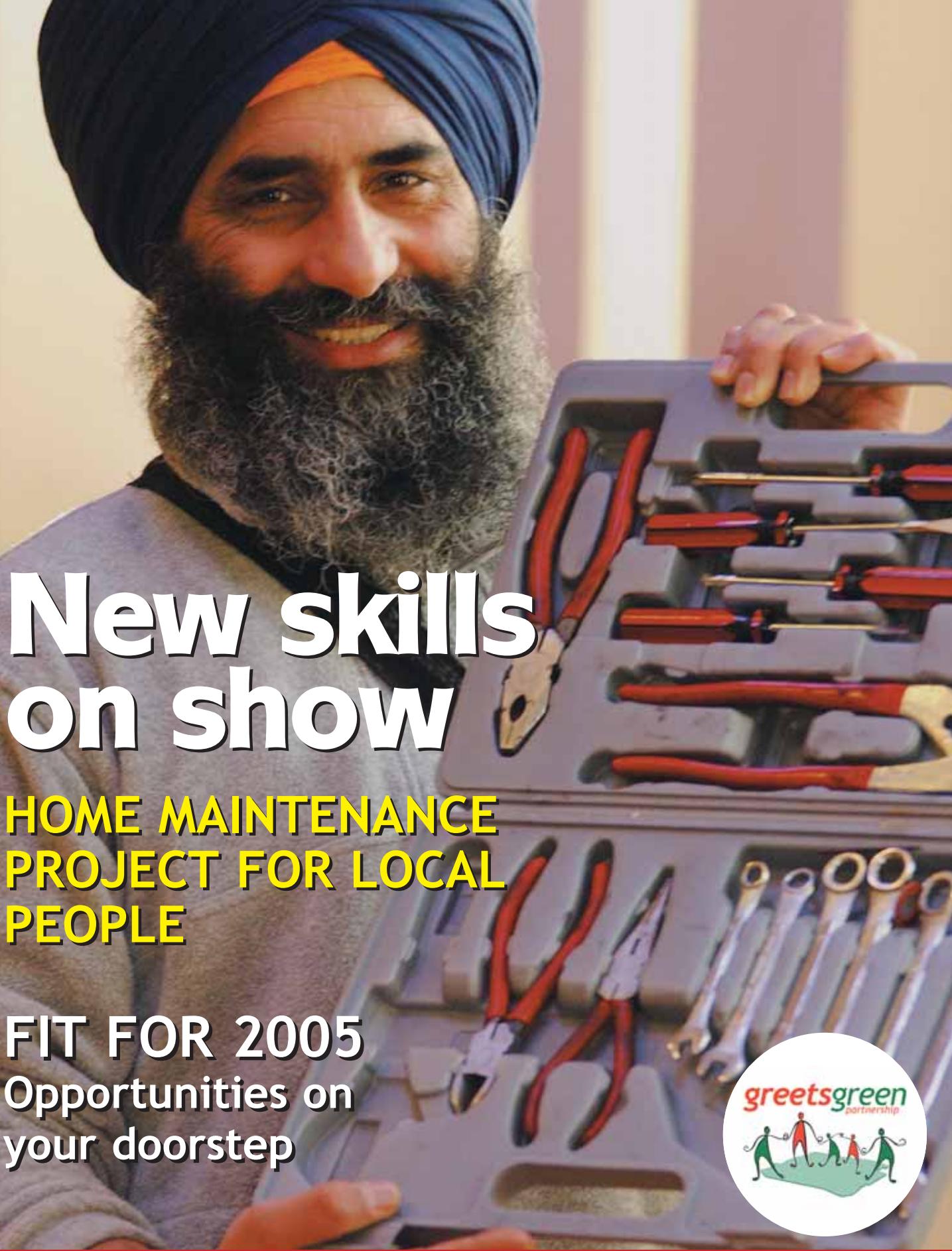


# greets green

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2005



## New skills on show

**HOME MAINTENANCE  
PROJECT FOR LOCAL  
PEOPLE**

**FIT FOR 2005**  
Opportunities on  
your doorstep



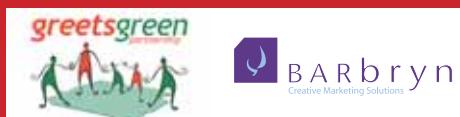
Front cover: Plumbing, carpentry and plastering are just some of the DIY skills Narinder Singh has learnt through the Greets Green Home Maintenance Project. He's now got a job as a caretaker at the Guru Nanak Community Centre.

The Greets Green magazine is distributed to every household in the New Deal for Communities area, and to other NDC's 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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Produced on behalf of Greets Green Partnership by  
Barbry Ltd

এ তথ্যাদি অনুবাদে আপনার সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হলে,  
দয়া করে ইংরেজী জানেন এমন একজন বক্তু বা  
আতীয়কে আমাদেরকে 0800 953 0215 এ  
নাশ্বারে ফোন করতে বলুন।

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0800 953 0215 ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਟੈਲੀਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਰੋ।

اگر ان معلومات کے ترجمے میں آپ کو مدد کا رہو تو انگریزی  
بولنے والے کسی دوست یا گھر کے کسی فرد سے کہیں کہ وہ ہم سے  
پر بات کرے۔  
**0800 953 0215**

إن رغبتم بالحصول على مساعدة على ترجمة هذه المعلومات يرجى أن تطلبوا من صديق أو من أحد أفراد الأسرة من يتحدثون اللغة الإنجليزية الاتصال بنا على  
. 0800 953 0215

# Welcome

Welcome to issue 16 of the Greets Green Magazine, which is packed with information on local projects and opportunities which could make a difference to your life.

If you're planning to get fitter and healthier this year then the 'Fit for 2005' feature starting on page 4 is a must. And if you've been thinking about turning your hand to DIY take a look at the centre pages and find out about the Home Maintenance Project which has just received funding for a further three years.

Regular features include information on two community celebrations – Eid and Easter; news of the latest happenings at Greets Green Partnership; 'Greet News' with its round-up of Partnership and Community news and 'Young Greets Green' at the back of the magazine, featuring what's happening for young people in the area.

You'll also read about Neighbourhood Warden, Colin Cooke, who sadly passed away in December. Colin was a truly outstanding man and our tribute goes some way towards showing how he made a difference to the lives of local people. Our thoughts and best wishes go to his wife and family.

Finally, please remember, we want to hear from you. If you're part of a local group and have a story to tell – please get in touch. And if you've got an idea for a story, a competition or you just want to give us some feedback on the magazine, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

**Happy reading!**

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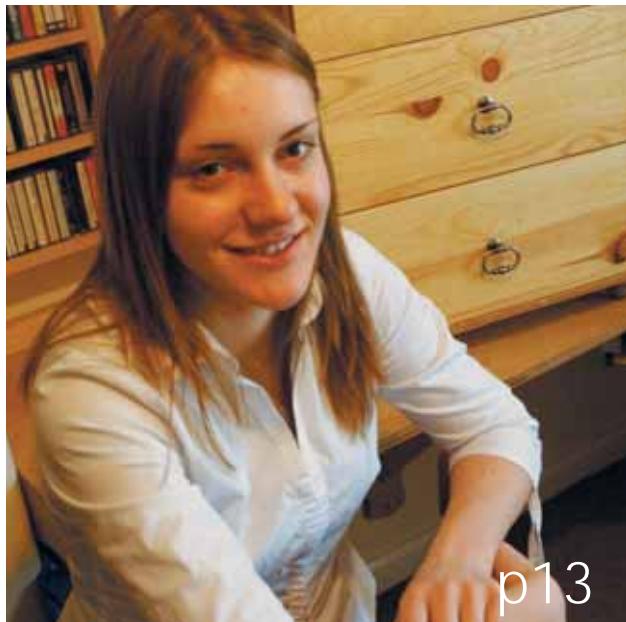
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**0800 953 0215**

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# FIT FOR 2005!

Don't think of 2005 as just another year. Why not make it the start of the rest of your life by taking some real steps to improve your health, fitness and happiness? Here are just some of the many opportunities on your doorstep.



## TRY OUT THE HEALTHY REC

**A brand new recipe booklet produced by the YMCA offers plenty of food for thought. Pick up your booklet from the YMCA Café where you can also sample some of the delicious healthy dishes included in it.**

The YMCA Café is part of Sandwell's Healthy Living Network and is one of five community cafes in Sandwell which are making healthy choices easier for local people. The Café actively promotes the national 'five a day' message.

"We try to offer something for everyone at the Café," said Louise Carr, Head Cook. "We've lots of delicious healthy options available every day and we have special pensioners' meals on Monday to Fridays. Come on down!"



YMCA Café INFO

Address: West Bromwich & District YMCA, 38 Carters Green

Open: Monday 10am - 5pm  
Tuesday 10am - 7pm  
Wednesday 10am - 6pm  
Thursday 10am - 7pm  
Friday 10am - 5pm

Tel: **524 1970** (YMCA reception)  
or **524 1964** (YMCA Cafe) to find out more.

# FORTIES FOOD

**Older people enjoyed sharing their wartime stories and comparing food then and now at a special event at the YMCA in December.**

It was one of five events organised by The Public in conjunction with Sandwell Healthy Living Partnership to raise awareness of local Community Cafés while gaining stories for the BBC's website, 'The People's War'.

In addition to providing a healthy meal which focused on '5 a day', the event brought together non profit-making organisations which provide services for older people including Agewell, Warmzone and Shopmobility.

The Public is currently discussing future projects with the BBC including VE day street parties.



## TOMATO & PEPPER SOUP

**Tomato & Pepper Soup is just one of the simple, healthy recipes you'll find in the YMCA recipe booklet.**

### INGREDIENTS:

- 3 tbsp oil
- 2 cored, de-seeded & chopped red peppers
- 1 small onion, peeled & chopped
- 1 garlic clove, peeled & chopped
- 1 can (400g) chopped tomatoes
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 750ml vegetable stock
- Basil

### METHOD:

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan. Add the red peppers and onion and fry gently for 5 minutes. Add the garlic, tomatoes, tomato puree and stock and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and cook gently for 2 minutes.
2. Blend the mixture in two batches in a food processor, adding some basil with each batch. Return to the saucepan and re-heat gently, seasoning to taste.
3. Ladle into bowls and serve with rolls or bread.



## Food in 1942

- Adults had a weekly ration of 3oz of cheese.
- The monthly ration was 3 eggs.
- At Christmas the tea ration doubled and sugar increased.
- Fruit and vegetables were not on ration, but were only available in season as almost all were home grown. Some items, such as oranges were reserved for children and pregnant women.
- The Dig for Victory campaign led to vegetable plots being created in parks and school fields so that people could grow their own fruit and veg.
- More unusual meats were eaten such as horsemeat and whale.
- Leftovers and peelings went into communal 'pig bins' to feed chickens and pigs on local farms.

## Getting active in Greets Green

### There's lots of ways you can become more active!

#### HEALTH WALKS

– these are group walks led by volunteers. You're encouraged to walk at your own pace in a fun and sociable environment. For more details on the walks and how to become a walk leader, contact Lindsay Manford on 500 1651.

#### CYCLING

– increase your confidence on a bike by learning to cycle in a similar way to driving lessons. Available for complete beginners or those wanting more confidence in heavy rush hour traffic. To find out more, contact Dene Stevens on 500 1660.

#### HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

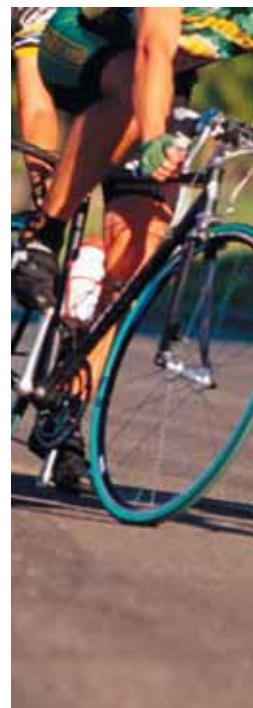
– the closest centre to find out your health and fitness status and to get a personalised exercise plan is the YMCA. Call to make an appointment on 524 1950.

#### GP REFERRAL

– if you have a medical condition that could be controlled by exercise, you can be referred by your GP surgery for exercise. Contact Helen Brock on 500 1645 for more details.

#### GENTLE EXERCISE CLASSES

– ideal for the elderly and less able people of all ages. There are numerous classes in the area so give Cathy Ferriday a call on 500 1664 to find one suitable for you.



# GET HOME SAFETY HELP

**Even more help and advice with safety in the home is now being offered to local people following the appointment of new Development Worker, Flo Reynolds, to the Child Home Safety Project.**



In the October/November issue we featured how the Project has already provided many families with young children in Greets Green with free equipment such as fire guards, stair gates and door catches. More than 30 residents who read the article contacted the Project and are now receiving their own safety equipment. Don't miss out!

Now Flo plans to broaden the Project to work with other local organisations to offer home safety advice and equipment.

"Our project is already working with West Bromwich Fire Station to offer free Fire Home Safety Risk Assessments (HFRA)," explained Flo. "The fire fighters visit homes and look for hazards which could potentially cause a fire or prevent escape."

"We've given out a lot of equipment but when I visited one home, they had baby



clothes drying on their fire guard which is a major fire risk, so we need to make people more aware of the dangers."

Flo, who was previously a nurse at Sandwell General Hospital, has plenty of experience in community based work, having been involved in equal opportunities in the health service, in NVO assessments and in career development.

Based at OSCAR in Lodge Road, Flo is keen for anyone with a B70 or B71 postcode who has children under five, to get in touch and take advantage of the free home safety equipment and advice available.

**i** A new Administration Assistant, Adele Downs, has also joined the Project, so when Flo isn't around, Adele will be there to help. Call Flo or Adele on 525 0556 for more information.



## OBE HONOUR

**Dr Kishori Agrawal has been awarded a prestigious OBE in the New Year's Honours List for her services to health care.**

**Dr Agrawal, who is based at Oakwood Health Centre on Izons Road, came to Sandwell in 1993 but has worked in health care all her life.**

**"The OBE was a complete surprise," she says. "It's the most precious thing for me."**

**Sally Sandel, Health Development Facilitator, provides the answers to your healthy living questions.**

**Q** I've heard lots of different information about alcohol. What are the current safe drinking levels?

**A** Twice as many people are dying as a direct result of drinking too much alcohol compared with the end of the '70s according to figures released by Alcohol Concern. The Department of Health advises that women can drink 2-3 units of alcohol per day and men 3-4 units a day without damaging their health. As a rough guide to what you're drinking:

- 1 pint of beer contains 2 units
- A 25ml measure of spirits contains 1 unit
- A 175ml glass of wine contains 2 units
- A 330 ml alcopop contains 1 to 2 units
- A 440 ml can of strong lager contains 3 units

Decide your limit before you go out and stick to it. Avoid rounds, pace yourself and go for lower alcoholic longer drinks. If you're planning to drink, leave your car at home. If you're worried about yours or someone else's drinking, call Drinkline on 0800 917 8282 or The Aquarius Sandwell Alcohol Advice Centre on 525 9292. Alcohol Concern has a booklet, 'Say When...How Much Is Too Much?' – call 020 7922 8667 for a copy.



**Q** I know I should exercise more, but what is the recommended amount of exercise to keep me fit and healthy?

**A** In the UK, about two thirds of adults are now overweight and 22% of these are obese, meaning their weight is putting their health at risk. People who lead an active life are much less likely to gain weight than those who spend most of their day sitting in front of a computer or in the car. Regular exercise can help control your weight and improve fitness, reducing your risk of problems such as heart disease and diabetes. It's recommended that adults undertake a minimum of 30 minutes' moderate physical activity at least 5 days a week. This can be accumulated throughout the day eg a walk to work or school plus digging the garden. Moderate means getting slightly warm and slightly out of breath eg a brisk walk. Children should try and do a total of 60 minutes a day. There are many physical activities available in Greets Green. Call Sally on 500 2488 for more information.

**Q** Why should I eat a balanced diet and how can I fit it into my daily routine?

**A** Keeping your diet balanced helps ensure your body and mind get the nutrients they need to stay healthy, alert and active. A healthy diet also helps to reduce your risk of health problems.

Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables - at least 5 portions a day. These can be fresh, frozen, canned or dried. To fill you up and give you energy, eat bread, cereals and potatoes. Also add some meat, fish, eggs, pulses eg kidney beans, dahl and lentils to your diet. Milk and dairy foods are important, but try lower fat varieties. Sugary and fatty foods contain a lot of calories, so cut down on these if you are watching your weight. Don't add too much salt. Ready made foods eg sauce mixes, soups and curries already contain a lot of salt. A balanced diet doesn't have to be difficult, expensive or boring if you follow these basic rules. Look out for the Food Interest Group (FIG) in the YMCA where you can ask about food for health and try new foods. Contact Rosemary Kyle, PCT Food Policy Advisor on 500 1630.

**Q** Is smoking that bad for me and what is available to help me to give up?

**A** All your healthy behaviour means little if you continue to smoke. 120,000 people per year die from smoking-related diseases in the UK. It's said that every cigarette you smoke could shorten your life by 14 minutes. If you're thinking about stopping smoking, talk to an expert eg helplines, NHS specialist centres, pharmacists or your GP. Find out if Nicotine Replacement Therapy or Zyban would be right for you. Get your friends and family involved as they can give you moral support. Call the NHS Smoking Helpline on 0800 169 0169. Sandwell Stop Smoking Service also runs a support group on Wednesday evenings at Wood Lane Community Centre. Call 607 3337 for more information.

If you would like any more information, Sally can be contacted on 500 2488 / 07779 337145

**With line-dancing dogs,  
outdoor ice skating, choirs, bands,  
drummers, stalls, a Beacon FM roadshow,  
costumed characters and even snow....the Greets  
Green Community Festival took the area by storm  
on 4th December.**

The Memorial Gardens attracted people of all ages from noon till night! The event marked the official switch on of nearly 3,000 Carters Green Traders Festive Lights by the Mayor of Sandwell, Councillor Linda Turton and they shone bright from the Memorial Gardens to Carters Green Clock Tower.

Balvinder Paul, Secretary of the Greets Green Events Steering Group, which planned the whole event, said:  
"It was a brilliant chance to get everyone together and celebrate the start of the festive season.

"There was so much going on, it couldn't fail to be a huge success."

# community festival fun

**It is with great sadness that we report the death of Neighbourhood Warden, Colin Cooke, who made such a difference to so many people's lives throughout the area.**



## AN OUTSTANDING MAN

**Colin was a Warden in Greets Green since the scheme was first launched in December 2002. "He was the embodiment of what a Community Warden should be," said Senior Warden, Neil Woodfield. "He was always willing to help, always had information to give and always knew the number to contact. His dedication to his job was exemplary and his pursuit of a result, indefatigable."**

"His work with the BME residents of our community was without parallel. The people he helped on a personal level will never forget his effort. His endeavours changed people's lives forever and he most probably saved a few as well."

When Sulaiman Uddin joined the Neighbourhood Wardens, Colin teamed up with him and the pair reached the heart of every community, taking on people's concerns and achieving results.

"We were able to break down the barriers because I have the language skills to translate what people in the different communities need and Colin had the tenacity not to let a problem drop until he had found a solution," explained Sulaiman.

"When he met a disabled resident who couldn't leave the house because he hadn't got a wheelchair, Colin phoned everywhere until he got a wheelchair and gave it to him."

*"Colin was an outstanding and extremely communicative person. His familiar presence was always reassuring. One knew that Colin was about and on the job – no fuss, no worries. His reliability was what made Colin so popular."*

Mr M F Bari, Grange Road resident

*"Colin was a very familiar face at the YCA. If we did give him a problem to deal with, he would be on the case straight away and back the next day to give us the news. In his work he did so much to bring all the communities together."*

Salem Ahmed, Development Manager, Yemeni Community Association

Colin was so well known in the community that he was always stopped while out on patrol by people who knew him by name. "The community loved him so much and he would help anyone and everyone," says Sulaiman. "People were praying for him at the Mosque when they heard of his death."

As a result of their work, Colin and Sulaiman received a Community Champions Award from the Yemeni Community Association and certificates from The Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations for helping with their community.

An outstanding Neighbourhood Warden, Colin had a superb memory for contact numbers, names and incidents and was always extremely well prepared. He was unstoppable in his work, he never gave up until he got things done. People Greets Green-wide will have heard him ask 'Just as a matter of interest...' before really getting to the bottom of an issue which others would have forgotten long before. Greets Green born and bred, Colin transformed many lives in the community he grew up in and he will be sorely missed by all.



### We're indebted to him

**Jokki Uddin and his wife will never forget the help Colin gave them.**

"Colin was very very helpful and we will be indebted to him for the rest of our lives," says Jokki. "Our son, Johil, was six months old and very sick when we first met Colin. Johil had chronic breathing problems and heart problems and our damp house was making him a lot worse."

"Colin helped us get a new house and now Johil only has oxygen at night. Colin explained to the housing people what our problems were. We couldn't explain it so well. We'll never forget Colin."

*Thank you to everyone who sent in tributes. We received so many we were unable to publish them all.*

## YOUNGSTERS GET VOCAL

**As the Greets Green Vocal Skills project reaches its first anniversary, it is celebrating seeing more than 300 pupils from five local primary schools and George Salter High School get in tune thanks to weekly vocal tuition, supported by specialist Sandwell Youth Music staff.**

More than 200 youngsters came together in a massed choir and performed for parents and friends at West Bromwich Town Hall in the Summer term. Then in the Autumn term, each of the primary choirs presented assemblies of both Harvest and Christmas songs for the whole school and for visiting parents.

The project aims to support pupils as they move from primary to secondary school and the success of Vocal Skills was seen when massed choirs from Newtown Primary and George Salter High School performed at the Greets Green Community Festival in December.

Plans are well underway for more community performances and a Town Hall concert in July.

### Pre-School Music

Sandwell Youth Music, which believes that singing lies at the heart of music learning, is now supporting Greets Green Partnership in developing music making activities for pre-school children, parents and staff in Greets Green. Activity sessions have already been held at Ryders Green Nursery, the YMCA and Sandwell College crèche. Watch out for more details!



## SATURDAY SCHOOL SUCCESS

### Going to school on a Saturday is proving a big hit for George Salter High School.

Launched a year ago, the Saturday School runs each week during term time and approximately 80 year 11 students come along to enjoy breakfast followed by a day of study.

All subjects are covered on a rota basis and students learn in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. "Pupils feel that they can cover more in their time at Saturday School as they are not confined to hour-long lessons," said Paul Clayton, Assistant Head Teacher.

"The scheme has already attracted both local and national attention and The Government's Innovation Unit has named it as an example of best practice on their website."

**i** To contact George Salter High School, call 553 4665.

## Homes caught on film

**Local school children have been taking a closer look at where they live with all their work set to become valuable archive material for generations to come.**

The 'Where I Live' project is being run by Click! Greets Green and Urban Form to encourage youngsters to record how they perceive their own community.

As part of the geography curriculum, children from Ryders Green, Lodge and Lyng primary schools are creating films all about their neighbourhood. A video conference will then be staged between two schools at a time so that the children can share their work. A mosaic project has also been launched in conjunction with George Salter High School.

Children from Years 3 and 4 at Ryders Green Primary enjoyed a tour of the High School's art department before creating individual clay tiles which will form a mosaic depicting their interpretation of where they live. Youngsters from Newtown, Lodge and Lyng, are also taking part in the project.

"Greets Green will be changing in the years to come so the videos and mosaics will provide a lasting record of the area," said Mollie McPherson, Education Project Manager for Urban Form.

## POETIC JUSTICE

### Budding film makers are making their first edit at George Salter High School.

Working with Artists from Creative Partnerships, youngsters of all ages are developing 'film poems' aimed at boosting their literacy skills. The pupils are looking at how images, words and sound go together to make meaning in movies by learning to produce and edit films to accompany poetry. All films will be shown at a community event in the Summer and will form part of a national conference.

# IT'S GGREAT IN GREETS GREEN!

Local traders and businesses can look forward to GGREAT times ahead with the opening of a brand new facility on the High Street.



Greets Green Retail Enterprise & Training (GGREAT) opened on 25th January at 393a High Street above Billingham's Interflora to provide help and support to all traders and businesses in the Greets Green area. Launched in January by Greets Green Traders' Association thanks to funding from Greets Green Partnership, GGREAT will be helping new businesses get off the ground, offering training to meet local people's needs and providing office and meeting space.

Robert Stokes, Chair of Greets Green Traders' Association, said: "Our aim is to support all traders and businesses in the area so that we have a thriving retail and business community. We hope that the organisation will become self-financing in 12 months."

GGREAT's premises can cater for up to 70 people and are available for

**Want to be a bricklayer, plasterer, carpenter, plumber - or all of these?**

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Are you working?                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Are you over 30?                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Want to learn new skills?              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Are you hardworking?                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Want to work in the building industry? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

We're currently looking at ways to help residents take advantage of future work opportunities in the building industry - but first we need to know how many people could be interested.

If you answered yes to all the above questions and would like to find out more, call Kathy Camille on 533 3188.

organisations to rent for meetings, events or regular surgeries. Business Link and the Chamber of Commerce will provide useful help and advice.

To book rooms, discuss training or to find out more about GGREAT, call Robert Stokes on 525 7331.

## CHRISTMAS TREATS

**Christmas brought some unexpected treats for local older people when the Neighbourhood Wardens handed out special hampers at their community surgeries.**

The Wardens collected goodies from shops and residents to create the Christmas hampers. Pictured are Wardens, Tony Vogan and Sulaiman Uddin presenting a hamper to local resident, Mrs Shelton at SWAN.

To contact the Wardens, call 580 4481.



# DO IT YOU

**The Greets Green Home Maintenance Project has proved so successful throughout the area for the past three years, that it has just received a further three years' funding from Greets Green Partnership so even more people can benefit.**

Mark O'Nions (pictured opposite) has been running the project since its launch. With 15 years' experience as a Project Manager for a construction company, he now loves sharing his skills with local people and seeing the achievements they make.

"The Home Maintenance Project is completely free for local people and aims to provide practical advice, support and training in DIY," Mark explains. "Basically, we're hoping to encourage people to do more home maintenance by giving them the skills and lending them the tools they need."

## Practical DIY courses

At present, the Project has a workshop in Phoenix Street which is fully equipped with a carpentry shop, plastering and plumbing facilities so that anyone can come along and learn practical DIY skills.

Courses are run at Sandwell Training Association on anything and everything

to do with DIY – plumbing, plastering, carpentry, painting and decorating – to meet local demand.

"We have to have a minimum of six people to run a one or two day course which provides basic knowledge such as tools, materials and techniques training," added Mark. "If you've got family, friends, work colleagues or are a member of a community group, why not club together and ask for a course to be run just for you?"

## Project help & advice

Once someone has completed a course and feels ready to tackle a project themselves, Mark goes to their home to help out and encourages them to bring friends and neighbours round so that they can learn too.

"I've been helping a man lay a ceramic floor which then led to him fitting a whole new kitchen himself," said Mark. "I also remember helping with a

plumbing job and the man brought so many friends along that we were all squeezed in his bathroom! It was great that they were all keen to learn."

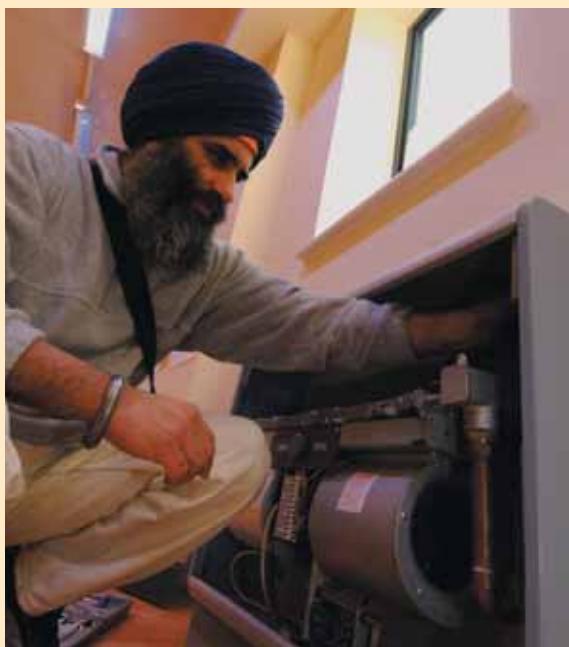
Instead of giving grants to people to bring professionals in, the Home Maintenance Project is designed to enable people to do the work themselves so that they have real pride in their achievements and can use their new skills in the future.

## Tool loan scheme

The Project also runs a community tool loan scheme so that everyone has the right tools for the job. Once residents have joined the scheme they can borrow any basic tools such as paint rollers, tile cutters and screwdrivers or can complete a one day certificated course before being able to borrow power tools.

Plus, a user manual packed with energy saving tips, handy hints and local contacts is given to home owners.

To find out how you can benefit from the Home Maintenance Project, call Mark O'Nions on 525 9277.



## Skills lead to job

**Narinder Singh has learnt so many DIY skills through the Home Maintenance Project that he's now undertaking caretaking work at the Guru Nanak Community Centre.**

"The courses I've done have been really useful and I'd recommend them to everyone," he says. "I've done plumbing, carpentry, plastering and health and safety and am now able to do my own DIY. When the Project moved to new premises, I fitted the kitchen sink, did the plumbing work and laid flooring there."

"I've always had a little bit of DIY knowledge but now I've got so much more. I've got a job as a caretaker and do all the odd jobs at the Guru Nanak Community Centre so that we don't have to call someone out."

"Last night my dad rang me and said one of his radiators was leaking. I was able to go over and stop it leaking and avoid a real problem. That felt really good."

# RSELF

**How many small jobs  
are there around the  
house that never seem  
to get done because you've  
not got the time or money  
to call out a professional or  
the right tools or confidence  
to tackle it yourself?**

**Well, the Home Maintenance  
Project can help!**



## Family learning

**Eighteen year old Anna Turburfield heard about the Home Maintenance Project through her dad.**

Anna explains: "At first, having a go at carpentry was just something to do, but then I found I really enjoyed it.

"I went down to the workshop where I started making a cassette rack while Mark taught me what to do. I then made a chest of drawers for my bedroom. I'd never tried anything like it before and it was all totally new. I'm really pleased with what I've made and would love to learn more now. I wish I had more spare time so I could go to the workshop more often."

Anna's dad has done a number of courses and now helps friends and neighbours with any small jobs which need doing. "I re-pointed the back of the house and used the tool loan scheme to borrow everything I needed - ladders, trowels, angle grinder etc," he says. "The Project is a wonderful facility for the area."





## Better services? YES!

**A new Neighbourhood Manager has just joined the Greets Green Partnership team and is all set to tackle the issues high on local people's agendas. We found out more about Rohit Mistry.**

**Q. What is a Neighbourhood Manager?**

This is a new role which has been created because local people want better services. My main aim is to bring together local service providers and local residents to improve the quality of all services – from rubbish collection to community safety.

**Q. How will you do this?**

I'll be working to develop a co-ordinated approach to service delivery. I'll share details of services which are delivered well and will encourage others to be innovative in how they provide services.

**Q. How are you getting started?**

At present I'm getting to know the area, the services in it and the people who provide them.

**Q. Will you be making a difference to local people?**

Definitely. When the services to the local community improve, the quality of life and the opportunities for local people to progress will also improve.

**Q. What's your background?**

I've lived and worked in Wolverhampton for the last 16 years - mainly in community development work such as supporting local community centres and voluntary organisations. My last job was as a Programme Manager for Sure Start.

If you would like to contact Rohit, give him a call on freephone 0800 953 0215.

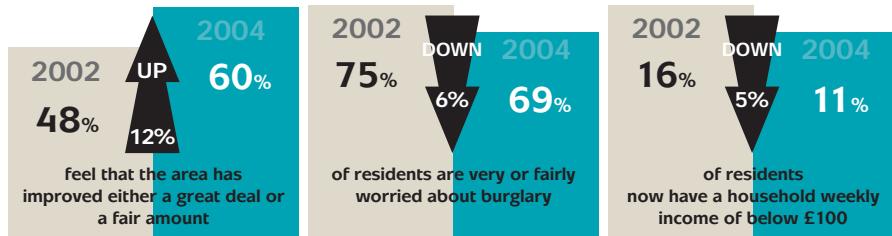
# QUALITY OF LIFE IS GOOD!

## MORI Household Survey – the results!

Is Greets Green Partnership making a difference to the area? To find out, a special independent survey asked those who know – you, the residents!

Every two years, national research agency, MORI carries out a household survey of each New Deal for Communities area – including Greets Green. From June to November last year, a total of 500 households were surveyed to find out what local residents think about a whole host of issues – from the quality of their house to whether they feel safe at night and whether they think the area is getting better.

The survey showed that Greets Green Partnership has made major progress in improving life in the area since the last survey was completed in 2002 and residents are positive about many issues. Here are some of the results highlights.



The survey also looked at how Greets Green Partnership is doing compared to other NDCs around the country. Here are just a couple of the results.



## MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

**Greets Green Partnership is undergoing a big review of its structure to create lots more ways for residents to get involved.**

Some people have said it's difficult to come to meetings in the daytime and others are busy in the evenings so we've taken your comments on board and in future plan to rotate meetings between days, evenings and weekends.

There'll be plenty of opportunities for you to hear about projects coming up for approval and share your views.

**Watch out for more details in the next issue!**

# STARTING TO MOVE

**Greets Green Partnership is already keeping its promises regarding its ambitious Housing Plan which will completely transform Greets Green!**

Change has begun in the Wattle Road, Claypit Lane and Coppice Street area – just a small part of our much bigger plan for the whole of Greets Green.

We promised that every resident in this clearance area would be offered a personal home visit – and we've done it. Our personal home visit team from Greets Green Neighbourhood Office (Sandwell Homes), Sandwell Council and Greets Green Partnership Housing Team, has been busy meeting all residents affected by the redevelopment to fully explain what's happening, to find out their re-housing needs and to answer any questions.

"The personal home visits have gone better than expected," explained William Brindle from Sandwell Council, who's been involved in co-ordinating the home visits.

"We've already completed 173 visits out of a total of 184 and we're receiving positive feedback from residents saying 'thank you' for spending time with us and helping to put our concerns to rest."

Having looked at where residents would like to go to and which property would suit them best, the team is now helping them to move into new properties.

For all the latest information contact the Greets Green Housing Team on freephone 0800 073 0798.



## A New Home

**Karen Charlton and her partner have already moved into their new flat in St George's Place, West Bromwich and she says the move has been 'brilliant'.**

**I** lived in Wattle Road for 14 years. When I first moved in, the area was a lot better and I liked my flat, but it got worse over the years. The road never looked nice and it became run down.

When I heard that I would have to move because my flat was going to be demolished, I was quite happy because of the way the street has gone downhill.

The move to our new two bedroom Jephson flat was great. The removal men turned up dead on time at 9am and they moved everything in one trip. By quarter to 12 we were in our new home. It really is gorgeous round here. The property is lovely and so is the area. Everyone at the Greets Green Neighbourhood Office was really helpful and the move has been brilliant.

## DROP IN advice sessions

**DROP IN**

Call in at any time during the hours listed and find out about the housing plans in Claypit Lane/Wattle Road/Coppice Street.

Every Thursday  
from 6-8pm

Every Tuesday  
from 10am-1pm

All surgeries are held  
at 117 Claypit Lane.

# A TIME OF GOODWILL

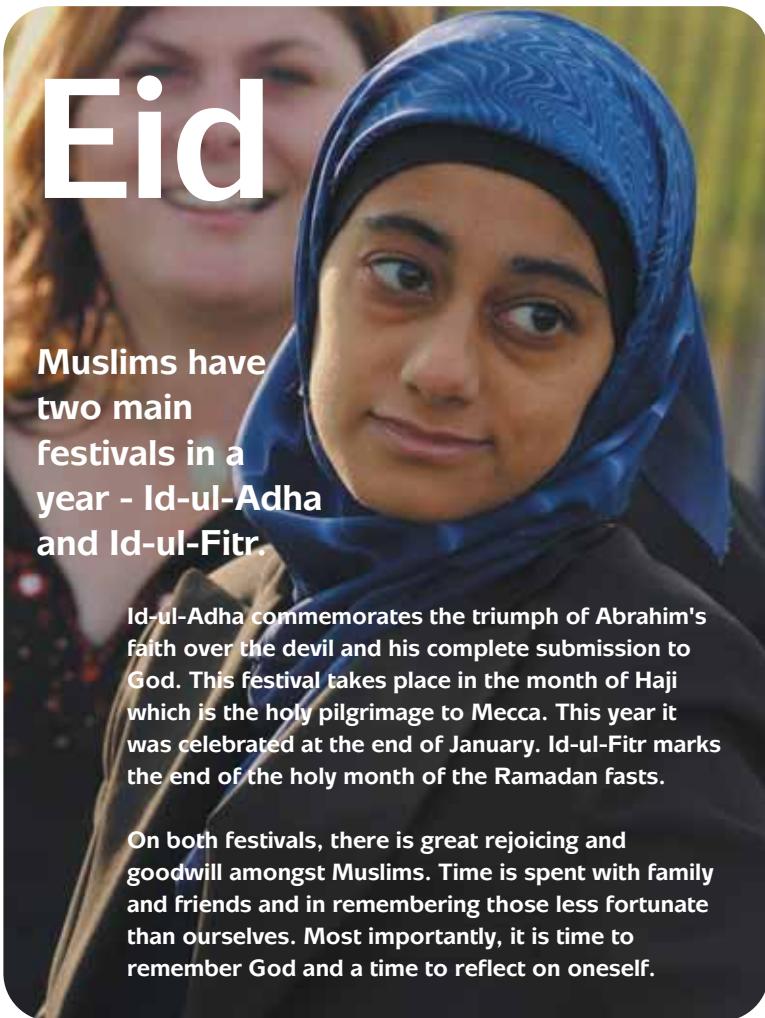
## Easter

**Easter is the Christian celebration of Jesus' return to life or resurrection after his crucifixion on Good Friday. It's usually celebrated on the first Sunday after the full moon following the first day of Spring, which is why the date changes each year.**

Lent is the 40 days prior to Easter Sunday. It begins on Ash Wednesday which gets its name from ashes being put on the foreheads of the faithful to remind them that man is only dust. Lent is a period of fasting or doing without certain foods, prayers and repentance. It reminds us of the 40 days Jesus fasted in the wilderness.

Holy Week is the last week of Lent and begins with Palm Sunday when Jesus entered Jerusalem and the crowd laid carpets of palms on the street for him. The Last Supper of Christ with his disciples is commemorated on Holy Thursday and Friday is the anniversary of the crucifixion. Easter Sunday marks Jesus' resurrection and his ascent into Heaven.

Why do we give eggs? Easter is about Christ coming back to life after death. One of the oldest Spring symbols is the egg because its oval shape is the same as a raindrop and a seed - two important life-giving elements. The egg promises new life.



**Muslims have two main festivals in a year - Id-ul-Adha and Id-ul-Fitr.**

**Id-ul-Adha** commemorates the triumph of Abraham's faith over the devil and his complete submission to God. This festival takes place in the month of Haji which is the holy pilgrimage to Mecca. This year it was celebrated at the end of January. **Id-ul-Fitr** marks the end of the holy month of the Ramadan fasts.

**On both festivals, there is great rejoicing and goodwill amongst Muslims. Time is spent with family and friends and in remembering those less fortunate than ourselves. Most importantly, it is time to remember God and a time to reflect on oneself.**

Two major community celebrations take place towards the beginning of the year – Easter and Eid – but how much do you know about them? We asked the Spring Chicks group for the more mature lady, which meets at SWAN each Thursday, to tell us why Easter is a special time, while Rukhsana Hussain from the Greets Green Pakistani Women's Steering Group describes what Eid is all about.



## Easter to me is...

*"...a religious occasion with the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. I feel that we should celebrate this time of year and I like to make Easter bonnets, send cards and buy my grandchildren Easter eggs. It's a time of prayers to thank the Lord that Jesus died to save us from sins and for us to be believers in God."*

ALICE WHITEHOUSE, CHAIR OF THE SPRING CHICKS

*"...a time of resurrection, new life, new growth. To children it means chocolate eggs, Easter bunnies and hot cross buns; to others, perhaps, a renewal of faith; to others a time of giving."*

FLORENCE PLANT

*"... remembering the Lord, believing in Him and praying to Him to overcome our troubles."*

ELSIE WARING-JONES, SECRETARY

*"...Happy Easter Sunday at church."*

ANNE SHELTON

# BE A LOCAL HERO!

**Your local Neighbourhood Reps have been busy tackling a whole host of issues which people in their community have said they want improving. And now it's time for some new volunteers to come forward as the annual Neighbourhood Rep elections are launched.**

This year, elections are being held for four of the nine area posts. We're looking for residents to stand in:

- Hamblets North
- Lodge Road
- West Bromwich Central
- Oak House North

Neighbourhood Reps are elected on a staggered basis so that new people can find their feet alongside those who have been on the Board a bit longer. That's why we're only holding elections in four of the nine neighbourhoods. Then we'll have further elections next year for the remaining areas.

Greets Green Partnership believes that having local people at the heart of decision making is vital to the area's

success in the future. The Partnership needs to be sure that it is spending money wisely to make a lasting difference and who better to say whether this is the case than residents with first hand knowledge and understanding of the area?

Neighbourhood Reps enable local people's views to be heard by representing their local community at all levels of Greets Green Partnership decision making. Together with a Neighbourhood Support Worker, they support their local Neighbourhood Group which discusses local issues and identifies solutions.

Anyone aged over 16 can stand for election as a Neighbourhood Rep in the area they live in. All that is

required is plenty of enthusiasm and no experience is necessary.

If you're interested in standing for election, why not give Katherine Hewitt a call on 533 3185 to discuss what's involved? Elections will take place in March and everyone living in the four election areas will receive more information at the start of that month.



## Being a Neighbourhood Rep

Bev Dudley has been the Neighbourhood Rep for Oakhouse South since last year and definitely recommends that residents should stand for election.

"I work at Lyng Primary and, since becoming a Neighbourhood Rep, I've had a lot more parents coming up to me to chat about local things because they know who I am," Bev says. "Parents from BME communities are more forthcoming now and they're starting to ask questions and gain a voice in their community – possibly for the first time."



"You're never going to please everyone, but when you see the improvements you've made and hear someone who's really happy with your efforts, it's really rewarding."

"Everyone at the Partnership is so welcoming and supportive. When you go to Board meetings, you feel equal to everyone else on the Board. It's a really friendly atmosphere and you can just go along and be yourself."

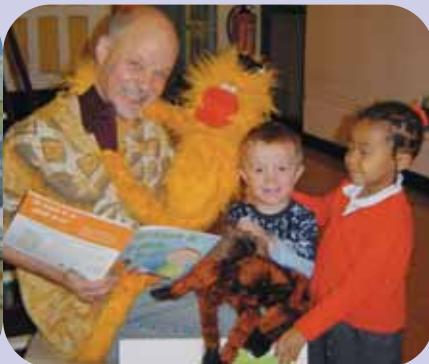
"I'd say to anyone: 'Stand for election – go for it!'. The area needs a voice and there are so many good things which you get out of being that voice. There's no point in sitting back and moaning about issues – do something about it!"

## JACKIE GIVES SUPPORT

Former Neighbourhood Support Worker, Jackie Owen has recently taken on the new role of Partnership Board Representative Support Officer at Greets Green Partnership. This means that there'll be even more help and support on offer for this year's Neighbourhood Reps.

Jackie will be helping the Reps to learn new skills as they develop and providing guidance where needed. If any Reps have any problems or queries, they just have to speak to Jackie on 07919 110078.

# SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT SANDWELL CENTRAL LIBRARY



*Imagine... a place which offers everyone free access to a lifelong supply of books, music, films and information about anything and everything.*

Imagine... a place you can go to without anyone checking why you are there and what you are doing. You can use a computer without having to buy it and can find and borrow a book without having to pay for it. You can learn anything you want, when you want, without ever having to pass an exam. You can choose by yourself or have help if you need it. You can learn new skills, share a hobby, read a newspaper, email a friend, find out about your family history or simply read a book – and it's all for free!

Imagine... a place that has regular story sessions for children, plus lots of other events for everyone.

*This is no dream. Sandwell Central Library has all this and much more!*

## FREE & EASY TO JOIN

**Sandwell Central Library is the largest library in Sandwell, serving the whole Borough as well as the West Bromwich area.**

Joining is free and easy. Simply fill in a membership form in the library and show proof of identity. Everyone who joins can use the free computers (children will need their parents' permission first).

You can start borrowing books, videos, CDs and DVDs straight away and if you join as a concessionary member - schoolchildren, over 60s, people in full time education and people on low income benefits - you won't have to pay library fines.

If we haven't got the book you want, ask

us to get it for you. Requests for books in stock are free. If you've not been to the library for a while, you'll be pleased with the changes. And if you've never been to a library, check out what you've been missing. You'll be amazed!

"There's never been a better time to come in and join Central Library," says Robert Hazel, Lending Services Manager. "We've spent additional money on the book stock and have introduced new formats such as DVD and Spoken Word on CD. We also host the regular Storytelling Café alongside a monthly programme of events and displays.

"It's free to join and there are plenty of friendly and helpful staff, so come along and get your library card now!"

**Sandwell Central Library is situated on the High Street in West Bromwich. Just pop in, or contact the library direct on 569 4904 or at [www.lea.sandwell.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.lea.sandwell.gov.uk/libraries)**

# PROJECTS UPDATE

Here are the latest projects which Greets Green Partnership has funded. If you're interested in finding out more about any of them or how to get involved, just give us a call.

## JOBS & ENTERPRISE:

Call Pat Parkes on 0800 953 0215, or the contact listed, for more information.

Sandwell Advice and Moneylink

SAM will offer affordable loans and a range of financial support services to local residents who are unable to access finance through mainstream lenders.

Call Sandra Spence  
0121 561 1969

## HOUSING AND URBAN FORM THEME:

Call Marianne Monro on 0800 073 0798, or the contact listed, for more information.

Neighbourhood Management Co-ordinator

The postholder's function will be to enhance the links with other projects and mainstream activities. The project will underpin the delivery of the housing plan and support the securing of further investment to the delivery of the plan.

Call Amanda Aston  
0121 569 5287

Millward Street & Wood Lane Environmental Improvements

This project will enhance the appearance of a new housing development at Wood Lane/Millward Street, Greets Green.

Call Chris Jones  
0121 569 4086

Piercy Street & Butler Street Environmental Improvements

The project will give local people a greater sense of security in their own homes and improve their quality of life as a result.

Call Chris Jones  
0121 569 4086

## HEALTH THEME:

Call Kate Massey on 0121 500 1650, or the contact listed, for more information.

Fit for Life at George Salter

This project aims to address the low activity levels and poor diets that can contribute to obesity and poor health in young people. Pupils progress will be followed throughout their school life.

Call Sally Sandel  
0121 500 2488

Green Gyms

Free two to three hour long sessions led by a qualified leader during which time participants carry out practical environmental work such as planting hedges, creating community gardens etc in order to improve activity and health of residents.

Call Sally Sandel  
0121 500 2488

## EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING:

Call Roger Cunningham on 0800 953 0215, or the contact listed, for more information.

Library Explorers

An incentive scheme to encourage children to bring family members into the library, linked to library membership for all 7-9 yr olds in Greets Green schools.

Call Heather Vickerman  
0121 525 9505

Adult Learning Strategy-Implementation

Greets Green Adult Learning Programme will provide increased opportunities for lifelong learning for the residents in the community.

Call Roger Cunningham  
0121 533 3184

## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THEME:

Call Katherine Hewitt on 0800 953 0215, or the contact listed, for more information.

Time 2 Trade

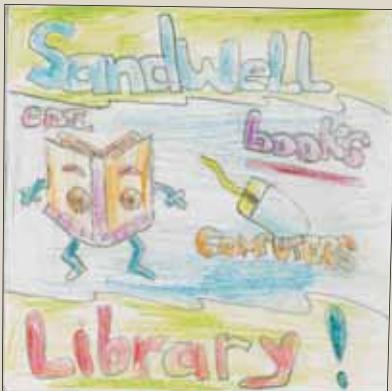
Participants 'deposit' their time in a bank by giving practical help and support to others and are able to 'withdraw' their time when they need something doing themselves.

Call Dan Grainger  
0121 553 3110

African Caribbean Support Worker

A Development Officer dedicated to working with the African Caribbean community.

Call Rupshana Nahar  
0121 533 3193



## WINNING EXPLORER!

A local youngster's eye-catching design will be featured on the Greets Green library card as part of the 'Library Explorers' project.

Pupils in years 3 and 4 at local primary schools took part in the Greets Green 'Library Explorers' design competition and Natalie Dell from Class 3J at Guns Village Primary School was chosen as the winner.

A professional designer will make her drawing into the library card and designs from other youngsters will be used in the pages of a special 'Filofax' style library pack which will accompany the card.

All designs are being displayed at Sandwell Central Library in West Bromwich and participating schools are being invited to visit the exhibition and choose £500 of books for their own school library.

"The aim of the Greets Green 'Library Explorers' project is to introduce local families to a whole range of learning, development and recreational opportunities through their children's membership of their local library," explained Roger Cunningham, Greets Green Partnership's Education Theme Leader.

## MINISTER LAUNCHES COMMUNITY BANK

Jeff Rooker, Minister for Regeneration and Regional Development, pictured with Sandra Spence of Black Country Housing & Community Services Group, officially opened Sandwell Advice & Moneylink (SAM) in January in a bid to help reduce the number of people who end up in the hands of unscrupulous loan sharks.

Black Country Housing & Community Services Group has been instrumental in the development of SAM, which will initially serve customers in the Greets Green area. It is also supported by Greets Green Partnership, Sandwell MBC, Accord Housing Association and Mercian Housing Association.



Affordable loans will be offered to local residents from SAM's shop-front premises at 382 High Street - along with a range of financial support services. The products and services provided are specifically for those in the community who are unable to access finance through mainstream lenders such as high street banks and building societies.

To find out more call in to SAM at 382 High Street, or call Tony Wood or Fiona Middleton on 553 3110.

## SPONSOR NAOMI

Civil Servant, Naomi Greenhalgh from Oak Road, is looking for sponsorship for a charity China Trek.

In October, she'll be joining 50 people from across the UK, to trek across the Great China Wall for SCOPE, the charity for people with cerebral palsy.

Naomi says: "I have a lot of hard work to do before then, keeping to a fitness programme and reaching the £2,500 target for SCOPE. With the money raised, the charity can help support children and



adults with cerebral palsy and their families and ensure that they have a better quality of life. I used to work at the local pub, The Yew Tree in Albion Road and they have offered to support me. I hope that other members of the local community can recognise my efforts and help me reach my target by sponsoring me."

You can sponsor Naomi by visiting her website [www.justgiving.com/go4itomi](http://www.justgiving.com/go4itomi) and click on 'sponsor me now' or contact her direct on 01902 329033.

## REACH A NEW HORIZON

New Horizons Fellowship for the Disabled is inviting local people to join the group.

Any disabled or older people can come along to Stoney Lane Day Centre on a Friday night from 6.30-9pm and enjoy a get together with bingo and plenty of socialising.

If you'd like to find out more, call Jim Pearce on 532 7182.



# WARDENS' PARTY PRESENTS

**Neighbourhood Wardens helped children get into the festive spirit by donating a sack full of toys to Sandwell Women's Agency Network (SWAN)'s Christmas party.**

Father Christmas was guest of honour at the party, distributing the presents which the Wardens had collected.

Senior Warden, Neil Woodfield, said: "We collected a number of new toys over a few months and wanted to donate them to children in Greets Green who deserve a real Christmas treat."

Pictured: (front) Sue Morgan and Elaine Knowles from SWAN with Senior Warden, Neil Woodfield and (back) Sulaiman Uddin, Karen Judge and Naseem Ahmed.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CAB

**Greets Green Citizens Advice Bureau is looking for volunteers to help with a project aimed at increasing household incomes. The project will offer benefit and money advice and increase access to quality jobs.**

Local residents are required to train in advice work and administration, providing valuable skills for employment. Full training will be provided and will last approximately three months based on a minimum of six hours per week. The training will lead to a qualification in advice work. Travel expenses are paid.

The majority of paid staff within the CAB service are former volunteers and this training has also led to employment opportunities within local authorities and other statutory and voluntary organisations.

○ To discuss this further or for an information pack, contact either Rupinder on 580 2783 or David on 569 2999.



## Charitable works

**Walton Walker Lodge has been busy undertaking a host of charitable work throughout Greets Green recently.**

The Masonic Lodge handed out presents at Sandwell General Hospital in the run up to Christmas and has also contributed to the Tsunami disaster appeal and worked with local schools.

○ For more information, contact Alan Siddall, Secretary to the Lodge on 553 2106.

## NEW VOICES WANTED

**The K&J Male Voice Choir is on the look out for new singers – plus a new pianist!**

Established in 1927, the Male Voice Choir was originally made up of workers at Kenrick & Jefferson. After taking a break during the War, the Choir reformed and has been going strong ever since. It now has around 20 members and has only ever had four conductors since 1927! The current Conductor and Musical Director is Jim Walker who has been leading the Choir for the past 28 years.

"The Choir is very informal and anyone is welcome to come along to one of our practice evenings to see if they are interested in joining," says member, Ivor Wright. "We're also on the look out for a new pianist to accompany the Choir."

The Choir rehearses every Thursday from 7.45-9.30pm at the United Reformed Church on Cronehills Linkway. Plus, the Choir is keen to give performances for local community groups, churches, fundraising activities or at local weddings.

○ To find out about joining or to request a performance, call Ivor Wright on 525 3879.

## Share your skills

**People of all ages have been trading their skills in Greets Green.**

The Time to Trade Timebank, funded by Greets Green Partnership and Tipton & Oldbury PCT, offers a means of reciprocal volunteering. Members earn credits each time they volunteer to undertake a project for someone and can redeem their credits by getting people to do jobs for them.



"It's a great way of generating community spirit and rewarding people for the work they're doing within the Greets Green community," explained Project Manager Dan Grainger. "Projects range from decorating and gardening to shopping and providing advice."

Kewal Kaur Vijay has just enjoyed having her home decorated by Timebank volunteers.

○ If you'd like to get involved, call Dan Grainger on 553 3110 or pop in to see him at 382 High Street (SAM offices).

## RAFFLE APPEAL

**Swan Village Goldies are appealing for prizes for their regular fundraising raffles.**

○ If you can help please contact Katherine Hewitt on 0800 953 0215.

Flip magazine for 'Young Greets Green'



ggyf

# greets green

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2005



**MEET THE TEAM  
EIGHT NEW SESSIONAL WORKERS**

# WORLD OF WORK

**More than 100 Year 11 pupils from George Salter High School found out more about the world of work recently.**

Thanks to funding from the WorkWise project, the young people went along to the 'Skills for the World of Work' Conference at Tipton Sports Academy where they took part in a range of fun exercises.

First they had to construct the highest tower to develop teamwork, before discussing what the 'ideal employee' is like. They also had to apply for a Travel Assistant job – from completing the application form to attending an interview.

Throughout the Conference, the pupils gained support from Team Advisers from local businesses including the RAF, the

Child Support Agency, the Highways Agency and Connexions.

"I'll be more confident and I'll know what to do when I'm at an interview," said one participant.

Everyone who went to the Conference received a certificate for their progress file and one of the Team Advisers said: "I wish to compliment George Salter School on the behaviour of their students. Each one thanked me at the end of the event."

For more details about WorkWise, call Fiona Stone, WorkWise Project Manager on 569 2347.

## WE WANT YOU!

In the recent Youth Forum elections we were looking for a young person to represent each of the seven areas of Greets Green. We can announce that four were elected but we still have three vacancies and need you to put yourself forward.

Your new reps are:

- The Hambletts – Minah Hoque
- Greets Green – Kam Panesar
- Carters Green – Satwant Burjy
- The Lodge – Abdul Alam

And we still need reps for:

- Oakhouse
- Swan Village
- West Bromwich Central

To find out what's involved, call Greets Green Youth Forum on 525 9509 or 07976 943638.

**Make yourself heard!**



## YOUTH CLUB RETURNS

Last issue we asked if you wanted to see the Youth Club return and you said 'yes!' .

So, it's making a come back on Wednesday evenings at Wood Lane Community Centre.

With lots of new sessional workers, there'll be tons to do, so make sure you're part of it.

Telephone 525 9509 to find out more.



## FREE SK8ing at the SK8 PARK

Come on down to the Street Stars Sk8 Park!

Every Saturday, 1-5pm at George Salter High School

Chat to your mates and listen to the DJs

**Don't miss out!**



# WE'RE ON THE TEAM!

**The sessional workers are each giving six hours a week to the Youth Forum to provide advice and support with events and to help make the Youth Forum members' ideas become a reality.**

Three of the new workers – Andy Falconer, Smita Patel and Sammy Stocking – are already well known as they've been Youth Forum members themselves.

We asked them to take a few minutes out of their training to tell us more.

## ANDY

I've been a member of the Youth Forum for three years and I felt that becoming a sessional worker should be the next stage in my development. It's the next level up.



I'll be down at the Sk8 Park at George Salter High School each Saturday and will be showing the new Youth Forum members what we've been doing for the past couple of years.

I've learnt a lot through being in the Youth Forum and it's good to be able to pass on my skills and experience so that the Forum can continue to be a success.

By becoming a sessional worker I'm opening up new avenues for the future. I'm interested in helping young people and maybe joining the police force in a few years' time to do community liaison work. This will be great experience.

Until then I'm keeping pretty busy as I'm at college doing A levels in Psychology, Sociology and Travel and have two part-time jobs!

## SMITA

I've been Chair of the Youth Forum and have learnt loads during that time, so when the sessional worker jobs came up I thought I had enough experience to apply. I was really pleased to get the job.

**Look out for loads more exciting activities as eight new workers are taken on by the Greets Green Youth Forum.**

I'll be spending three months doing different things such as helping at the Sk8 Park or the Youth Club and working in the office. I'll also go along to the Youth Forum meetings.

Youth work is definitely something I want to do in the future and this job is giving me lots of experience.



At the moment I'm at Walsall College studying Health & Social Care and have another year to go. Then I may do another college course or go onto university.

Last summer I said in this magazine that I was going to go to college, study community work, then become the best youth worker ever! I've already started getting there.

## SAMMY

I've done lots of different things while I've been a member of the Youth Forum – helping at the Youth Club, launching the Buzz, organising the Summer residential – and now I want to put my experience into practice.

I've been representing George Salter High School on the Forum for a year and have really got interested in youth work. I'm hoping to go into it in the future. I'm just about to start my GCSEs now.



We're doing training on a Tuesday and Thursday night to learn the ground rules of youth work and finding out about lots of different examples of what it involves. It's been good so far and I'm looking forward to being a sessional worker.

**i** To find out more about the Greets Green Youth Forum call 525 9509 or 07976 943638.