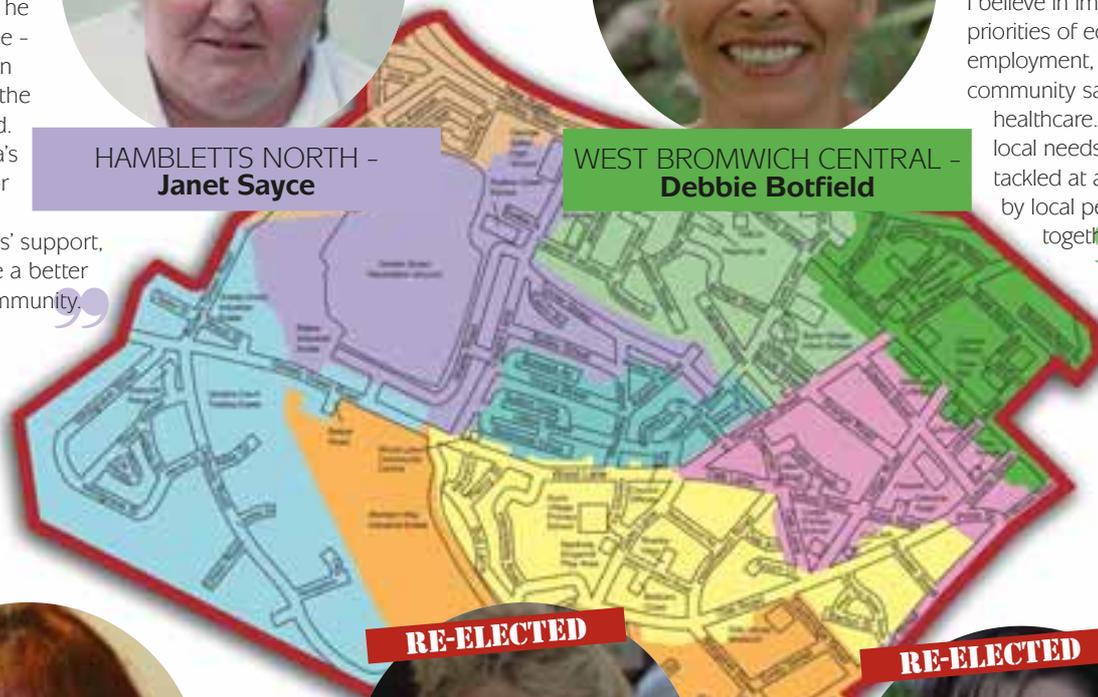
HAMBLETT'S NORTH - Janet Sayce

I think I can say that after 57 years, I know my community. The area needs a voice - someone who can take concerns to the Partnership Board. I've been this area's Representative for nearly four years and with residents' support, I hope I can make a better future for our community.



WEST BROMWICH CENTRAL - Debbie Botfield

I am a wife, mother and grandmother of mixed parentage and have lived here for over 35 years. I believe in improving the priorities of education, employment, housing, community safety and healthcare. These are local needs that must be tackled at a local level by local people working together.



GREET'S GREEN - Wendy Letts

I do lots of voluntary work, specifically working with one of our local community centres. I have a specific interest in transport and would like to raise issues regarding crime in the area and mobility. I believe my outgoing personality, strong views and assertiveness will enable me to tackle issues in the community on behalf of local people.

RE-ELECTED



OAK HOUSE NORTH - Ann Coll

I'm very used to the diverse nature of the area and the hopes and fears of the residents who live here. I have three children and five grandchildren and am also a Governor of Guns Village Primary School. I've been the Oak House North Neighbourhood Representative for nearly four years and this has enabled me to take residents' views on board and address issues arising.

RE-ELECTED



LODGE - Fajli Bibi

As a local resident, I understand and am aware of the social, economic and political issues and concerns of the community. I have the ability to develop these into positive outcomes. I'm well known in the community as I have lived in the Lodge Road neighbourhood all my life. I want to see a positive difference in my area because this is our future and the future of our children.

The Electoral Reform Service was engaged to oversee the whole election process. Full details of the results are available on request. An election was also held in the Swan Village neighbourhood. Unfortunately, no valid nominations were received. The Partnership Board is now looking at how to fill this vacancy.



RESIDENTS HAVE THEIR SAY

Plenty of residents have started making the most of Greets Green Partnership's latest opportunity to make their voices heard.

The 'Have Your Say' workshops were launched in May so that local people can share their views on proposed projects. Held every month, the workshops take place at different community venues and alternate between a Wednesday evening and a Saturday daytime to make it as easy as possible for people to come along.

Each project being discussed is timed so you can just come along to hear a particular subject or stay for the whole workshop.

May Feedback

The first 'Have Your Say' workshop at Lodge School in May saw plenty of lively debate. Three projects were discussed – one around sickle cell and thalassaemia, the second to encourage involvement in the Greets Green Housing Plan and the third to place a shared IT tutor in two Community Learning Centres. Lots of people from many different communities joined in. Several residents who came to hear about the housing project also listened to the sickle cell discussion, and said afterwards how interesting they'd found it.

June Feedback

The June workshop was held at SWAN and discussed the Environmental Pathfinder project to employ a team of staff specifically for Greets Green to tackle issues around litter, street cleaning and fly tipping. The Jobs & Enterprise Business Strategy was also discussed, along with a project to support local businesses, and the Hat Trick Community Football programme to involve young people in footballing activities.

July Feedback

The July workshop focused on three health projects. It looked at an Active Lifestyles project which aims to promote physical activity through more than just sport. The general view was that it is a much needed project. A project focusing on increasing the level of community involvement in the development of the Children & Families Programme was also discussed, including involving more parents and creating a female community worker post. Finally, the YMCA came along to outline their project which looks at renewing gym equipment and supporting staff costs.

If you'd like to register on the database for details of future meetings, call Katherine Hewitt on freephone 0800 953 0215.

have YOUR SAY!

Come and share your views about the projects Greets Green Partnership is looking to fund.

The next 'Have Your Say' workshops are being held on:

Saturday 20th August
from 10.00am, Wood Lane
Community Centre

Wednesday 21st September
from 6.00pm

Saturday 22nd October
from 10.00am

Wednesday 23rd November
from 6.00pm

Wednesday 14th December
from 6.00pm

Let us know which subjects you're interested in and we'll be in touch when those topics are being discussed at future workshops.

Creche and transport facilities for all workshops are available, but please book places at least 24 hours in advance.

Venues need to be confirmed for some sessions. Call Katherine Hewitt on freephone **0800 953 0215** for more details.

HAA Forum meetings

Want to find out more about housing?

Everyone living in the Housing Assessment Area (HAA) around Edith Street and Chapman Street can go along to the HAA Forum which meets every month to discuss issues around housing.

All residents from the area are welcome to observe and bring issues to the attention of the Forum members. The next meetings will be held on 12th September, 10th October and 14th November at OSCAR on Lodge Road.

In response to requests from the HAA Forum, members will soon be able to benefit from independent expert housing advice. Watch this space!

Call Abdul Monim Khan from Greets Green Partnership Housing Team on freephone 0800 073 0798 for more details.

COMMUNITY FUND UP & RUNNING

Local groups are already sending off their applications for grants to the newly re-launched Community Fund.

Representatives from a wide range of community groups came along to the launch of the project at Wood Lane Community Centre in June when they were able to find out more about applying for grants, which could make a big difference to their group.

"There are around 50 active community groups and organisations in the Greets Green area which provide a variety of extra activities and services for local residents," says Katherine Hewitt, Community Empowerment Theme Leader. "We believe that this is something to be both encouraged and celebrated and one way we can support these groups is by offering financial help.

"We hope that by awarding small grants through the Community Fund, we'll enable groups to continue running their existing activities, as well as try out new ideas."

Groups can apply for up to £1000 in any financial year to fund things such as equipment, training or room hire. "The application process is very simple but if you need help the Neighbourhood Support Team is on hand," added Katherine. "A panel made up of local residents then decides which applications will be successful."

Call Simon Ware on freephone 0800 953 0215 or 07810 850851 for an application pack.



Sunny Days

Sunny Lodge Over 60s group had a Christmas to remember when they received a Community Fund grant towards a festive dinner.

"We took a whole coach load to a Christmas dinner at the Regis restaurant in Cradley," explains Treasurer, Doreen Campbell. "The group paid half and we used the grant for half. We enjoyed a nice meal. We used the rest of the grant to cover the cost of transport for a trip to the seaside the following April and for bingo pens and pads.

"The grant was really appreciated. Even if you just ask for help with one trip, it makes a big difference."

The group meets on Mondays and Thursdays at Farley Park Lodge. Call 557 4957 for more information.



Great Play Equipment

St Andrew's Teddy Bear Club welcomes children from new born to school age with around 25 children regularly attending.

"We successfully applied for a Community Fund grant for play equipment including a climbing frame with a slide, foam jigsaw puzzle pieces for the younger ones to sit on and horseshow cushions for babies who can't sit up on their own," says Co-ordinator, Hazel Griffiths.

"I think it's a marvellous project. We usually rely on holding jumble sales to raise funds and couldn't have got this play equipment without the grant."

The club meets at St Andrews Church every Wednesday during term time. Call Hazel on 532 3944 to find out more.



The Community Fund awarded more than 300 small grants to local groups including Xtreme Youth Club, Ryders Green Day Centre for the Elderly and Turton Road Children's Garden Project, when it originally ran in the first four years of the programme.

MOVING ON UP

It's now more obvious than ever that change is happening in the Claypit Lane / Wattle Road / Coppice Street area of Greets Green. Work towards clearance, the first stage of regeneration work, is well underway in the area and, now that many residents have moved out of their properties, demolition has begun. We caught up with a few local residents to find out where they've moved to and what they think about the plans for the area.

My Best Move

Mrs Priest moved to Coppice Street from Dudley five years ago. When she first found out her home was included in the clearance area, she was very upset.

"I was really happy in my home and didn't want to move," she says. "I was frightened because I didn't know where I'd end up or what would happen. It came as a shock to me."



After she'd received a personal one-to-one home visit from the Greets Green Partnership Housing Team and Sandwell Council, her views began to change. "Once I realised why our houses were coming down and found out about the plans to improve the area, I thought it was a good idea. I thought, if I've got to move, I just need to get on with it."

"When I was offered a two bedroom house in the Trident Homes scheme on Wood Lane, I was over the moon. It was the easiest move I've ever made. I've met my neighbours who are very friendly and the area here is nicer. I was always happy in Coppice Street but this is a thousand times better."



GLAD TO MOVE

Sandra Thompson and her partner have moved from their home in Claypit Lane to a two bedroom house in the new Trident scheme on Wood Lane.

"I'd lived in Claypit Lane for 26 years and was hoping to modernise the kitchen so I wasn't planning to move," Sandra explains. "But after I was told our house would be coming down, people starting leaving rubbish around which was attracting rats. Nobody seemed to bother and I thought then 'I'm glad to move'."

"Our new house has a downstairs toilet which we didn't have before, a bigger bathroom, bigger living room and bigger bedrooms. I've always wanted a proper hallway and now I've got one. I'm very pleased."

"We were offered a house in Tipton first but we don't know that area so we didn't want to move there. Then we got offered here. It's taken a bit of time to settle in and get things sorted but we're getting there."

"We're near the shops, close to the bus stop for work and it's handy for getting into town. When I took down the net curtains in Claypit Lane, it hit me that we were really moving, but that was the only time I felt sad. Now I wouldn't want to move back there."

Staying Close By

Audrey Small and her partner, George Upton had lived in a Sandwell Homes ground floor flat in Wattle Road for 11 years. Now they've moved to a Black Country Housing Association bungalow on Hamblets Road which suits them down to the ground.

"I was a bit subdued when I found out we'd have to move because as you get older, you don't want these upsets," Audrey says. "There are six new bungalows here and we were asked if we'd like to look round one. We liked it and said we wanted to move in. It's a nice two bedroom house with grass and trees around. There's a lot more room here and a lovely big fitted kitchen. Our kitchen in Wattle Road was tiny."

"It was hectic on moving day but we were lucky to have nice weather which helped. We're close to where we used to live which is what we wanted and we've been able to keep the same phone number. We know it will be lovely here."



If you need any help or advice with housing issues, call the Greets Green Partnership Housing Team on freephone 0800 073 0798.

If you are experiencing problems with vermin, contact **Environment Pest Control on 569 6600**. This is a free service for Sandwell tenants/residents. Please do not put waste bags out too early for refuse collection as this will attract vermin.

SWAN spreads its wings

SWAN (Sandwell Women's Agency Network) helps women and children to improve their lives, whatever their problems.

Based at the Sandwell Trading Association Building, Phoenix Street, SWAN offers advice and support on a wide range of women's issues from domestic violence, abuse and teenage pregnancy to stress management and sexual health – the list is endless as one problem often leads to another.

Having carried out a study in Greets Green to see what types of services were needed, SWAN found that women are reluctant to go into a building called a 'women's centre' but prefer to use a drop-in facility where they can have a cup of tea and an informal chat and talk through their problems with another woman.

In April 2003, SWAN received funding from Greets Green Partnership and has not looked back since. Its aim is to promote social inclusion and break the cycle of isolation while continuing to offer a full support service.



Left to right: Karmjit Panesar, Carol Childs, Celine Motard, Vickie Cooper, Wendy James and Maxine Verschoyle.



Sue Morgan (left) and Elaine Knowles.

Sue Morgan and **Elaine Knowles** are Joint Managers of SWAN and **Wendy James** is Development Officer for Mental Health Issues. Plus, the organisation has just recruited five new staff so that an even broader service can be offered.

Carol Childs is the new Development Officer for 40+ women. She's working

with SWAN's Spring Chicks group for older women to try to encourage more people to stop feeling isolated by coming along to the group's activities.

Celine Motard is the Development Officer for Women in General and is helping women of all ages become more empowered by learning new skills. She's currently organising an evening surgery every second Monday from 6.00 – 8.00pm where women can chat and share ideas for activities.

Karmjit Panesar is the Development Worker for Young People and she's setting up Saturday morning workshops where young people can do arts and crafts, karaoke and get help with their homework.

Maxine Verschoyle is the Administration Officer who's always there to help with any queries or information. She's always looking for letters, poems and stories for SWAN's newsletter.

Vickie Cooper is the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator and is providing support to women and children who are suffering domestic violence. Vicky is available during office hours 9.00am-4.00pm.

"We want to know what women want and we can arrange events and activities to suit them," says Sue Morgan. "We'd love local women to call in or phone us up with their ideas. "Our purpose is to make people's lives easier – whether it's a friendly chat, a shoulder to cry on or practical advice, we're here to help in the strictest confidence."

To find out more, call SWAN on 553 7074.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES AT SWAN

Monday:

Keep Fit & Weight Management
10.00 - 11.00am

Tuesday:

CAB surgery 9.30am - 1.00pm
Women's Self Defence –
On-site crèche facilities. 1.00 - 2.30pm

Wednesday:

Greets Green Women's Group –
Wide range of activities for all ages.
On-site crèche facilities. 9.30 - 11.30am

Thursday:

Extend Gentle Exercise
12 noon - 1.00pm, followed by Spring Chicks arts & crafts for the mature lady.

Saturday:

Duke of Edinburgh's Award for Girls Club
Speak to Karmjit for more details.

We also offer relaxation sessions by appointment, a listening ear service for anxiety / depression sufferers and confidential one to one support for domestic violence / abuse.

A real champion for older people

Maggie Turner has recently become the Older People's Champion for Greets Green and is busy giving local people a real voice.

Having been a volunteer for some time with Agewell, an organisation in Sandwell which addresses the current and future needs of local older people, Maggie was appointed to the two year Champion post at the start of June. Based at Wood Lane Community Centre, she's working with the Healthier and Safer Older Age Team to identify and support older people.

"This is a growing role which encompasses a great many things," Maggie says. "My aim is to help older people how and where I can and, being from the older generation myself, I've got a good idea of how older people think and feel."

Maggie has lived in Greets Green since 1968 so she knows the area well. She's held a wide range of jobs over the years, having started life in printing before working at Sandwell Council, with the older community and with young adults with special needs.

When she first retired, she felt like a black cloud was hanging over her and was determined to keep doing lots of things.

"I set up City Challenge mobility scheme in Tipton and worked with the West Bromwich scheme too," she explains. "I've always had an interest in the community. You get talking to people and find out many interesting things."

When asked why she decided to apply for the role as Older People's Champion, she says it's because she hates injustice. "I'm not frightened to open my mouth and say that maybe something

isn't fair. Perhaps there's another way of going about things which should be looked into."

Maggie has already attended an older people's conference and met with other champions from around the country to share ideas.

She's currently gathering information on older people's groups in the Greets Green area and hopes to engage older people in decision making, listen to their concerns and feed these back to agencies for action.

She'll also be signposting older people to local services and encouraging them to take part in health related activities.

"I'm well known in my area," she adds. "I know all the children who love to see me riding my scooter around the neighbourhood. One little boy said to me recently: 'Are you sure they let old ladies ride scooters?' It really made me smile and that's something I want to help other older people to do."

If you'd like to speak to Maggie or find out more about her new role, call her on 525 5237.

NEW DIRECTORY

A new Directory of Services for Older People in Greets Green was launched in July.

Developed by Agewell, Greets Green Partnership and Wednesbury and West Bromwich Primary Care Trust, the directory is packed with details all of the local social and leisure groups in the area, as well as some of the learning and health improvement opportunities.

Members of the Healthier & Safer Older Age Team were present at the launch to explain more about their work in Greets Green and the services on offer.

For a copy of the directory, contact Maggie Turner on 525 5237.



WE'RE FILM

A total of 120 Greets Green residents proved what stars they are when they took on a wide variety of roles in 'Civic Life', a Greets Green Partnership funded high quality film which will be shown in cinemas across the region.

'Desperate Optimists', award-winning film makers, worked with The Public to create the unique film which was shot in just one take on 35mm cinemascope film at the Town Hall in May. The project brought together residents of all ages and backgrounds to explore their interest in film and performance. After achieving what some thought they never could, several participants are now actively looking into drama courses and a group has been identified who The Public will help to create a community film club.

"I've had an absolutely fab-tastic day!"

Thoughts on the Film

by Noreen Khan (the bride in the film) and Arif Mahmood

Inspirational! That's one way to describe the proceedings at West Bromwich Town Hall on Sunday 29th May. I never imagined such beauty, grace and subtle elegance lay behind those heavy oak doors and now, thanks to The Public, it's on film for the entire world to see!

Taking part in The Public's 'Civic Life' film was an amazing experience. For me, and probably everyone else at the 'shoot', it was a completely new experience. It just shows what can be done when everyone comes together in harmony. Young and old, everyone rallied round and supported each other and made what would have been a gruelling day, enjoyable and entertaining.

The film's aim was to depict life in Greets Green; it proved to be much more. A fine piece of art showing the diversity, the elaborate mix and blend of cultures and the community spirit - the story defined all that's Greets Green.

"Beyond all expectations."



Older residents including Geoff May prepare for their scene.

The Mayor of Sandwell, Cllr Bill Archer and consort, with film participants Noreen Khan and Arif Mahmood.

Tony Vogan, Noreen Khan and Arif Mahmood, the film's key actors, prepare their lines with Christine Malloy of Desperate Optimists.

STARS!



“I loved every minute of it.”

“I had a fabulous time and met some great people.”

A Review

by local resident Geoff May

At 7am Desperate Optimists, film crewmembers, staff from Greets Green Partnership and The Public arrived at West Bromwich Town Hall. Their objective? To film a one-off 10 minute sequence of events of a day in the life of the Town Hall.

Entering the double doors my ears are treated to a crescendo of percussion - a series of 18 drums of the 'Dhol Blasters', a band of musicians supplied by the Punjabi Music and Dance Academy.

I head upstairs to the balcony and survey the proceedings from above. I'm struck by the hive of activity below. Joe Lawlor from Desperate Optimists says: 'Look, can you help me out here? I need a distinguished gentleman in there.' I'm greeted by a room full of senior citizens who are in the process of practising their script. Pauline our 'rep' for the day was going through her paces. Her job? To sell us all a home for the elderly!

For the rest of the story you're going to have to see the film. Three hours later we were on our final 'take'. We were all up in the central hall for the grand finale, a rousing speech by Raj, a young mother-to-be, then those aforementioned drums. Once more they 'bring down the curtain' and 'it's in the can'.

A screening of the making of the film has already been shown at 'The Unit' and there will be a private screening of the film for cast, friends and family this Autumn. The film will then be shown at community centres and venues around the region in 2006.



For more information on the 'Civic Life' film project contact The Public on 525 6861.



The Steadycam tracks its way through the crowded hall at West Bromwich Town Hall.

Joe Lawlor watches over filming in the older residents' scene.

Shaun Ore and Sam Etheridge don policemen's uniforms for their role in the film.



NEW FACILITY AT LODGE

If you thought Lodge Primary School was just for children, think again!

Thanks to funding from Greets Green Partnership, the School now has a self-contained adult learning facility and is encouraging more people to come along and join in the classes on offer.

As part of its Community Access Points Programme, the Partnership has funded new unisex/disabled toilet and baby changing facilities, a kitchenette area and a secure electronic CCTV door entry system and disabled ramp. Previously, adult learners had to use the main school entrance and disrupt classes taking place in the hall to reach the learning facility or to use the toilets. Now

they can gain direct access which means that learning activities can take place outside normal school times.

Mohinder Riat, Head Teacher at Lodge Primary School, said: "We now have a stand-alone unit which we can use for many courses. It's much better for the community. We already have ESOL, basic literacy and numeracy classes and we're introducing new ones all the time."

📍 If you'd like to find out more about the 📍 classes available, call Lodge Primary School on 553 2389.

Learners keep cool

Too hot in summer, too cold in winter – does this bring back happy memories of your school days?

Not anymore! Greets Green Partnership is funding the installation of combined heating and cooling units at six Community Learning Centres to create an even better learning environment for local people.

"We decided to put these units in because we found that the IT equipment was making the rooms too hot during the summer months," explained Stinder Johl, Community Access Points (CAPs) Project Manager. "It will also mean that the school doesn't have to have the heating on out of school hours in winter – just the IT suite can be heated."

The Community Learning Centres to benefit from the new units will be Lyng, Newtown, Ryders Green and Lodge Primary Schools, SWEDA (Sandwell Women's Economic Development Agency) and the Yemeni Centre.

Davinder Kaur, Manager of SWEDA, said: "Our IT learning centre is quite small and friendly but gets very hot and uncomfortable. Having a cooling unit will provide a more comfortable and attractive environment for all learners. We're grateful to Greets Green Partnership for providing funding for this much needed facility for SWEDA."

📍 For more information, contact 📍 SWEDA on 525 2558.

TOP RESULTS

George Salter High School is expecting its Summer exam results to be the best in the School's history and is aiming to be among the most improved schools in the Borough.

With funding from Greets Green Partnership, a host of improvements were made at the start of the academic year which have contributed to these results. These include improved classrooms, extended computer rooms, new interactive whiteboards and many new staff. When representatives from the Department of Education and Skills visited the School in June, they were 'very pleased' with the positive steps that had been taken to move the School forward.

They will now be supporting the School's joint application with Shireland Language College to become an Academy – the first Collegiate Academy of its kind in the country. If successful, it will result in around £20 million of investment.



NEW OFFICER

Marcia Roberts-Grey has become the new Community Development and Marketing Officer for Sandwell Adult Education Service.

She's based at George Salter High School and her role is to promote and develop adult learning activities for residents in Greets Green.

📍 So, if you want to find out more about the 📍 learning activities on your doorstep, call Marcia on 525 6457 or 525 6671.

ADULTS LEARN NEW SKILLS

Nail art, story telling, plumbing and wallpapering - there were so many new skills to be learnt during Adult Learners' Week in May that local people were spoilt for choice.

"Our aim was to offer a series of activities which gave learners some background, theory, confidence and a level of competency so that they could use their new skill to earn some money or start a college course," explained Stinder Johl, Community Access Points (CAPs) Project Manager.



"On the face painting course, for example, the tutor explained health and safety issues, described the techniques used, then taught a couple of designs. The group practised on each other and are now able to create these designs for friends and family."

At the end of the week long nail art course, all learners wanted to sign up for an NVQ because they'd enjoyed it so much. "It showed me I can do something in my life" said one participant.



Greets Green Partnership teamed up with Sandwell Adult Education Service and Sandwell Training Agency to provide a whole range of free courses during the week. The team of Community Learning Workers each took the lead on a different project and found a trainer, organised publicity and assisted on the day.

Both men and women took part in the tiling course and the queue for basic plumbing was so long that another session is being run! The storytelling sessions also proved popular with a professional coming in to explain how to create interest in a story and the props to use. Learners can now use their new skills to engage their own children or to help out at their child's school.

Did you know that since last September, more than 1,300 people have enrolled on adult education courses in Greets Green? If you're interested in further learning, call Roger Cunningham on 533 3184.



PARTNERSHIP NEWS Health

WOMEN'S HEALTH EVENT SUCCESS

Women of all ages from the Pakistani community in the Greets Green area found out more about many health issues and services at the recent Women's Health Awareness Day.

Held at Lodge Road Community Centre, the event was organised by the Pakistani Women's Group and Pakistani Women's Worker, Nadia Farhat with support from Community Development Worker, Joyce Hays.

The aims of the event were to engage with local women to raise awareness of specific health issues and how they can impact on them and their children, and to give women an opportunity to meet with people who deliver health care to discuss any concerns.

There were talks on a wide range of health issues including breast cancer, menopause, child health and postnatal depression, a thought-provoking drama on domestic violence, plus a variety of information stalls. Visitors were also able to have their blood pressure checked and even participate in a gentle exercise class with Bhangra music!

Pakistani Women's Worker, Nadia Farhat has now moved on to pastures new and we wish her all the best in the future. A new Pakistani Women's Worker is currently being recruited.





24 HOUR SECURITY

In response to residents' concerns in the Claypit Lane, Wattle Road and Coppice Street areas about crime, burglary, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour, Greets Green Partnership has fast tracked approval to fund additional security measures.

The package of security measures means that throughout the summer, the Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens and a private security firm will make out of hours security patrols, giving the areas where clearance is underway, a visible security presence 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Wardens have stepped up their patrols to cover weekends and will continue to work with remaining residents in the areas and act as a link with other agencies working to address crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental matters. Whenever the Wardens are not on shift, their work will be picked up by the private security firm which has been employed to meet this demand.

Greets Green Partnership's Crime & Community Safety Manager, Phil Hartley, said: "We know this is needed and we have responded quickly. This additional support will give people the comfort of a visible presence throughout the summer, while we review the long term needs of the area."

To report any incidents around the Claypit Lane area, call the security firm on 604 8668. In an emergency, call 999.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

'We're committed to tackling crime together'. That's the message from Greets Green Partnership and the Greets Green Crime Fighting Team who signed a Service Level Agreement on 5th July to show that they're serious about working in partnership.

The Agreement, 'Early Impact on Crime', establishes protocols for closer working such as sharing information on crime and crime statistics, so that the Greets Green area can become a safer place for all.

● The Greets Green Crime Fighting Team is now being led by Sergeant Nathan Grix, who will be profiled in the next issue of the Greets Green magazine.



Pictured is Ally Allerson, Executive Director of Greets Green Partnership signing the Service Level Agreement with Chief Superintendent Paul Scarrot. Phil Hartley, Crime & Community Safety Theme Leader and Inspector John Smith, look on.

HELP US HIT BACK

Greets Green Crime Fighting Team and Greets Green Partnership are calling on local residents to help stamp out drug dealing in the area.

"We all know there are drug dealers on our streets and we want to get rid of them just like residents do," says Phil Hartley, the Partnership's Crime & Community Safety Theme Leader.

"We're rolling out Operation Hit Back in Greets Green and are distributing leaflets with a special reply slip which local people can fill in and return, telling us where drug dealers are active so that we can investigate."

FREE BUSINESS SUPPORT

Self employed in Greets Green? There's plenty of help, advice and support on offer.

A Greets Green Business Survey is currently being undertaken to ensure that Greets Green Partnership is fully up to date with the local picture and can respond to the needs of the business community. The results of the survey are being published in a 'BE70 Business Book' which will also list details of local businesses in the area who have taken part in a survey, information on the business support and advice available, and outline any legislation that may affect businesses.

If you work for yourself, please let us know that your business exists by responding to the survey by the end of August. All information received will remain confidential. If you want to promote yourself to other businesses in Greets Green, you can also request a free entry in the Business Book and receive a free copy of the directory. You may also be eligible to receive a business development grant of up to £2,000.

Greets Green Partnership has teamed up with Black Country Chamber of Commerce, Black Country Business Link Small Business Service and Greets Green Business Forum to offer training, start up grants and Chamber of Commerce membership to self employed residents and local businesses. Advice on waste management, financial planning and cash flow forecasts, is also available, plus help with filling in self-assessment tax returns.

Contact Kathy Camille at Greets Green Partnership on 533 3186 to reserve your copy of the 'BE70 Business Book' or to find out more about business support and grants.

Building skills awarded

A team of 20 local young people are well on the way to becoming apprentices in the construction industry through the Building Skills in the Community project.

The 16-19 year olds were recently presented with their first aid certificates and are now studying for their health and safety certificate as part of their Foundation Construction Award. Throughout the Summer, they'll be assigned work placements with organisations including Groundwork and will complete a teambuilding activity break in Devon.

Working with the Young Builders Trust and Sandwell College, Greets Green Partnership is enabling the young people to gain different skills in construction such as painting and decorating and bricklaying, before focusing on their chosen trade. The next group of students will be recruited in the Autumn.

NEW ERA

Since we appealed for photos of bygone Carters Green, along with ideas for revitalising the area in the December / January issue of the magazine, plenty of businesses and residents have stepped forward.

All this feedback is now being used to turn Carters Green into the 'Gateway to West Bromwich – a new era in leisure and shopping'. Local architects are currently drawing up design concepts for the High Street and residents will be able to comment on these shortly. Look out for more details!

To find out more, call Greets Green Partnership's Jobs & Enterprise Theme Leader, Pat Parkes, on 533 3186.



Are you unable to borrow from banks and building societies?

Do you need a loan?

Are you looking for savings and financial advice?

SAM can help!

We're a community business run on a not for profit basis and can offer reasonably priced loans, direct access to savings and other advice and support services.

Interested? Call SAM on 553 3110 or call in to 382 High Street, West Bromwich.

CONSTRUCTION COURSE UPDATE

More than 70 residents in low paid, low skill jobs replied to our advert offering an opportunity to enter the construction industry, one of the many opportunities that are arising from investment in Sandwell.

All eligible residents are currently being interviewed to find the final 15. Through a partnership between Gapskill, Future Skills Sandwell, Construction Industry Training Board, Greets Green Partnership and local developers, the group will complete a sandwich course leading to an NVO level II in their chosen trade.

Thanks to funding from Greets Green Partnership, SACDA (Sandwell African Caribbean Development Agency) is running a Radio Presenters Course for all budding broadcasters.

Free!

Starting this September, one day per week for 12-14 weeks.

The course will cover all aspects of broadcasting through tuition, tutorials and workshops. Then, you'll get the chance to experience a 'live broadcast' on a 28 days restrictive licence.

Call SACDA on 553 4264 for more details or email enquiries@sacda.com

WANT A CAREER IN RADIO?

If you have any news, get in touch.
Call Barbryn on T: 01564 741847,
E: susan@barbryn.co.uk or the Greets
Green Partnership on T: 0800 953 0215,
E: brian_mckinstrie@sandwell.gov.uk

GOOD REPORT

Newtown Primary School has received an excellent report following its OFSTED inspection in May.

The school's good links with the community were particularly praised, with the report saying: "The School has a major involvement with a number of local bodies and has benefited significantly as a result. These include the Community Learning Network which has underpinned the major development in ICT resources.

This has had a direct impact on the ICT curriculum and pupils' computer skills... Involvement with Greets Green Partnership is providing the funding for the Community Learning Centre. All these activities benefit the learning of the pupils and their families."

Contact Newtown Primary on 557 8504.

SURVEY WINNERS

Congratulations to Chantel Clacken of Turner Street, who won £100 of shopping vouchers, Shirley Graham of Bowater Street, who won £50 of vouchers and Anisa Akhtar of Oxford Road, who won £25 of vouchers for returning the Greets Green Magazine survey in the last issue. The winners were drawn by Katherine Hewitt, Greets Green Partnership's Community Empowerment Manager.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their comments and views on the magazine.

LIBRARY EXPLORERS LAUNCHED

"Pleeeeeease take me to the Library" was the phrase children's author, Shoo Rayner asked children to say to their parents this summer when he launched the Greets Green Library Explorers project in June.

At the launch event, Sandwell Central Library and Great Bridge Library invited all children aged 4-12 years in Greets Green Primary Schools to take part in 'Reading Voyage', the Library's Summer Reading Challenge.

The Challenge runs in Sandwell Libraries until 3rd September and children can register in the library to receive their Reading Voyage log. Children collect stickers for their log as they read and they must read six books to complete the reading challenge.

This is the second competition run by the Library Explorers project. The first saw Natalie Dell, aged 9 (pictured), from Guns Village Primary design a special library card. Sponsored by Greets Green Partnership, the Library Explorers initiative focuses on children in Years 3 and 4 and their families. In September, the children will receive an Explorers filofax packed with library information, Explorer challenges and details of lots of incentives and library events.

To find out more, call Sandwell Central Library on 569 4911.

Open night planned

Staff and students at George Salter High School are busy preparing for their Open Night on 29th September.

Parents of children in their final year at primary school will be given the opportunity to look around the School and meet staff to help them decide whether to choose George Salter for their child's secondary education. Last year's Open Night was one of the best attended in the whole authority and the School hopes to get even more people through the doors this year.

"Visitors last year had the chance to try French delicacies in the Languages Department, sample cookies in the Technology Department, create digital stories in the English Department and try out exciting computer programmes in the ICT Department," explained Assistant Headteacher, Paul Clayton. "That's not to mention the art, drama, and science experiments that were going on!"

For more details of the Open Night, contact the School on 553 4665.

JEWELLERY OF THE FUTURE

Youngsters took to the catwalk in July to stage a fashion show at Tipton Sports Academy. Year 6 children from Lodge, Newtown and Oakham Primary Schools exhibited jewellery for the 21st century which they designed and made themselves.



Chris Perry, a Design and Technology Association (DATA) Leading Primary School teacher, visited all three schools to look at existing types of jewellery and show the children how to make jewellery using gold, silver, wire and precious stones. The Year 6 teachers carried on the design process, while teachers from George Salter and St Michael's High Schools helped with the jewellery making.

Chris said: "This is a unique project to push the boundaries of learning and help Year 6 children from different schools prepare for Year 7 next year."

COME & JOIN IN

Are you retired? Have you got lots of interest and enthusiasm? They're the only qualifications you need to join Sandwell's University of the Third Age (U3A).



Launched in January, the U3A has proved so popular that a range of special interest groups have been launched including Literature, Criminology, Computers, Music, Strolling and Outings. The groups meet at different times across the whole of West Bromwich and offer a great chance to learn in a relaxed and friendly environment.

Plans are now underway to set up a Local History group and the U3A would love to hear from seniors who could help get this group going. The U3A meets on the second Monday of every month at Wesley Church, High Street, West Bromwich at 2.00pm.

Call Bob Tidmarsh, Older People's Learning Champion for West Bromwich on 07939 226193 to find out more.

LEARNING IS FUN

Have you received your 'Greets Green Learning is Fun' leaflet? It's full of information about more than 50 local courses - and most are free for Greets Green residents.

If you've not yet seen the leaflet, pick up a copy from your local learning centre or library or call Marcia or Jim on 525 6457 and 6671 who will post one to you.



RACE EQUALITY SANDWELL

Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing / Regeneration Advice Surgeries to support:

- The BME community
- Vulnerable or intimidated victims of crime or racial harassment / discrimination
- High risk groups eg mental health sufferers, disabled people, women, asylum seekers, refugees, travellers and young people

Free & confidential service.

If you'd like further information, or to make an appointment, please contact Bhavnita on 541 1775.

GROUPS WIN AWARDS

Congratulations to all the Greets Green groups who received awards in the West Bromwich Town Assembly Community Recognition Awards 2005.

West Bromwich Town Team and The Sandwell Community Empowerment Network (SCEN) staged the Awards in June at Bethel Convention Centre to recognise the excellent voluntary work which groups carry out in the community.

Stephen Gabriel from West Bromwich Town Team said: "The Awards are a small gesture to recognise the important work of volunteers in the West Bromwich area. We are extremely fortunate to have a thriving voluntary and community sector, serving a diverse community."

Groups from the Greets Green area which won Awards are:

- George Salter Over 50s.**
- Krishna Community Forum.**
- Swan Village Action Group.**
- New Horizons Fellowship for the Disabled.**
- Turton Road Children's Garden Project.**
- Bethel Christian Fellowship Group.**
- Sunny Lodge Elderly Group.**

To find out more about West Bromwich Town Team, call 569 4635.



Forging international links

Pupils at Lyng Primary School have been comparing where they live with youngsters in Holland and coming up with some great ideas for the future.

The children used video cameras to produce a film which looked at ways their community could be improved. Supported by Greets Green Partnership and Sandwell Council's Housing Strategy Department, the project enabled children to compare the Lyng environment - which is undergoing regeneration - with Alphen aan den Rijn in Holland via email links and a video swap with The Kameleon School.

Teacher, Daniel Kelly said: "We found it fascinating that areas in other countries are also facing times of change. Students came up with some good ideas about how they want to see their area improved."

The video created by the youngsters was shown at a special assembly attended by Sandwell's Mayor and all the pupils' ideas are being forwarded to Housing Strategy.

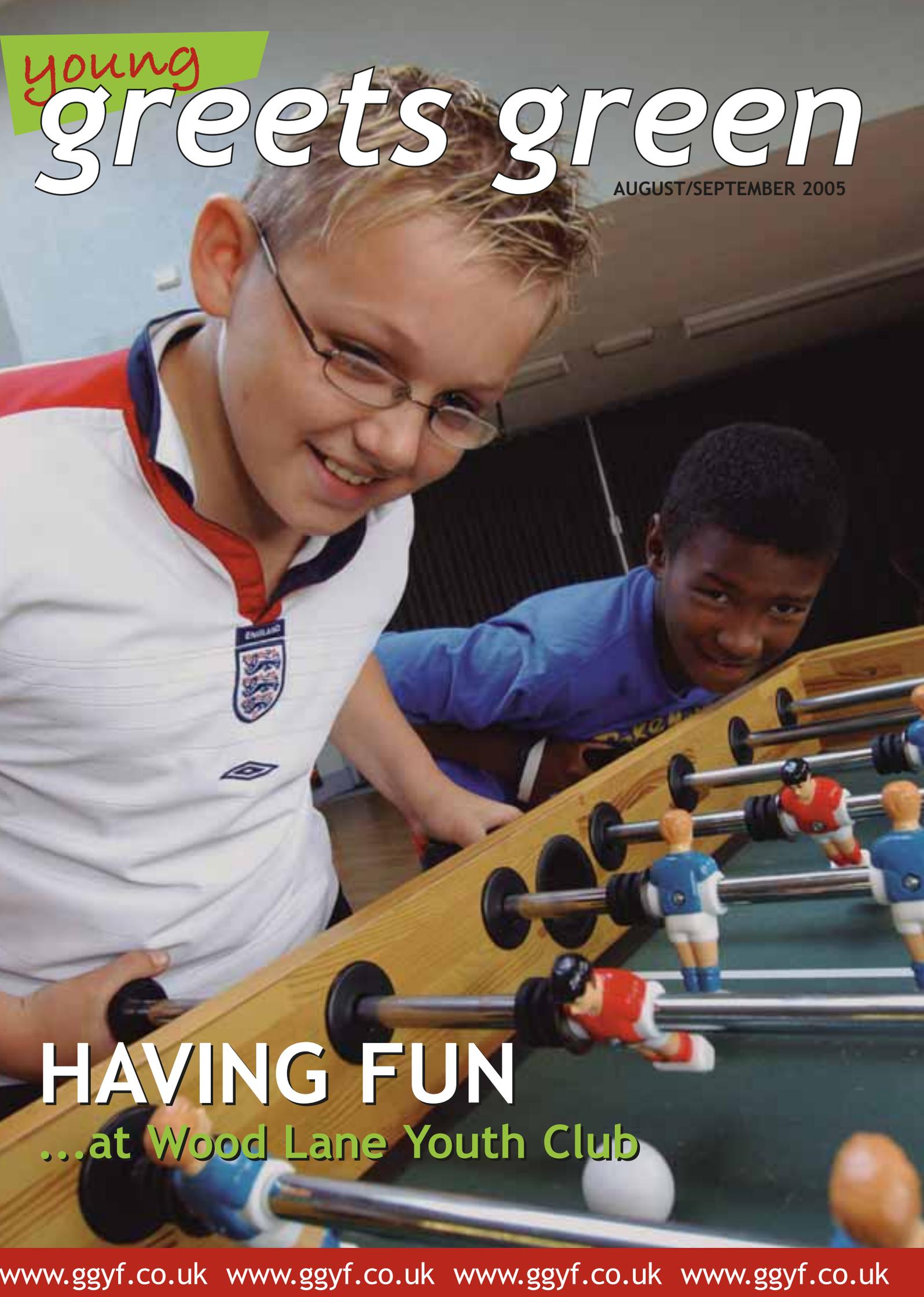
Watch out next issue for our report on Lodge School's contribution to this project.

Flip magazine for 'Young Greets Green'

young

greet's green

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2005

A photograph of two young boys playing table football. The boy in the foreground is wearing glasses and a white England football jersey with a red collar and a crest. He is smiling and looking down at the game. The boy in the background is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and is also smiling. They are both leaning over a wooden table football table. The table has several metal rods with small plastic figures of football players attached to them. A white ball is visible on the green surface of the table.

HAVING FUN

...at Wood Lane Youth Club

WE'RE A STRONG TEAM!

The Greets Green Youth Forum team literally lives and breathes youth work. They're so enthusiastic that the Youth Forum is moving forward at a rapid pace with new ideas, activities and initiatives all starting up. So, who are the people driving everything forward?

PAUL

Following recent changes, Project Manager, Paul Arrowsmith now has full control of the Youth Forum team and has spent lots of time writing a long term plan with Jay which says how the Youth Forum is going to develop and grow over the next five years. He says: "The Youth Forum is going so fast at the moment that we're having to hold onto the reins!"



"We've got a really good team who all want to make this a huge success. We want to become a whole youth project in the future and get lots of different local agencies on board so that we can provide support with every single thing which young people identify as an issue – crime and community safety, education, peer mentors, sports development, drugs awareness – the list goes on.

"It's very exciting, it's our vision. The work we do can continue for generations to come as today's young people can pass what they've learnt onto their children and so on. We're doers and we're going to make this happen."

JAY



Jay Alexander is the Senior Youth Development Worker and he's been with the Youth Forum for a year and a half now. His aim is to see as many young people as possible get involved in the Youth Forum and is always looking at ways to develop it so it can become even better.

"We've become much more than just the Youth Forum we started off as," he says. "We've become a whole youth team with the Youth Forum at the heart. What we're now doing is so much bigger than the Forum – we're reaching hundreds of young people throughout Greets Green through all our work in the community."

Holly, Amanda, Jasmin, Andy & Sammy

The team of five sessional workers are also familiar faces throughout Greets Green. They've been meeting young people on the streets and finding out what they want to see in their area and what the issues are. You'll often see them at Wood Lane Youth Club on a Wednesday night or around the area. Tell them what you like or don't like and they'll see what can be done to improve things.



NABEEL

Lots of people now recognise Youth Buzz Driver and Youth Worker, Nabeel Saleh Audhali. He starred on the front of the last magazine and, since then, he's been busy getting the Youth Buzz ready to hit the streets.

"We're now on the road and I'm creating a timetable of

where the Youth Buzz will be so that people can come along and enjoy the games and activities," says Nabeel. "Locals have already been stopping the bus when they see it and asking if they can take a look around. I love showing them how great it is on board."

LORRAINE

The voice you'll now hear when you call the Youth Forum belongs to Lorraine Bryson. She's the new Administrative Officer who's keeping the whole team organised!

She works at the Youth Forum office at George Salter High School from 10.00am – 2.00pm Monday to Friday and answers the phone, undertakes all the administrative work, makes sure the rest of the team knows which meetings they have to go to and generally keeps the office in order.

"I live in Great Barr just 10 minutes away so this job is ideal," Lorraine explains. "My little boy, Declan will start school in September and I also have a two year daughter called Niamh so the hours suit me. The team's great and I'm able to develop the job how I like."



Want to get more involved?
Call Greets Green Youth Forum
on 525 9509 and get the ball
rolling!

Don't get bored this Summer, get active!

Greets Green Youth Forum has a FREE action-packed Summer programme which runs till 2nd September:

Tuesdays: canoeing, kayaking and archery at Ackers, Birmingham from 11.00am – 2.00pm. Meet at George Salter High School.

Wednesdays: bowling from 1.00 – 4.00pm at Wood Lane Youth Club (50p charge). Meet at Wood Lane Community Centre.

Thursdays: Water World Mystery Tours and barge trips all day (times vary). Meet at George Salter High School.

Fridays: Telford Ice Rink and Telford Park all day, 10.00am – 5.00pm. Meet at George Salter High School.

The times listed are when the coaches actually leave George Salter High School. You must phone in advance to confirm the details and let us know you are coming. Please arrive in plenty of time. Call the Youth Forum on 525 9509 to book your place now!



WORKING TOGETHER

Greets Green Youth Forum enjoys such a close relationship with George Salter High School that the team decided to present their National New Deal for Communities Achievement Award to the School to be displayed in reception for all to see.

"We're delighted the Youth Forum is based at our site," explained John Nicholson, Extended Schools Co-ordinator at George Salter. "They fit in perfectly with the school's agenda for Extended Schools which means using the school for activities out of usual school hours."

The Youth Forum:

- Supports the School's fun days and events such as the Cultural Event in June.
- Runs a really successful Sk8 Park at the School each Saturday.
- Katie Flint works in the School's Learning Support Centre and trains with the sessional workers.
- Offers support to any pupils who need it, especially at exam time.
- Works with the School's pastoral managers who identify pupils we can help in an informal way.
- Promotes the School's events to the wider community.
- Helps the School achieve Extended Schools status.
- Tries to resolve any issues pupils have by listening and taking action.

Kids' TV show, Wacky Races, may have been before your time, but it was brought back to life in June for local primary school children.

Students on the Higher Sports Leaders course at Sandwell College gave children a day to remember when they organised a fantastic Wacky Races day at Tipton Sports Academy.

"The students have to organise an event as one of their modules and they decided to go for a fun event and invite Year 5 children from all the local primary schools to take part," said Jim Stott, Team Leader for Sport at Sandwell College.

"They spoke to the schools, organised transport, created the whole idea for the event and made sure everything went smoothly on the day."

Children recreated the teams from the TV show such as the Anthill Mob and took part in silly races involving lots of water and sponges, and ending with a huge relay race around the track.

FEELING WACKY





If you're not going along to Wood Lane Youth Club on a Wednesday night, you're definitely missing out.

Around 30 – 40 young people are heading down there each week to try out the dance mats, play pool, get the top scores on the X-Box and hang out with friends.

If you're aged 7-12, the Youth Club runs from 5.00 – 7.00pm and if you're aged 13-19, go along from 7.15 – 9.15pm.

i Each session only costs 50p. Call Jay Alexander on 07974 921432 to find out more, or just call in next Wednesday!

"I like it, its better than playing outside and this bus is good too. We're all mates here and it's good to hang out with your mates."



GREAT NIGHT OUT



"It's bad, better than last time, better games like PS2, X-Box and the Bus is here and that's wicked!"



MAKING IT REAL

Local children have been having a go at creating their own communities recently.

During May and June, the WorkWise project funded pupils in Years 5 and 6 at all five Greets Green Primary Schools – Newtown, Guns Village, Ryders Green, Lodge and Lyng to try out the “Make It Real” game.

Pupils take on different roles and work together in small groups to build a community. They start by creating and naming their town and local neighbourhoods before locating key public buildings and choosing and planning housing and transport. They then form a small company, hire staff, find offices and carry out an assignment as a business team.

“The pupils began to understand the services and jobs that make up a town,” explained Fiona Stone from Sandwell Education Business Partnership’s WorkWise Project. “Plus, they found out how important education and qualifications are in getting jobs.”



Pupils from Newtown Primary display the map of their new town.

Contact WorkWise on 569 2347.

FUTURE VISION

Pupils’ imaginations have been running wild at Ryders Green Primary School.

The Year 6 pupils spent three days planning how they’d like to see the Claypit Lane / Wattle Road area developed in years to come. The Council’s Housing Strategy Department worked with the School in conjunction with the University of Central England (UCE) to create the project which resulted in pupils presenting their model for the future to the Mayor of Sandwell.

To coincide with Architecture Week in June, UCE Architecture and Landscape Architecture students shared their ideas and worked with the pupils on an ambitious model.

The pupils’ vision for the future even included a recycling turtle – a turtle shaped building where rubbish goes in one end and comes out as new products at the other!

“We looked at books and magazines for ideas and the children worked in small groups to make models of buildings they’d like to see around the area,” explained teacher, Mrs Wood. “We then put them all together to make a whole community with football pitches, bike tracks, hills and gardens.”



KEEP IT SAFE!

Why make it so simple for someone to steal your mobile phone?

Mobile phone theft is a serious offence which carries a maximum sentence of five years’ imprisonment. But, people are still doing it because it’s quick and easy to snatch a phone if someone’s wandering along the street with it on display.

Take these simple steps to stop yourself becoming the next victim.

- Keep your mobile in a hidden place and try not to use it while walking along the street. If you make or answer a call, do it inside.
- Put your phone on silent when you’re out and about so that thieves aren’t aware you’ve got one.
- If a stranger asks you the time, don’t look at your phone but at your watch.
- Mark your mobile with your postcode using a security pen.
- Each phone has a unique IMEI number. Write down the number in a safe place so that your phone can be traced if it’s stolen.

If your mobile is stolen, contact your phone company immediately so they can block any calls.