

greetsgreen

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2006

Summer Fun

LOCAL EVENTS TAKE-OFF!

BECOMING EXPERTS

Residents take control of their lives



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
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الهاتف 0800 953 0215

welcome

to issue 25 of the Greets Green Magazine.

What a Summer it's turning out to be! There have already been so many fantastic events taking place in Greets Green - can you spot yourself or your friends in any of the pictures in our 'Summer of Fun' photo special? Thanks to everyone who came along and supported these events and made them such a success.

There's still plenty going on in your area so make the most of it. Turn to page 8 and find out more about the network of Community Access Points (CAPs) which offer so many great facilities and activities for residents of all ages. Why not call in to your local CAP and see what's available?

While there's already lots of projects up and running, a brand new theme area has now been created by Greets Green Partnership which means even more projects are being developed. These will be aimed at improving local services and we want as many residents as possible to get involved and influence how services are run. Find out more on page 14.

To have an even greater say in how issues in your area are tackled, make sure you vote in the Neighbourhood Representative elections. Turn to page 5 to see if you're living in one of the neighbourhoods where the elections are taking place this year.

Make your voice heard!

Happy reading!

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Residents become expert patients

A course for patients with long term illnesses has given 16 residents in the Greet's Green area an opportunity to gain new skills to manage their condition and improve their lives.

Simple but effective

OSCAR volunteer worker, Rebecca Solomon, found she really benefitted from the Expert Patients course.

Rebecca, aged 22, has a condition called sickle cell which affects the red blood cells and can cause pain in any part of the body at any time.

She often suffers chest pain and has found the breathing exercises learnt on the course to be a great help. She's also been putting her new relaxation techniques to the test when she's in pain or struggling to get to sleep.

"It's just simple things which I've learnt on the course, but they do make a difference," says Rebecca. "I wanted to find out how to manage my condition better and the course was a big help."

The Expert Patients course was organised by OSCAR in Lodge Road and catered for patients with a variety of conditions including sickle cell, epilepsy, high blood pressure and diabetes.

These courses are part of a NHS initiative to help patients with long term health problems by giving them the confidence and knowledge to help them cope with their condition and improve their quality of life.

expert patients

GET VOTING!

It's election time again, giving local residents a chance to choose their Neighbourhood Representatives for the Board of Greets Green Partnership – or become Reps themselves.

This is your opportunity to ensure your voice gets heard when it comes to decisions about how the funding for Greets Green Partnership is spent.

Greets Green Partnership has been working throughout July and August to ensure as many people as possible are registered to vote. It's also been encouraging residents to stand in the elections.

Local people elected as Reps sit on the Board of Greets Green Partnership to help make crucial decisions across its key themes of Housing & Urban Form, Health, Education & Lifelong Learning, Jobs & Enterprise, Crime & Community Safety, Community Empowerment and Neighbourhood Management.

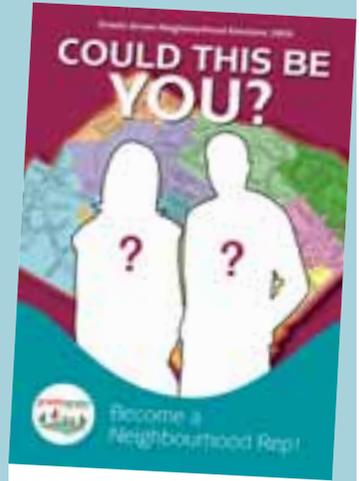
Greets Green Partnership is responsible for administering New Deal for Communities funding until 2010 – so whoever gets elected will help to ensure it's wisely spent to create a

lasting legacy for the benefit of the community. During September the candidates standing will be announced and a postal ballot will take place in October.

Existing Neighbourhood Reps are urging residents to consider standing for election. Janet Sayce, who represents Hamblett's North, says: "For me it's been very rewarding. I can put my community's views to the Greets Green Partnership Board and take the Partnership's information to the community."

Ann Coll, Rep for Oak House North, adds: "It can be very busy, but a very rewarding experience. If you have the time to spare and think you could fit the bill, why not volunteer your services?"

I To find out more about standing as a Neighbourhood Representative, call Jackie Owen or Katherine Hewitt on freephone 0800 953 0215.



Areas where elections for Neighbourhood Representatives will take place are:

- Carters Green**
- West Bromwich Central**
- Oak House South**
- Hamblett's South**
- Greets Green**
- Swan Village**

Look out for a leaflet through your door for more details.

Courses involve six weekly sessions and are led by people who live with a long term health condition themselves. They cover issues such as dealing with stress and depression, managing pain, relaxation techniques and eating healthily.

The courses also give people the chance to make new friends and gain the support of others who may be facing similar problems to themselves.

Eugene Makore, who is based at OSCAR and organised the course locally with support from the Primary Care Trust, said: "16 patients with a variety of different conditions started the course and it was very well received. Some are now keen to become trainers themselves."



I'm not alone

Among those who took part in the Expert Patients course was local mum Priscilla Chaora, aged 32, who has epilepsy.

She said: "The course was excellent and I enjoyed it so much. It was more than I expected. You go there and meet other people in a similar situation and it was a help because you don't feel alone."

In addition to the support of fellow patients, she found the course particularly useful in finding ways of coming to terms with and dealing with her condition, and coping with stress and depression.

Following the success of the first course, a further course is being planned and Priscilla is considering becoming a trainer after experiencing for herself the benefits of taking part.

I For more information about Expert Patients, call Judy Blaney on 0121 612 1476.

Care & companionship at day centre

It's one big happy family at Ryders Green Methodist Church Day Centre on Greets Green Road.

That's the view of those who use the Centre, which caters for the over 60s. There are people who may have a disability or mental health problem, and many regulars who attend are in their mid 80s – the oldest is 98!

Manager, Pat Briscoe says: "The main purpose of the Centre is for people to be able to leave their home or have a day out. It provides a change for people, and those who live alone can have companionship and can make friends here."

She says that for older people who are very dependent, the Day Centre not only provides a service for them, but also gives a break to their carers.

The Centre is open daily from Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm, and caters for about 100 clients who can choose how often to attend, whether it's once or twice a week or every day.



Funding from the Health Theme has provided activities which include; games, arts and crafts, trips out and a Wednesday afternoon church service. The Centre also provides a hot lunchtime meal cooked on the premises.

i If you'd like to know more about the Day Centre, call manager Pat Briscoe on 0121 520 5367.

We're Community Heroes!

When Day Centre Manager, Pat Briscoe was nominated to be Greets Green's latest Community Hero, she saw it as an honour for all her staff.

Pat, who was nominated by the elderly people who use the Centre, said: "Although the award has come to me, I'm only as good a manager as the team I manage, and there isn't a paid member of staff, trainee or volunteer that doesn't give 110 per cent. That's why the Centre is so successful."

The award was presented by Katherine Hewitt, Community Empowerment Theme Leader, from Greets Green Partnership.

Phyllis Walker, who's been attending the centre for 20 years, said: "I've known Pat all the time I've been coming here. She's a wonderful person - she has so much patience and she's always warm and friendly. She has time for us all.

"Sometimes people get anxious if they're not well or upset about something - she's very good at calming them down, usually by just sitting and talking quietly to them." Frances Williams added: "Pat's a very caring person. She's always ready to talk about whatever it is that's troubling you. Mind



Left to right: Frances Williams, Pat Briscoe and Phyllis Walker.

you, all the staff here are like that - we're very lucky. They give you time and listen and you really feel like they care."

i If you'd like to nominate someone you know for the Community Hero award please call Simon Ware at Greets Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.

Greets Green is changing

Private developers are backing Greets Green's Housing Plan and making the dream of building brand new properties, which fully meet local people's needs, into a reality.

A special 'Greets Green is Changing' developers' day was staged at The Hawthorns in June by the partners leading the Housing Plan – Greets Green Partnership, Sandwell Council, Urban Living, RegenCo and Sandwell Homes.

The developers found out about the exciting opportunities for development which will be coming up as the regeneration of Greets Green gathers pace. They were then taken on a coach tour of the area so that they could see the development sites for themselves. They visited Claypit Lane and Wattle Road, Coppice Street and Meadows School, Edith Street and Chapman Street, Whitgreave Street, and the former Albion House site on Richard Street South.

The event was arranged so that developer partners can be selected who will help redevelop the area with the quality of housing and shared vision of the partners. Developers will be encouraged to work with residents to give them the opportunity to influence aspects of the design process.

Local resident and Chair of the Housing Forum, Jessica Ferguson, said: "It's time for change in Greets Green. A lot of people have worked very hard to get us to this point, so to be talking to developers is very exciting."



BRINGING LEARNING INTO THE COMMUNITY

Now that Greets Green has a network of Community Access Points (CAPs) set up, it's up to you to help make them a growing success.

Over the past couple of years Community Access Points Project Manager, Stinder Johl and his team of Community Learning Workers have been working tirelessly to set up the network of CAPs at various community venues and get lots of activities off the ground. Funding for the project has now ended but the CAPs are here to stay as long as lots of residents make use of the venues for clubs, groups and community meetings.

Workers' legacy

"We have a lot to thank Stinder and the Community Learning Workers for," says Roger Cunningham, Greets Green Partnership's Education & Lifelong Learning Theme Leader. They've set up CAPs at Guns Village and, most recently, Newtown and Lyng Primary Schools.

They've started up regular courses and welcomed in groups to use the facilities for a range of activities. They've also helped with the refurbishment at Lodge Community Centre and made the community room at Lodge School into a better facility.

The aim now is that more and more groups will use the CAPs and develop them so that they meet the needs of local people and help school based CAPs to offer more out of school hours activities. These include before and after school clubs, sport, homework clubs and support for parents.

Plus, the wider community will be able to access IT facilities, sport, arts and adult learning. The CAPs network, now in place in Greets Green, means we're well ahead of the game.

So many activities

Back in 2004, a small team of Community Learning Workers which included local residents began work to encourage local people to become more involved with learning. Since then, they've been pointing residents in the right direction for courses and setting up training that people want.

At the start of 2006 activities at Lodge Primary, for example, included IT drop-in sessions, English courses, yoga, sewing

and a parents' workshop for people with nursery and reception age children.

When a new Guns Village Primary School was built last year, facilities included a modern dance studio, which can be used by the community outside school hours, plus a parents/community room funded by Greets Green Partnership.

While we say a big thank you to the team of Community Learning Workers for setting up so many opportunities and activities in Greets Green, the best way to show how much their work is appreciated is to really make the most of the CAPs – start using the facilities on your doorstep today!

Making plans for the future

The CAP at Lyng Primary was opened in March this year and a management committee has already taken up the running of CAP activities at the school.

A mother and toddler group meets there on Monday afternoons and a playgroup on Thursday mornings, while the YMCA is going to start an after-school club in September.

The community space is being booked regularly for parties and plans are underway for more activities.

A taster day to encourage parents to look at the facilities was set up during a school fun day before the end of term.

School bursar and committee member, Sue Staple said: "It's still very new and we've put a lot of flyers out and are in the middle of advertising and getting people to come and use it."

Classroom assistant and committee member, Kerry Knight said there were plans for adult education classes from September, with flower arranging, computer classes and photography suggested. She added: "We're going to suggest what we could offer and

see what people want. It could be fantastic!"

Glad to have our own space

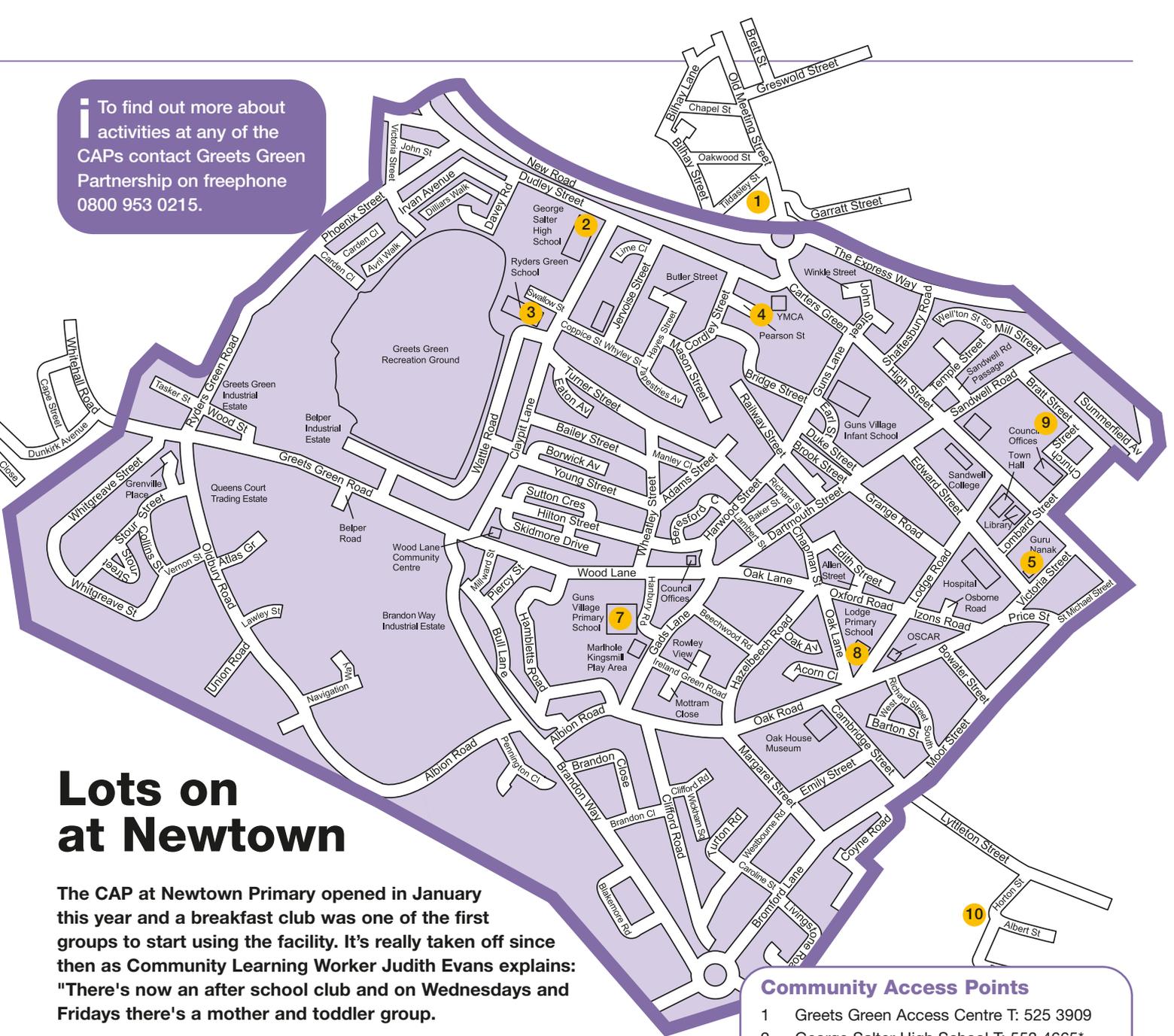
Karen Groom and Nazem Begum run Lyng Little Learners, a pre-school children playgroup, which meets every Thursday morning in the CAP at Lyng Primary.

Karen said: "We were based in the school originally, before we moved into this facility. We're no longer infringing on the school or feeling we're in the way.

"The facilities are better with access to a kitchen and we have toast and tea and coffee. At the moment the committee's trying to get more people to use the facilities."

Karen's now contacting local groups to encourage them to use the great new facilities.

To find out more about activities at any of the CAPs contact Greets Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.



Lots on at Newtown

The CAP at Newtown Primary opened in January this year and a breakfast club was one of the first groups to start using the facility. It's really taken off since then as Community Learning Worker Judith Evans explains: "There's now an after school club and on Wednesdays and Fridays there's a mother and toddler group.

"The room is used quite a lot for meetings and the school is using the IT suites. We ran a few courses during Adult Learning Week which proved popular."

In July, Adult Education workers ran an IT taster day, to coincide with the school's sports day, as lots of parents were around. And during the school holidays it's being used as a holiday club. Future plans include more taster courses, including Computers for the Terrified, and later in the year, Christmas activities in the community room.

Judith said: "It's important that activities are put on which the parents request, rather than what we think they want."

Community Access Points

- 1 Greets Green Access Centre T: 525 3909
- 2 George Salter High School T: 553 4665*
- 3 Ryders Green Primary School T: 553 0658*
- 4 YMCA T: 553 4211
- 5 Guru Nanak Community Centre T: 525 6923
- 6 Newtown Primary School T: 557 8504*
- 7 Guns Village Primary School T: 553 1427*
- 8 Lodge Primary School T: 553 2389*
- 9 Sandwell Womens Enterprise Development Agency (SWEDA) T: 525 2558
- 10 Lyng Primary School T: 553 1480*

*During term time only



Life's Buzzie for toddlers

Elaine Beckett's been running the Buzzie Bees mother and toddler group at the Newtown Primary CAP since it opened. She used to run a similar group in mobile classrooms at the school but the new facilities are so much better.

She's now been able to attract more people who've gained support by going to the group. Elaine said: "The facilities are absolutely brilliant. We used to get about eight children - now we get 17. Many parents say that it's hard when you're on your own and don't know anybody. The group really helps. We've got a business plan together now and a proper name so we can put posters up and get more people in."

It's never too late to learn

Adult Learners' Week is the UK's largest celebration of learning, giving adults the opportunity to participate in free fun activities, both leisure and vocational.

And Greets Green adults certainly took advantage of the courses on offer during Adult Learners' Week in May, with over 150 taking part.

The variety of courses on offer included creative skills, such as nail art and indian head massage, information technology, home and garden skills such as wallpaper hanging and basic plumbing and family, health and sports activities including football coaching and healthy cooking.

A Taster Session Fair included everything from digital photography to how to sell on ebay. Whatever your needs, Greets Green has a course for you!

Free crèche facilities were available during the Week to enable as many Greets Green adults as possible to take part, as well as individual 'Advice and Guidance' sessions to assist with career advice or finding out more about courses in the area. Feedback from residents was overwhelmingly positive, with many

saying "give us more - we've enjoyed the opportunity of learning something new".

One resident who completed the Basic Plumbing Course said: "I achieved a lot of self-satisfaction from this course and feel like I won a million quid lottery!"

Courses help at work

Mohammed Saith took part in lots of short courses during Adult Learners' Week and is hoping to do some in more depth in the autumn.

He said: "I did one on spreadsheets, PowerPoint, ebay, decorating, basic plumbing and maintenance work. It would be interesting in the future to have a more advanced course in technology, that would be a great help.

"The decorating and basic plumbing courses were packed out! There was a good selection of courses."

Mohammed said he'd chosen the decorating and plumbing courses to help with his work as a housing officer, based at Mother Teresa House in Baker Street. "These were perfect for what I needed," he said.

In the autumn he's thinking of looking at more detailed courses and is also interested in carpentry, again to help him with his work.

Mohammed Saith took part in lots of short courses during Adult Learners' Week and is hoping to do some in more depth in the autumn.

Punam gets creative

Mother-of-two, Punam Singh, of Clifford Road, took part in five taster sessions during Adult Learning week at Lodge Road Community Centre and Wood Lane Community Centre.

Punam, who does several voluntary jobs and is kept busy with sons aged one and a half and eight, particularly enjoyed the jewellery making, and has something to remind her of the class.

She said: "I made a kind of necklace. It's very delicate - I wear it every day."

"I did nail art, Mendhi, flower arranging, body decoration and jewellery making. I hadn't done any of them before, but if they're available regularly, I will do."



I If you would like to find out more about learning something new in Greets Green, contact Marcia or Pam on 0121 525 6457/6671 or visit www.learning4u.org or www.ict.greetsgreen.org

A Summer of Fun

Greets Green has seen a lot going on lately. Seems everyone is getting out and about in the sunshine...

GREETS GREEN SCORE GOLDEN GOAL!

Special report by Isabel Raby

Almost 100 local footballers answered the call to take part in a West Bromwich Albion Community Programme (WBACP) 5-a-side football tournament in June as part of Men's Health Week.

The tournament, which was held in conjunction with George Salter High School on their new AstroTurf, was organised by Russel Smith, Hat-trick Football Development Officer and Joyce Haye, Greets Green Community Development Worker. Russel said; 'A big thank-you to everyone who took part and gave 100% effort despite the soaring temperature. It was a great day!'



As well as some high quality football Joyce was on hand to provide players with helpful and important advice and information on getting fit & staying healthy, with such success that the football and health advice combination of Russel and Joyce was repeated at the Family Funday in July.

Teams from all over Greets Green entered the knockout competition and after some close matches the final was between WBA Community team and Greets Green Partnership's team.

In the most tense final since the World Cup the Greets Green Partnership' team grabbed the only goal in a spirited match. The tournament trophy is now proudly on display in the Partnership's reception at Court House.



Healthy MINDs in Greets Green

As one in four people experience mental health problems at some point in their lives, Greets Green Partnership launched a Healthy Minds programme at the fun-packed Smile for Summer event on 14th July.

The aim of the programme is to support local residents with their mental well-being by providing information on what's available and making sure services reach those who really need them.

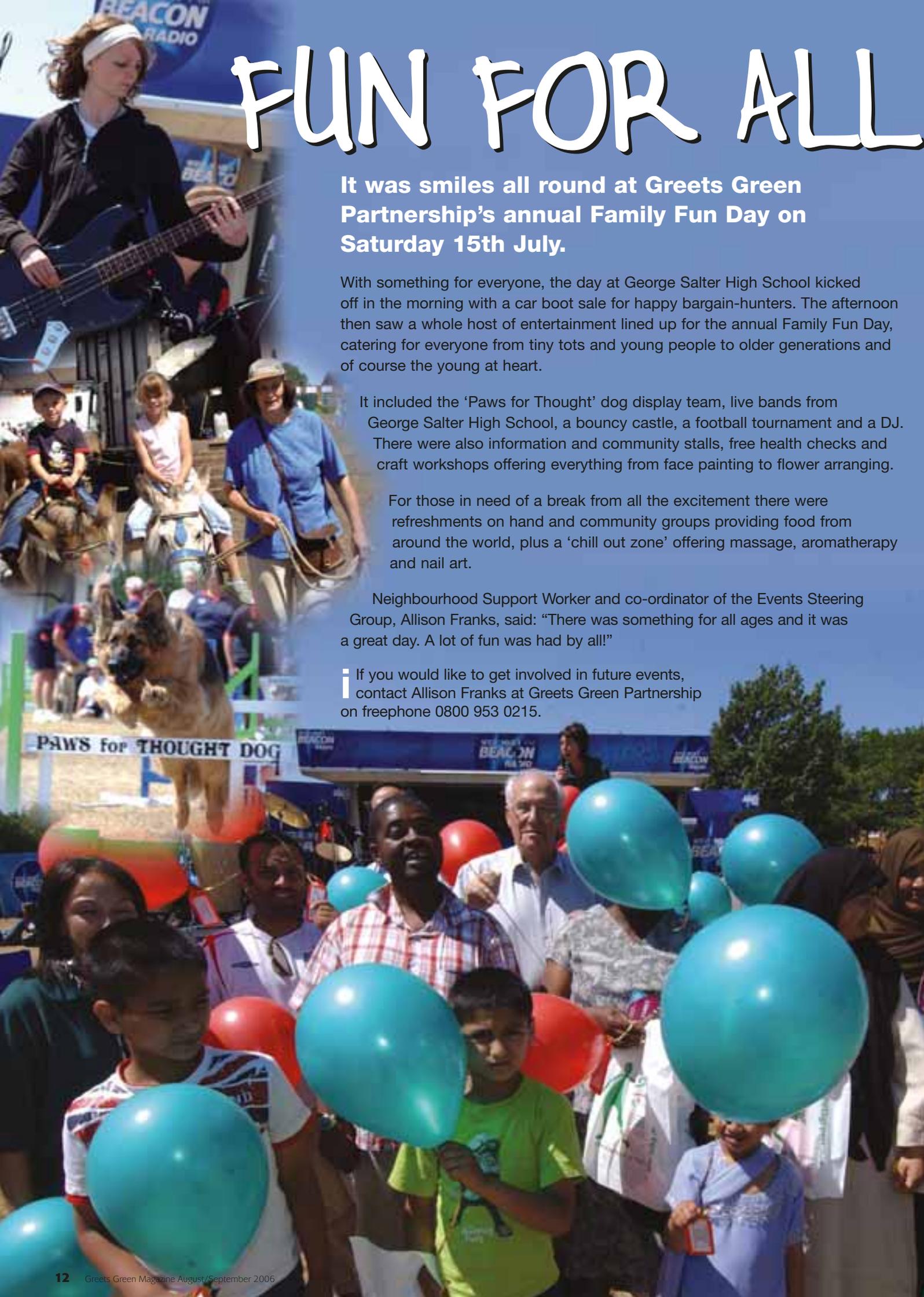
With lots of entertainment for all the family, the Smile for Summer event at the Memorial Gardens got the programme off to a great start.

Residents enjoyed live bands, face painting, an art exhibition, a balloon race and a whole host of stalls. SMILE – Sandwell

Mental-wellbeing Information Lifestyle Equality event – was a multi-agency event, with partners including the PCT, Sandwell Mental Health and Social Care Trust, Greets Green Partnership, Sandwell MIND, Rethink mental health charity, and PALS Patient Advice and Liaison Service.

Sandwell Primary Care Trusts User Involvement Officer, Tony Kirk, said: "The event was a celebration of mental health and well being. We wanted to make it a fun day and let people know about the range of services in Sandwell, while de-stigmatising mental illness."

I If you have any ideas about what the Healthy Minds Programme should provide, contact Sally Sandel on 0121 612 1663.



FUN FOR ALL

It was smiles all round at Greets Green Partnership's annual Family Fun Day on Saturday 15th July.

With something for everyone, the day at George Salter High School kicked off in the morning with a car boot sale for happy bargain-hunters. The afternoon then saw a whole host of entertainment lined up for the annual Family Fun Day, catering for everyone from tiny tots and young people to older generations and of course the young at heart.

It included the 'Paws for Thought' dog display team, live bands from George Salter High School, a bouncy castle, a football tournament and a DJ. There were also information and community stalls, free health checks and craft workshops offering everything from face painting to flower arranging.

For those in need of a break from all the excitement there were refreshments on hand and community groups providing food from around the world, plus a 'chill out zone' offering massage, aromatherapy and nail art.

Neighbourhood Support Worker and co-ordinator of the Events Steering Group, Allison Franks, said: "There was something for all ages and it was a great day. A lot of fun was had by all!"

I If you would like to get involved in future events, contact Allison Franks at Greets Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.



Family fun promotes safety

The smiles say it all at Greets Green's Biggest Kids' Party!

The children's party at Oak House in West Bromwich in June was part of a whole series of events held for Child Safety Week. Other activities included teddy bears picnics at primary schools and other community venues across Greets Green, plus pampering sessions and first aid training.

The aim was to encourage families to have fun together while getting across safety messages to parents. The children's party included stilt walking, juggling, balloons, face painting, henna tattoos, flower arranging, information stands, refreshments and a prize draw.

The week's events were organised by the Child Safety Project, which is funded by Greets Green Partnership, with support from OSCAR, the organisation for Sickle Cell Anaemia Research, the WWB PCT Children and Families Programme and Oak House Museum.

I The Child Safety Project is based at OSCAR in Lodge Road and helps families by providing information and free safety equipment such as fire guards and safety gates. If you'd like to know more, call the Child Home Safety Community Champions on 0121 525 0556.



Come to the Neighbourhood Forums

Don't miss the monthly meetings which are held in each area of Greet's Green to give local residents a chance to have their say and find out about key neighbourhood issues.

All meetings start at 6.30pm. Venues for meetings marked with * will be confirmed after August.

i For further information, call Greet's Green Partnership on 0800 953 0215.

SEPTEMBER

Monday 4th: Lodge Road*

Tuesday 5th: Carters Green and West Bromwich Central (West Bromwich Town Hall)

Tuesday 5th: Hamblett's*

Wednesday 6th: Oak House (Good Shepherd Church, Bromford Lane)

Monday 18th: Greet's Green (Ryders Green Day Centre)

OCTOBER

Monday 2nd: Lodge Road*

Tuesday 3rd: Hamblett's*

Wednesday 4th: Carters Green and West Bromwich Central (West Bromwich Town Hall)

Wednesday 4th: Oak House (Bethel Church, Gads Lane)

Monday 16th: Greet's Green (Ryders Green Day Centre, Greet's Green Road)

NOVEMBER

Monday 6th: Lodge Road*

Tuesday 7th: Hamblett's*

Wednesday 8th: Carters Green and West Bromwich Central (West Bromwich Town Hall)

Wednesday 8th: Oak House (Good Shepherd Church, Bromford Lane)

Monday 13th: Greet's Green (Ryders Green Day Centre, Greet's Green Road)



Down your street

As part of the new Neighbourhood Management Theme, street surgeries are being held across Greet's Green to give residents a chance to raise any issues they'd like to talk about.

Neighbourhood Support Workers - Allison Franks (Oak House North & South), Harshad Patel (Lodge Road, Carters Green and West Bromwich Central) and Simon Ware (Greet's Green and Hamblett's North & South) - have been leafleting local streets telling people about the street surgeries. The leaflet invites people who'd like to highlight a particular issue or concern, or ask questions, to display the leaflet in their window.

A Neighbourhood Support Worker will then know to knock on their door the next day to find out what action is needed, or to help residents by telling them about other services which can help. Work has already started in Carters Green and Oak House.

i For more information, contact Bob Lloyd at Greet's Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.

So look out for the team coming to the street where you live soon!

NEW THEME IN ACTION!

A new theme area has been created by Greet's Green Partnership to work alongside Crime & Community Safety, Health, Community Empowerment, Jobs & Enterprise, Housing & Urban Form and Education & Lifelong Learning.

Neighbourhood Management has previously formed a part of several other theme areas but has now become one in its own right. Rohit Mistry is the Neighbourhood Manager who'll be leading this theme area and he's already started developing projects aimed at improving local services and ensuring they meet local needs. The aim is to involve the community more in how services are run. The Neighbourhood Support Team



will also be part of Neighbourhood Management and they've been as busy as ever recently, getting out and about on local streets.

i If you'd like to find out more about Neighbourhood Management, call Rohit direct on 0121 533 1866.

KATE MASSEY – the past, the present & the future!

Health Theme Leader, Kate Massey retires at the end of August but the legacy of her work will continue long after the end of Greets Green Partnership.

Kate never intended to have a career in the NHS. But, 25 years ago as a young mum with two small children, she took up a part-time job at Walsall's Manor Hospital. In 1995 she worked in the community for the first time, managing district nurses, health visitors and school health nurses across Wednesbury and West Bromwich. And from 2000, as PCT Locality Manager for West Bromwich at the Primary Care Trust, she first came into contact with Greets Green Partnership.

Kate helped put together the original New Deal for Communities funding bid to start Greets Green Partnership – so her contribution has been from day one. In 2003 Kate went on to become Health Theme Leader.

Kate said: "I want to express my thanks to everyone in Greets Green, especially community representatives, local residents

and project workers, for their support, encouragement and friendship over the past six years. My work in Greets Green has been the most rewarding time in the whole of my 25 year NHS career".

Health Development Facilitator Sally Sandel, who has worked with Kate since September 2004, said: "I've learnt so much from Kate and I'm really sorry to see her go. She is very well respected and highly regarded and I will miss her, as will many others, particularly for her friendship, enthusiasm and passion."

Kate's work has involved looking at health issues, assessing whether there is a need for services to tackle them, and then

getting projects launched and subsequently

mainstreamed. The Health Theme is all about helping people to live healthier lives and about changing people's life expectancies, and so the full impact of Kate's work will be seen in years to come.

And if anyone is wondering what Kate will be up to as a 'lady of leisure', don't worry, she'll certainly be keeping herself busy, spending more time with her husband Dave and her two daughters. She'll also have the time to rediscover favourite places in the UK, cook (healthy meals of course!), participate in a bit of voluntary work, and generally enjoy life!

Good luck Kate – we wish you all the best for your future!

"When I first came to the Partnership Kate was already leading our Health programme, but what I didn't realise – and Kate was too modest to say – was that Kate has been one of the driving forces behind the whole New Deal for Communities programme in Greets Green.

"As a professional you can only admire Kate's drive and efficiency and local people will continue to benefit from her work for many years to come. As a person I now want to wish her a long and very happy retirement – it's certainly richly deserved."

Ally Allerson, Executive Director, Greets Green Partnership



PARTNERSHIP NEWS Jobs & Enterprise

Pat Parkes Means Business!

We are sorry to say that Pat Parkes, Greets Green's Jobs & Enterprise Theme Leader is moving on.

Pat is taking on a new challenge setting up a major retail Business Improvement District (BID) in Nottinghamshire, after her success in helping the Albion Business Consortium (ABC) to establish one of the few industrial BIDs in the country. Even though Pat will be moving into an exciting new role in September, her commitment to Greets Green means that she will remain on the board of the ABC BID.

Pat came to the Partnership in 2003 with the brief to pick up an area of work that had been without leadership for some time. It was a big task, and some people

wondered if she was cut out for it. They didn't know her!

Over the last three years Pat has used all her tenacity and negotiating skills to see the ambitious, wide ranging BECOME project take off. BECOME is a range of different interventions, all of which aim to remove the barriers local people face getting into work, getting on in their careers or setting up in business.

A lot of people were not sure it would work, now they know otherwise and they will join us in saying a big 'thank-you' to Pat and wishing her well in her new job.

John Paddock, Deputy Director, Greets Green Partnership said: "Coming from the



private sector Pat brought with her a wealth of knowledge and the ability to engage with the business community. Her drive and vision means many people are benefitting from the BECOME project. Pat leaves on a real high after her contribution to establishing the ABC BID. We wish Pat all the best in her exciting new challenge as Nottingham City Centre BID Manager."

More security for empty properties

Alarms have been fitted to a number of empty properties earmarked for demolition in Greet's Green to prevent them attracting vandalism.

Private properties which have been purchased as part of the redevelopment plans for the Housing Assessment Area have been fitted with the alarms, including properties along Chapman Street, Dartmouth Street, Oak Lane, Oxford Road and Edith Street.

If sensors detect an intruder, an alarm system sounds and automatically calls out a security firm. The aim is to ensure the properties remain safe, secure and monitored 24 hours a day while awaiting demolition.

The alarms are being fitted by Sandwell Council thanks to funding from Urban Living.

FREE GARDEN TOOLS FOR HIRE

It's now easy to improve your home and your garden! The Greet's Green Home Maintenance Project has expanded its free tool hire scheme to include a wide range of garden tools, as well as DIY tools, to help residents create the perfect garden.

Administration Officer, Gemma Rock, says: "After talking to residents, we decided to set up the scheme, which is proving very popular. We have around 30 different types of garden tools including rakes, spades, forks and cultivators, for people to borrow for as long as they need them. All residents need to do is bring in some ID, which can be as simple as a letter addressed to them at home and they can join the scheme."



Local residents are already really pleased with the scheme, with one lady saying: "Being able to borrow the garden tools has made a real impact in my garden."

Along with the right tools for the job, the project also offers help and advice on gardening. For more information, drop in at Unit 49, Queens Court Trading Estate on Greet's Green Road or call Mark or Gemma on 0121 520 4448.

Friendship at Falls Prevention Group

A group which helps older people to prevent falls in the home is proving so popular in Greet's Green that all the participants have continued meeting up. The Falls Prevention Programme is run by the Healthier and Safer Older Age Project and takes place over 20 weeks.

Each session starts with a gentle Extend exercise class, followed by a guest speaker. Recent talks have covered posture and co-ordination, medication, home accident prevention, aromatherapy and relaxation techniques. Residents who took part in the first group have stayed friends and many have now signed up for the Passport to Health scheme.

Occupational Therapist, Caroline Elliott, who co-ordinates the group with Physiotherapist, Emily Hoffmann, explains: "Everyone says that their confidence and balance have improved, but the other big thing we've found is the social benefits of the group. One lady said 'It's a light in the darkness'."

Mr Griffith was one of the first to take part in the programme and found it so good that he wrote a poem and letter about it. He wrote: "The course has given us more confidence, mobility and co-ordination. The team made the sessions a joy to attend and something we can look forward to."

Another group is due to start in the Autumn, but Emily urges anyone interested to get in touch now as there's plenty of support the team can give in the meantime. Call Emily on 0121 601 2208.





WINNING THE FIGHT

The Greet's Green Crime Fighting Team is well on its way to winning the fight against crime. The team was honoured with a special award for achieving the highest reduction in crime in North Sandwell in 2005/6.

They were recognised with a Quality Achievers Award in June for cutting all types of crime in the Greet's Green area between April 2005 and April 2006. According to official statistics, the team was successful in reducing the amount of burglaries in the area by almost 43 per cent and robberies by 47 per cent – over eight times more than their target of 5 per cent. Plus, vehicle crime is down by over 9 per cent, violent crime by 27 per cent and overall crime by 19 per cent.

Sergeant Donovan says: "We're delighted to be recognised for our hard work and dedication. It's thanks to our joint work with Greet's Green Partnership, the Council and members of the community that we've been able to achieve such outstanding results. We hope this will make a difference to people who live in the Greet's Green area."

The team works closely with the Neighbourhood Wardens and gives talks to local schools on issues such as anti-social behaviour and regularly attends Neighbourhood Forums.

I For more information on the Greet's Green Crime Fighting Team contact Cassie Taylor on 0121 626 9182.

Reported & Sorted

Greet's Green Neighbourhood Wardens are still getting your problems reported and sorted.

When the Wardens were on patrol in Turner Street recently, they came across a property which had lots of rubbish dumped in the front garden. They found out it was owned by a private landlord, who they contacted and got all the rubbish removed.

I You can report any local issues to the Neighbourhood Wardens by calling them on 0121 580 4481.



FREE HOME FIRE SAFETY ASSESSMENTS

The Greet's Green Burglary Reduction Initiative and West Midlands Fire Service have teamed up to provide free fire safety advice to all residents in the Greet's Green area.

As well as providing a free security survey and lock fitting service, project workers from the Initiative are now offering residents free advice on how to stay safe from fire.

They can also arrange for someone from the Fire Service to carry out a more detailed fire safety assessment and make recommendations on how to improve the safety of your home.

Phil Hartley, Crime & Community Safety Theme Leader for Greet's Green Partnership, which is funding the Initiative, says: "This is a major commitment by the Partnership to reduce domestic burglary and increase awareness of fire safety issues."

Since it started in December 2005, the £248,000 scheme, which is being run by Urban Heart (formerly Focus Housing Group), has completed security upgrade works to over 450 properties in the area to prevent burglaries and reduce the fear of crime.

I The service is completely free of charge to all residents in the Greet's Green area. For more information, call 0121 565 0958.

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

Caring for carers

A Carers Support Group has been launched in Greets Green following a successful pilot scheme – enabling carers to meet each other and benefit from finding out about services which can help them.

Refreshments are provided and sessions have included gentle exercise, and talks covering issues such as home accident prevention, medication and healthy eating.

The group was launched by Social Workers, Angela Chick and Janice Moore, from the Healthier and Safer Older Age Project in Greets Green, and is now set to continue following positive feedback from those taking part.

Angela says: "We're hoping that people will bond and get support from each other, and share their experiences as carers, because isolation is one of the big problems for carers."

The group meets at Wood Lane Community Centre on Mondays from 10am to 11.30am. It's for anyone who has a caring responsibility, where either the carer or the person being looked after is aged over 50 and lives in the Greets Green area.

To find out more, call Angela Chick on 0121 601 2208.



LIFELONG AWARD

Well done to Freda Janicki who's been presented with a Lifelong Learning Award Certificate of Achievement.

At a time when many people have settled into retirement, Freda has proved there's no need to stop learning. She was nominated for the award in the Citizen of West Bromwich category by Melvin Ward from Wood Lane Community Centre. He said: "Freda's basically still learning things in the community though she's still a young 82. She is a classic example of someone who is involved in lifelong learning."

Within the past year she's taken training sessions relating to the community, been on courses on community development, and when some community managers were doing NVQ level 3 in community development, she attended three day trips with them to look at other developments.

Her certificate states it was given in 'recognition of outstanding accomplishment' and is on the wall at Wood Lane Community Centre.



Would you like to work in sport?

The Sports Pathways Programme is offering residents in Greets Green a chance to train as a sports coach, mentor or volunteer.

Opportunities include joining a Coach Education Programme, leading to qualifications and work placements, and a Sport Mentoring Project for young people aged 16-19 who want to get involved in school, youth and sports clubs or holiday activity programmes.

There's also a Pre-Volunteer Scheme training course, enabling participants to gain experience and secure volunteering positions at major and local events. Working with candidates on an individual basis, the project can assist with employment routes.

For further information, contact Programme Manager, Amanda Beehag on 0121 569 3074, or email amanda_beehag@sandwell.gov.uk

ANYONE FOR A DANCE?

It's never too late for a boogie! That's the message from the Healthier and Safer Older Age Team, which has organised a series of Tea Dances.

The idea of having regular Tea Dances emerged from the team's work to encourage the over 50s to lead healthier lifestyles through the 'Passport for Health' scheme. The first Tea Dance was held in July and another two dates have now been set for 28th September and 14th

December. The dances are held at West Bromwich Town Hall and take place from 1.30pm to 3.30pm, admission £1, including a prize draw ticket.

So if you are over 50, like to dance and want to improve your social life, put the dates in your diary!

The Healthier and Safer Older Age Team can be contacted on 0121 601 2208.





Senior Civil Servant in fact finding mission to Greet's Green

Peter Matthew, the new head of the Community Renewal and Liveability Division in the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit recently made Greet's Green one of his early stop off points as he looked at the New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme as a whole.

The 3-day fact finding mission is part of a wider tour of NDCs around the country to find out what is working and where improvements can be made. Following his visit, Peter praised Greet's Green Partnership in his inaugural speech to the National NDC Chairs & Chief Executives meeting, citing our work as one of the examples to follow.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit is the part of the Government that is responsible for NDCs, Neighbourhood Management, Neighbourhood Wardens, Liveability, Community Empowerment and the voluntary and community

PASSING FRIENDS

We don't always highlight the passing of members of the local community in these pages, but since our last issue we have lost two well-known local figures and although many of you will already be aware, the Greet's Green magazine did not want to let the passing of Jim Roberts and Winston Smikle go unacknowledged.

Jim Roberts lived on Claypit Lane for the majority of his 80 years and when plans to redevelop the area were announced, he was a fierce critic of the Partnership's plans.

We understood this and despite the fact that we agreed to differ, Mr Roberts was always a courteous and welcoming host for the numerous visits members of the Partnership's Housing Team and colleagues from the Council made during the last year to ensure that Mr Roberts was aware of the changes to the area and what the effects might be. "Getting to know Jim Roberts was a pleasure for me," reflects Marianne Monro, Greet's Green Partnership's Housing Community Consultation Manager.

"He once told me a story about how he used to be known locally as 'the magic man' because he was one of the first electricians in the area and people were amazed that he could

'make light'." In May Mr Roberts got his wish to 'have his say' before a full Public Enquiry, giving his view of why change was not right for him.

Winston Smikle has been a familiar part of the local African Caribbean community taking part in a wide range of activities as a member of the African Caribbean Steering Group and a committee member of the Centre Point group. Winston was always enthusiastic and keen to get involved. He was a regular volunteer to staff the African Caribbean stall at community events and always supported the weekly arts and crafts classes at OSCAR.

In their different ways both made a big contribution to life in Greet's Green. Greet's Green Partnership would like to extend our sympathy to the families of Jim Roberts and Winston Smikle.

sector and now comes under the new government ministry, the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The DCLG as it is known has a wide range of responsibilities, including looking at issues of race, faith and gender as well as housing, urban regeneration, planning and local government.

WRITERS CELEBRATE CENTENARY

Local authors and poets will be dropping in to Central Library on 20th September at 7.30pm to talk about their lives as writers and share a tip or two.

Those taking part are saga writer Michael Taylor, children's author Esther Shaw, poet Paul Rees, and Gordon Weaver, who will be talking about his new book, 'Conan Doyle and the Parson's Son'.

i Don't miss a chance to listen to not one but four great authors! Admission is free by advance ticket only. Call into the library in High Street West Bromwich or phone 0121 569 4911 to reserve your place.

All-star charity cricket match

**Himley Cricket Ground
27th August 2006**

**In aid of Guide Dogs
for the Blind.**

Dave Heeley's All stars Vs David English's Bunbury XI

Featuring stars from TV, sport and music, including Richie Woodhall, Bev Bevan, Nick Owen, Adrian Goldberg, Graham Taylor and Shefali Oza, plus many special guests

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

Job Club Room makeover

Autism West Midlands' newly refurbished Job Club Room at St Michaels Court Resource Centre in Sandwell is now up and running.

The room is for use by people with Asperger Syndrome and families of children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Sara Wolczek from Autism West Midlands says: "Thanks to a Community Fund Grant of £1,000 from Greets Green Partnership we've been able to completely transform the room. It's now a lovely calm shade of blue, has softer lighting and we even have a new computer!

"People can use it as a place to relax and take part in various 'Job Club' groups."



I For more details of the Autism West Midlands' Job Club Room, call 0121 525 4529 or drop into the Resource Centre. To find out more about Community Fund Grants contact Bob Lloyd on 0121 533 5060.



Getting into a savings habit is something of a family affair for the Timms of Greets Green, with three generations of them now signed up with the 6 Towns Credit Union.

Twins Lilly-May and Lorna-Marie were joined up by mum Anne-Marie as the youngest Greets Green Savers with the Credit Union Bounty Scheme, aged just three months. The tots are following in the footsteps of both their mother and their grandmother Christine.

Mum Anne-Marie said: "When I found out I was pregnant with twins the first thing that came to mind was how were we going to pay for everything! The Credit Union on the High Street in Carters Green helped me start saving and when I needed to buy baby equipment I was successful in applying for an affordable loan." Grandmother Christine joined 6 Towns to save for Christmas.

I For more details about the 6 Towns Credit Union call 0121 553 3110 or visit www.sixtowns.co.uk

ABUSE AWARENESS

A Domestic Abuse Awareness course is now being run by SWAN (Sandwell Women's Agency Network).

The training course is suitable for any group or organisation wanting to learn more about the effects of domestic abuse on women, men, children, family members and neighbours. It includes looking at how to respond to issues of abuse and agencies which can help.

The total course is approximately 16 hours and can be tailored to meet the needs of different groups, for example with weekly sessions or consecutive days. It leads to an in-house certificate and some participants may wish to go on to Child Protection Training.

I Contact Sue Morgan or Elaine Knowles at SWAN on 0121 553 7074 for more information.



Share your memories

**Did you come to England from the Caribbean years ago?
Want to share your memories of how the Greets Green area
has changed since then?**

Rachel McFee, Greets Green's African Caribbean Development Officer, is working in partnership with OSCAR Sandwell's Youth Forum YBI (Young Black Impact) Heritage Project to record the memories of older residents from around the area.

Interviews are being held to find out what residents' views of music, fashion, singers and life were when they first came over from the Caribbean, and how they've changed over the years.

These interviews will become part of an exhibition created by the YBI members, which will be made available to the public and archived for the future.

I If you're interested in taking part, contact Rachel on 0121 553 7737 or 07766 495247.



KUNG FU CLASSES AVAILABLE

Come and learn new skills at the Kung Fu classes at the Guru Nanak Community Centre.

The classes are run by Mr Singh who's trained in martial arts for more than 30 years. They're open to both children and adults and are held on Tuesdays at 8 - 9.30pm and on Saturdays at 2 - 3.30pm.

"I used to train at the Community Centre myself and it's a real hobby of mine," says Mr Singh. "When people starting saying to me that they'd like to learn too, I decided to run these classes."

i If you're interested in finding out more, contact Mr Singh at the Guru Nanak Community Centre on 0121 525 6923.



Health Forum celebrates

Members of the Community Health Forum celebrated the group's first birthday in May – and stuck to the topic of the evening by cutting a fat-free birthday cake!

The Forum is open to all residents in Greets Green who choose their own subjects to focus on each month, and May's was 'Food is Fun'. The discussion centred around the increasing numbers of overweight and obese people and members talked about what could be done to address these problems.

The Community Health Forum provides an opportunity for you to find out about local health services and influence future health projects in Greets Green. To make your views known, come along to the next Forums on:

Wednesday 13th September, 12.30 - 3.00pm at SWAN

Wednesday 11th October, 4.30 - 7.00pm at Wood Lane Community Centre

Wednesday 8th November, 12.30 - 3.00pm at Lodge Road Community Centre

Wednesday 13th December, 4.30 - 7.00pm at Guns Village Primary School Community Room

i For further information, speak to Health Development Facilitator, Sally Sandel on 0121 612 1663.



SPEEDY WAY TO WEIGHT LOSS!

Local residents have been taking part in Speed Weigh-In and Weight Management sessions, designed as a fun way of finding out about healthy eating.

The sessions were held at community venues during May and July, and were based on the idea of Speed Dating, but focused on weight loss instead.

Funded by the Greets Green 'Food 4 U Project' and Sandwell Primary Care Trusts, the Speed Weigh-Ins aimed to help people find new ways of making healthy choices.

Residents were invited to have a quick and discreet weigh-in and then had the chance to tour a number of five minute presentations by nutrition and fitness experts covering diet, shopping skills and exercise. Then, just like speed dating, they could choose their preferred partner to help them lose weight!

i If you'd like to find out more, contact Health Development Facilitator, Sally Sandel, on 0121 612 1663.



Time traders cook up a BBQ

Greets Green Partnership's Time 2 Trade project celebrated the end of a successful year with a barbecue event at their High Street offices.

The project encourages residents to offer their time and skills for free and to bank points which can be redeemed by getting other scheme members to do things for them.

Project Manager, Dan Grainger explains: "It's a really simple way for people to get something done that they might find hard to do themselves. Time 2 Trade members get involved in all sorts of things from gardening and decorating to walking the dog – it's that easy!"

Presentations were made to some of Time 2 Trade's most enthusiastic members including Julie Vaughan and Sylvia Russell who give lots of time to others but don't worry about the time they get back.

i If you'd like to get involved with Time 2 Trade, call Dan Grainger on 0121 553 3110 to find out more.



Flip
magazine
for 'Young
Greets
Green!'

young greet's green

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2006

Pupils create podcast

**PUPILS SHARING EXPERIENCES
WITH PODCASTS**

Have a go at our
crossword
competition
see page 23

PUPILS CREATE PODCASTS

Pupils from Ryders Green, Lyng, Newtown and Guns Village Primary Schools have spent the past year getting to know more about the area and recording what they've discovered. And the result is 12 podcasts which share their experiences.



They've all been taking part in Sandwell Education Business Partnership's WorkWise's podcast project and recently got together for a celebration and to share their work.

The pupils gathered at the Menzies City Learning Centre in Clarkes Lane for a special event where they each gave a presentation about their experiences and played some of the recordings they've made. Everyone taking part received a certificate to mark their achievements.

"The pupils had a great time visiting places they'd not been to before,"

Mollie McPherson, Education Project Officer, explained: "When we spoke to children about the area, they didn't seem to have any idea about what amenities there are in Sandwell.

"So the podcast project was created to get them out into some of the nice places in Sandwell and do English exercises to report back on their experiences. They took tape recorders and interviewed people while they were out, then spent half a day making podcasts about their visits at Menzies."

Podcasts take their name from a combination of 'iPod' and 'broadcasting' and are digital sound files which can be published on the internet or played on iPods.

Each term a group of 10 children went out to places including Sandwell Valley, the RSPB reserve and Galton Valley Canal Heritage Centre. They also visited Haden Hill, a Victorian house in Cradley Heath, where they had fun dressing up in Victorian costumes.

YOUNG PEOPLE MOVE FROM 'PLACE 2 PLACE'

Moving from primary to secondary school can be a worrying time, but young people in Greets Green are getting lots of support to make it as easy as possible, following the launch of a new 'Place 2 Place' project run by Head to Head at Murray Hall Community Trust.

During the Summer term, 150 pupils in Year 7 at Ryders Green, Newtown, Lyng, Lodge and Guns Village Primary Schools took part in class-based workshops to help prepare them for the change ahead. They've also been invited to join in fun activities and workshops throughout the Summer holidays so they can make friends with others who are starting George Salter High School in September.

Help and support will continue to be available once the pupils start at their new school. More workshops will be held during the first term and counselling sessions will be offered to youngsters and their families if they're finding it hard to cope with the change.

Malcolm Bailey, Chief Executive of Murray Hall Community Trust, says: "Our aim is for young people to settle well into secondary school and build good relationships with their peers and staff.

"We want more youngsters in Greets Green to enjoy school and we hope 'Place 2 Place' will help."

i To find out more about 'Place 2 Place', call Philippa, Project Co-ordinator, on 07754 116215.

SUPPORT FOR YOUNG MUMS AND DADS

A weekly group for young parents in Greets Green is helping to provide support and activities for them and their children.

The Greets Green Young Parents Group is held every Thursday from 12.30pm to 2.30pm at the YMCA in Carters Green and also supports young parents-to-be. It's run by the Teenage Pregnancy Team of Sandwell PCTs in partnership with the Youth Service and the YMCA, and is funded by Greets Green Partnership.

Greets Green's Teenage Pregnancy Development Worker, Louise Andrews says: "There's something different to do at the group every week, from healthy eating and healthy lifestyles to pampering, baby weaning and arts and crafts. We find out what's going on in Greets Green and include our young parents, assisting with everything from applying for housing and benefits, to college courses and job applications. The young parents plan events and trips and we always have a good old chat!"

If you're aged between 16 and 21, are a resident of the Greets Green area, and are a young parent or parent-to-be, you're welcome to join in or find out more by calling Louise on 07813 319510 or 0121 553 6415.

Tackling Teenage Pregnancy

Louise has created an action plan for supporting young parents and providing sex and relationship education work in Greets Green. The aim is to help raise awareness among young people and raise aspirations.

Louise was appointed to her full-time role of Teenage Pregnancy Development Worker in February, with the aim of reducing the

teenage pregnancy rate and providing support to young mums and dads in Greets Green. The teenage pregnancy rate in Sandwell is amongst the highest in Europe, with Greets Green being the sixth highest ward in Sandwell. The past six years have seen a reduction in teenage pregnancies in Sandwell and Louise hopes to continue this trend in Greets Green through her work.

Youngsters score

The Hat-Trick Unity Football Tournament at George Salter High School in May proved a huge success. Young people from white, Yemeni, Bangladeshi, Indian, African Caribbean and Pakistani communities were joined by the Lyng Falcons Football team for an action-packed day of football.

Hat-Trick Football Development Officer for Greets Green, Russ Smith, said: "The idea was about getting the different communities working together. The teams played six games and the standard was impressive – but more impressive was the new friends made."

The Hat-Trick project is also open to adults. Watch out for future events and activities. If you'd like to get involved, call Russ Smith on 08700 662 840 (local rate) or mobile 07904 588095.

COMPETITION CORNER

Have a go at this issue's crossword. Simply answer the 10 sporting questions, then send your entry by 18 September 2006 to: Magazine Competition, FREEPOST GREETS GREEN PARTNERSHIP (no stamp required). The first three correct entries out of the hat will each win a £10 voucher.

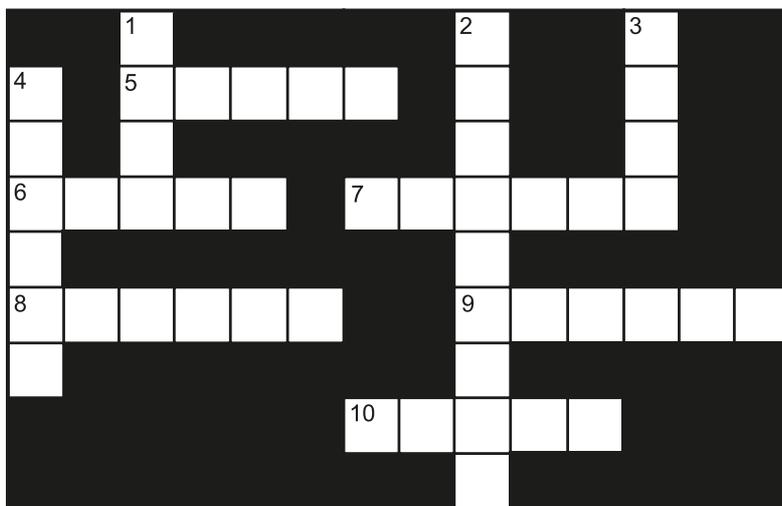
Congratulations to Mrs D Copson, Nurjahan Aktar, Suraya Begum, Mr S Barron and Mrs M Stockley who each won a £5 voucher from last issue's wordsearch.

Across

5. Which team won the 2006 world cup?
6. In which board game will you find pawns and knights?
7. Which city will host the 2012 Olympic Games?
8. How many players are there in a football team?
9. The two colours in connect 4 are red and ?
10. Colour of ball used to pot all the other balls in snooker?

Down

1. How many rings make the Olympic symbol?
2. How many miles are in a marathon?
3. In snakes and ladders, which direction do you travel along snakes?
4. Name of instrument used to hit balls in tennis?



Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Tel No. _____