

greetsgreen

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2006

HEALTHY SHOPPING

Fresh fruit & veg on sale locally

greetsgreen
partnership



USE YOUR VOTE!

Neighbourhood Representative elections are underway in

- Carters Green ■ Oak House South
- West Bromwich Central ■ Hamblett's South
- Greet's Green ■ Swan Village

Last date to post *your* vote is 20th October. Results will be announced on 26th October.

Meet your new Reps in next issue.

Issue 26

Front cover: Thanks to the Eatwell project funded by Greets Green Partnership, fresh fruit and vegetables are now available from local retailer, News Plus in Claypit Lane.

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

Magazine Contact Details:

Call Barbryn direct on

T: **01564 741847**, E: susan@barbryn.co.uk

Or Greets Green Partnership on

T: **0800 953 0215**.

E: brian_mckinstrie@sandwell.gov.uk

Issue 27, covering December/January 2007, will be published in December 2006.



Produced on behalf of Greets Green Partnership by Barbryn Ltd

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

આ માહિતીના ભાષાંતરમાં જો તમને મદદ જોઈતી હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને અંગ્રેજી બોલતા કોઈ સિત્ર કે કુટુંબીજનને કહો કે અમને 0800 953 0215 ઉપર ફોન કરે..

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਬੋਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੋਸਤ ਜਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਨੂੰ 0800 953 0215 ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਹੋ।

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

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

welcome

to issue 26 of the Greets Green Magazine.

There's so much change happening across Greets Green – and it's all for the better! See our main feature on page 4 to find out what's been happening and how Greets Green Partnership is listening to local residents so they can help plan the area's future.

Creating great communities is about more than simply building new homes, which is why a new 'Living Together, Working Together' community cohesion strategy has been launched. Its aim is to bring people together from all different backgrounds across Greets Green so that barriers are broken down. Read all about it on page 16.

Many residents will no doubt have seen the new Children's Centre taking shape at Ryders Green Primary School. This excellent centre is due to open soon with an official launch in January but it needs local families to help decide the services it should offer. Turn to page 11 to see how you can get involved.

A new dispersal order, giving the Police powers to prevent anti-social behaviour, has recently been introduced to the area. What do you think about this? See centre pages for details.

And don't forget to have a go at our prize competition in the Young Greets Green section, which is open to all ages.

Happy reading!

TEAM CONTACTS

ALLY ALLERSON

Executive Director

T: 0121 533 3181

E: ally_allerson@sandwell.gov.uk

JOHN PADDOCK

Deputy Director

T: 0121 533 3198

E: john_paddock@sandwell.gov.uk

KATHERINE HEWITT

Community Empowerment

T: 0121 533 3185

E: katherine_hewitt@sandwell.gov.uk

DAVID GUY

Housing & Urban Form

T: 0121 533 1379

E: david_guy@sandwell.gov.uk

ROHIT MISTRY

Neighbourhood Management

T: 0121 533 1866

E: rohit_mistry@sandwell.gov.uk

SALLY SANDEL

Health

T: 0121 612 1663

E: sally.sandel@wwb-pct.nhs.uk

PHIL HARTLEY

Crime & Community Safety

T: 0121 532 6885

E: philip_hartley@sandwell.gov.uk

ROGER CUNNINGHAM

Education & Lifelong Learning

T: 0121 533 3184

E: roger_cunningham@sandwell.gov.uk

BRIAN MCKINSTRIE

Communications

T: 0121 532 6835

E: brian_mckinstrie@sandwell.gov.uk

BOB LLOYD

Neighbourhood Support Officer

T: 0121 533 5058/5059

E: bob_lloyd@sandwell.gov.uk

SIMON WARE, HARSHAD PATEL & ALLISON FRANKS

Neighbourhood Support Team

T: 0121 533 5058/5059

E: harshad_patel@sandwell.gov.uk

RUPHSANA NAHAR-QAYYUM & SAM WATTS

Diversity Officer (job share)

T: 0121 532 6978

E: ruphsana_nahar@sandwell.gov.uk

Or you can contact any of the team on freephone

0800 953 0215

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Residents are sha **Greets Green's f**

The people who know how Greets Green should be improved are you, the residents. That's why Greets Green Partnership is continuing to listen to your views and opinions in transforming the area for future generations.

DEVELOPERS COMING ON BOARD

Last issue we gave you some feedback on the 'Greets Green is Changing' Developers' Day which was held in June at The Hawthorns. The aim was to invite private developers to see first-hand the opportunities available and see if they would be interested in working with the Greets Green Housing Partnership to build homes in the area.

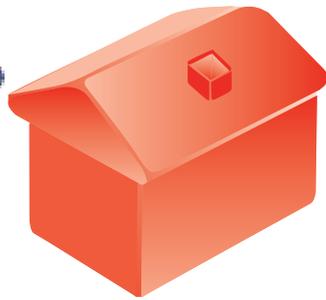
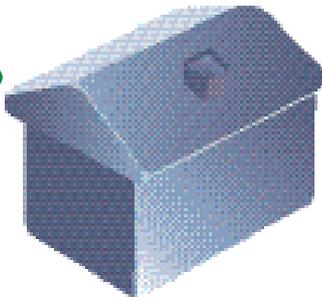
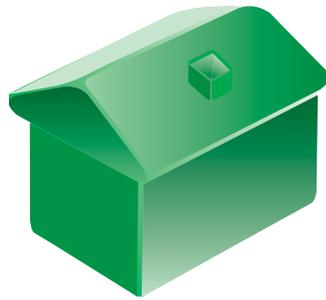
Since then, formal submissions have been made by interested developers and those shortlisted have been interviewed by the Housing Partnership. An announcement as to which developers have been successful in being selected will be made soon. "We'll invite the developers we select to put ideas forward for a particular site," explained John Har den, Planning Development Manager at Sandwell Council. "We'll then choose the best ideas and will involve residents in shaping these ideas before we put in a planning application.

"It's a long process but it's the way we have to work. We'll have a preferred group of developers who we'll work with and this will mean we can have much more control of how they develop sites. We'll be involving the community all the time."

i If you'd like to find out more about Greets Green's Housing Plan, call the Housing Team on freephone 0800 073 0798.

“The important thing is that local residents get to influence the designs before anything gets to the stage of a planning application.”

ping uture



WHAT YOU THINK...



Private developers were all given a copy of a 'Greetings Green is Changing' DVD, featuring interviews with local people. Here's a selection of their comments.

"We'd like to see modern houses, mixed houses, where single parents and families will all live together in one area."



"I believe Greet's Green is progressing. I think it's tremendous what's happening. The future looks good but it's down to the community to make it good."

"The way the area's been changed now, it's got to be for the good. It can only get better. What's happened with Greet's Green Partnership is probably the best thing that's happened for the area since the War."



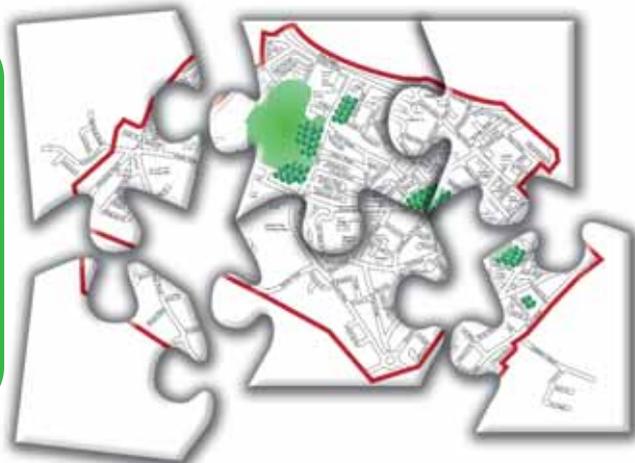
"I'd like to see a better place to live with more people moving into the area because of what we've done and what will be done, with children happy and places for them to go. Overall, just a complete difference."



"The ideal result for me would be that the promises that have been made to give us better housing, are kept. It's a long road but hopefully we'll get there."



"My first consideration is for the people in Greet's Green to be able to afford whatever is built. Living in better houses and in better conditions improves people. If people are living in decent housing in decent surroundings, people will change and will live up to that standard. If you make people feel second class, they will live second class."





Transforming the under-used and run-down recreation ground in Wattle Road is high on the agenda of Greets Green Partnership's Housing Team.

As part of the redevelopment of Claypit Lane, Greets Green Partnership is hoping to make the most of the chance to improve the park.

Help decide which sites to improve

Different areas in Greets Green are set to be improved in response to residents' requests. The Neighbourhood Management team at Greets Green Partnership has a fund of £70,000 which is being put into the new 'Small Sites' project.

Neighbourhood Manager, Rohit Mistry, explains: "The money is being divided between the Neighbourhood Forums. It has to be spent on projects to improve safety or the environment. We've looked back at what's been discussed at the Forums since March, to find what people would like to see improved in their area.

"We've passed all these requests to Technical Services to see which are feasible and are reporting back to the Forums. We're giving residents the power to decide how the Small Sites money is used."

The second round of meetings with the Forums has already started, but there's still time to go along and help in the decision making. The money all has to be spent in this financial year, so projects will start as soon as possible.

Neighbourhood Forums

The meetings all start at 6.30pm on:

Monday, 6th November
at OSCAR (Lodge Road Forum)

Tuesday, 7th November
at Ryders Green School
(Hamblett's Forum)

Wednesday, 8th November
at the Town Hall (Carters Green
and West Bromwich Central
Forum)

Wednesday 8th November
at venue to be confirmed
(Oak House Forum)

Monday, 13th November
at Ryders Green Day Centre
(Greets Green Forum)

i For more details, call Rohit Mistry on 0121 533 1866.

Landscape architects are being sought, subject to securing funding, to provide a range of design options to create a recreation ground which is welcoming, exciting, user-friendly and improves the appearance of the area.

Through local Neighbourhood Forums and recent consultation events in the Oakhouse/Hamblett's areas, some residents have already given their views on how the recreation ground should be improved, and these comments will be passed on to the landscape architects.

Once the architects have been appointed, the Housing Team will provide further opportunities for residents to get involved and influence the design options that are developed. Ideas could include more and improved footpaths, better lighting, and new landscaping and benches.

Housing Theme Leader David Guy said: "Because it's one of the largest pieces of open land, not only in Greets Green but also in West Bromwich, it would be great to see if we can enhance it further – it's a great opportunity. We want to get a vision for the area and involve residents in creating it."

i To find out more or to get involved, call the Housing Team on freephone 0800 073 0798.

Residents are saying **ASK ME**

Almost every single resident in Greets Green has now been given a chance to have their say about any issues in the area – and more than 100 people have already taken up the opportunity.

The 'Down Your Street' initiative started with the Neighbourhood Support Team delivering leaflets to all local homes. If residents wanted to highlight a concern or ask a question, they simply displayed the 'Ask Me' leaflet in their window.

Over the Summer, Neighbourhood Support Workers have been available in each area for street surgeries, looking for the leaflets and then speaking to the residents in their own homes about the issues they wanted to discuss.

Bob Lloyd, Neighbourhood Support Officer, said the leaflets had gone out to every street in Greets Green except a few where major demolition or redevelopment work is currently going on.

"Some people had three or four different issues they wanted to talk about," said Bob. "The information gained from the street surgeries is now being analysed and will then be passed on to the relevant team to deal with.

"For some issues, residents can be given individual help or advice, or referred to the appropriate department."



Issues raised include:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Rubbish, litter and fly-tipping
- Overgrown areas of land
- Noise from traffic, firms, pubs and clubs
- Requests for traffic calming
- Overhanging trees
- Security

If you'd like to speak to the Neighbourhood Support Team, call freephone 0800 953 0215.



Many courses at the YCA

The Yemeni Community Association (YCA) at the Greets Green Access Centre in Tildasley Street provides advice and support to approximately 200 Yemeni families who live in Sandwell. Conference and training facilities are also available for use by the wider community.

A range of activities are available for everyone within the Yemeni community from advice sessions and job clubs to Arabic and keep fit classes, kids' karate classes and luncheon clubs for the elderly.

Following a successful trial last year, the YCA has recently set up an Islam Awareness Course aimed at employers who want to develop a better understanding of Islam and the cultural issues surrounding the religion.

YCA Education Officer, Samina Saudager, says: "The course is split into four individual one-day modules so there's one to suit every type of employer - health, education, adult and children services and other employers including the Police, voluntary organisations and businesses.

"We believe that in today's workplace there's a real need for people to understand Islam so that everyone can work in harmony, regardless of their religion. We're confident that people will find the course interesting and rewarding."



Meanwhile there are still places on several of YCA's 'Skills for Life' courses, including ESOL and ICT which began on 18th September, and textiles, beauty and Mendi, beginning on 15th January 2007.



YCA services:

- Community Access Point
- Legal/Welfare/Health/Social Concern Advice
- Interpreting and Translation Services
- Assistance with forms/CVs
- Adult Education Courses
- ITC Room and Training Facilities
- Conference Room Facility
- Access point for Statutory and voluntary organisations in Sandwell.

For more information, drop into the YCA at the Greets Green Access Centre on Tildasley Street, call 0121 525 3909 or log on to www.yca-sandwell.org.uk

Keep reporting issues

Residents are being encouraged to keep reporting local issues to Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens, where they'll be greeted by a new voice on the end of the phone.

Grant Waldron has been busy since he joined the team as Administration Officer, as he explains: "The Neighbourhood Wardens' office is visited by lots of residents every day and I help deal with all their enquiries and point them in the right direction for more help and advice."

He's also playing an invaluable role in helping the Wardens tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. "I keep in touch with the Wardens when they're out on patrol, take down information from them and log any incidents onto the database in case they need to be followed up in the future," he says.

Plus, he's finding time to study for an NVQ in Business Administration. Grant found his job through the Job Introduction Programme - a scheme run by Sandwell Council and Job Centre Plus.

They help lots of people with disabilities to find work experience and employment, as

well as providing funding to study for a relevant NVQ qualification.

I To find out more about the Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens, call 0121 580 4481 or visit their office at 380 High Street. For more information about the Job Introduction Programme, contact Sharon Johal on 0121 569 4455.



SAFER CYCLING

Police are urging cyclists in Greets Green to take care and stick to the roads after one resident was knocked down by someone riding on the pavement. Concerns about cyclists were raised at a recent Hamblets Forum meeting and residents wanted the dangers to be highlighted.

Albion BID goes national

The Albion Business Consortium's Business Improvement District (BID), believed to be the largest industrial BID in the UK, has received national recognition.

Property Week interviewed Chairman of West Bromwich Tool & Engineering, and Chair of the Albion BID, Stuart Fell as part of a two-page feature in the June issue of the magazine.

The BID, which covers 80 businesses based at Brandon Way, Albion Road, Oldbury Road and the Izens Industrial Estates, was set up earlier this year in an attempt to clamp down on crime in the area. Local businesses pay an extra four per cent on their rates to fund improvements such as state-of-the-art security cameras which send information direct to the Police.

Stuart Fell said: "I'm really pleased with the publicity we've received for our BID.

I think lots of people reading the national article will be able to relate to our situation and agree that we should not have to put up with crime."

I For more information on the Albion BID, contact Stuart on 0121 500 5616.



We're cleaning up your area!

The new environmental team dedicated to making Greets Green cleaner and tidier - and keeping it that way - has been making a big impact in the area.

The four-strong team started work for the Cleaner Environment Project just after Easter and only focus on Greets Green, not the whole of West Bromwich.

Waste Action Worker, Andrew Hartill, who supervises the crew, said: "There's been a great improvement in the cleanliness of the streets since the team started.

"On average about 25 loads of fly-tipping are removed from the streets of Greets Green every week, ranging from a few

bags to lorry loads of bricks and rubble. Over 480 separate fly-tips have been collected since the beginning of May."

The Lodge Road area was identified as being the scene of more than 25 per cent of all the fly-tipped rubbish picked up.

Letters were sent out to local properties to remind residents what to do with rubbish and what the arrangements for refuse collection are. Since then, there's been a fall of eight per cent in the amount of

fly-tipped rubbish collected in the area. The team has found the biggest problems are black bags of household and green waste put out on the street regardless of whether it's due to be collected.

This makes up a staggering 60-70 per cent of all fly-tipped waste collected. This is currently being investigated and any residents who are found to be responsible could be fined.

I Any problems with fly-tipping or waste collection can be reported to Contact Sandwell on 0845 359 7501 or via the Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens on 0121 580 4481.

Already, all streets in the area are cleaned at least once a fortnight rather than every four-five weeks as previously. But probably the biggest difference the team's made has been in tackling particular trouble spots on both council-owned and private land. The areas cleaned so far include:



Duke Street - an access-way to the rear of houses which was frequently blocked by fly-tipped rubbish was cleared. Greets Green Partnership has now installed gates to stop the problem.



Greets Green Road - the pools were cleared of most of the bulky rubbish and restoration work is now being looked into.

Oldbury Road - lots of fly-tipped rubbish was removed from an access-way to garages.



Have you noticed a difference in your area? If so let us know. Contact Rohit Mistry at Greets Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.

Countdown to Children's Centre

Staff have been making themselves at home in the new purpose-built Children's Centre in Greets Green – and the countdown has now begun until it opens its doors to the community.

Although there were delays with the building work, the Centre at Ryders Green Primary School in Claypit Lane has now become a local landmark and it won't be long until its excellent facilities and

services are benefiting children and families across Greets Green. Dealing with much of the hard work to get it ready for opening is the Centre's new Deputy Manager Flo Reynolds, who's already a familiar face in the area.

Flo came to the exciting role from the Child Home Safety Project where she was Development Worker. "The Centre is planned as a focal point for children and parents in the area," says Flo.

"It will include a 48-place day nursery, family support, education and community health services for families. There'll also be lots of groups meeting here."

Flo is working closely with Jenny Mahimbo, Children and Families Programme Manager, and is already starting to set up lots of exciting programmes for children and their families.

She has recruited several key workers for the Centre – a community involvement worker, maternity support worker, family support worker, administrator and admin assistant. "We're making progress but it takes time," she adds. "Our official launch will be in January."

More services will be developed once the Centre opens as they'll be shaped by what local families say they want. Flo hopes to get parents involved by developing a system in which they can gain points by coming into the Centre for events. The points can then be exchanged for gifts and concessions. Watch this space!

i For more details contact Flo on 0121 553 6415.



HEALTHY SHOPPING CLOSER TO HOME

A local shop has introduced a range of fresh fruit and vegetables to help customers make healthy choices.

NewsPlus in Claypit Lane is taking part in the Eatwell project as part of the area's Food 4 U Healthy Retailing Scheme. The project aims to help make fresh fruit and vegetables readily available and affordable, and support local neighbourhood retailing.

NewsPlus, a family-run business, was awarded a grant towards replacing three old fridges with a large new chill cabinet for fresh produce. The store is also promoting its healthy options with the Eatwell logo on outside signs and various advertising initiatives and promotions.

Altaf Hussain, who runs the business with family members including Shabir Hussain, Sadier Hussain and Arfaan Khan, said customers had welcomed the chance to buy fresh fruit and veg closer to home, since they would otherwise have to travel to Great Bridge or West Bromwich.

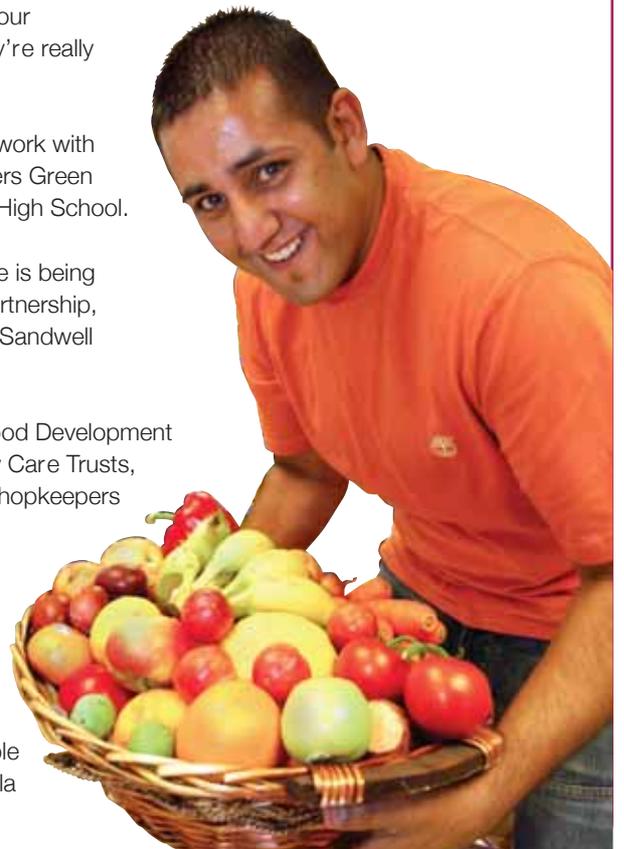
"We've been telling a lot of our customers about it and they're really pleased," he said.

The shop is also hoping to work with the two local schools, Ryders Green Primary and George Salter High School.

The healthy retailing initiative is being funded by Greets Green Partnership, working in association with Sandwell Primary Care Trusts.

Angela Blair, Community Food Development Worker at Sandwell Primary Care Trusts, said: "We're hoping more shopkeepers in time will get involved."

i If shopkeepers or residents would like to know more about the healthy retailing project, or if you would like to see fresh produce made available in your local area, call Angela Blair on 0121 612 1450.



DISPERSAL ZONE TACKLES ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

An order giving the Police powers to prevent anti-social behaviour by dispersing groups and returning under-16s to their homes has been introduced in Greets Green.

Greets Green Partnership's Crime & Community Safety Theme Leader Phil Hartley said: "The dispersal order runs for six months and aims to tackle some of the anti-social behaviour that's been happening in the area and to provide reassurance for residents."

The dispersal order started on 17th July 2006 and runs until 16th January 2007. The area covered is as shown in white on the map above.

It means that people in groups of two or more can be directed by a Police Officer to disperse or leave the area where the Police have reasonable grounds for believing that their behaviour could result in local people being intimidated, harassed, alarmed or distressed. Also, between 9pm and 6am, anyone under the age of 16 who isn't with an adult, can be taken back to their home.

A range of new activities are being introduced in Greets Green to give local young people more to do so that there's no need to hang around on the streets. Plus, the Greets Green Youth Forum is kicking off again with a revamped format – turn to the Young Greets Green pages at the back of the magazine to find out more.

Speak Out!

What do you think of this dispersal order?

We're asking all local residents to let us know how you feel. Is the dispersal order a good idea? Email brian_mckinstrie@sandwell.gov.uk with your comments or call him on freephone 0800 953 0215. We'll print a selection of your comments in the next issue.



SIZZLING SUMMER OF ACTIVITIES

Youngsters didn't have time to be bored and hang around this Summer in Greet's Green - they were too busy playing football, going to Rock School or learning about health and beauty!



These are just some of the many sports and activities that were on offer for 8-16 year olds during the Summer, thanks to a new approach to organising holiday activities.

West Bromwich Albion's Hat-trick Project Worker, Russ Smith, organised for 50 youngsters aged 8-11 to take part in two weeks of multi-sports. From football and cricket to Tae Kwon-do and roller blading – there was lots going on!

And thanks to Sandwell Youth Service, they also enjoyed day trips to Drayton Manor Park and Liverpool Football Club.

Meanwhile the Central West Bromwich Extended Schools Co-operative arranged for 8-11 year olds from local schools to take part in a Sports Week at Guns Village and Lyng Primary Schools.

Plus, various 'theme' days were organised including 'Rock School', 'Super Heroes' and 'Plastic Fantastic', where kids learnt how to recycle household waste.



Meera Patel, aged 9 from Guns Village Primary School said: "I had a great time and it was good fun. I met new friends and I would definitely do it again."

As part of the Fit-For-Life project, 11-14 year old girls took part in a fitness, health and beauty week at George Salter High School which included three hours of physical activity each morning followed by sessions on health and beauty in the afternoons. Fit-for-Life Co-ordinator, Shaleen Meelu said: "Taking part in physical activity is necessary for

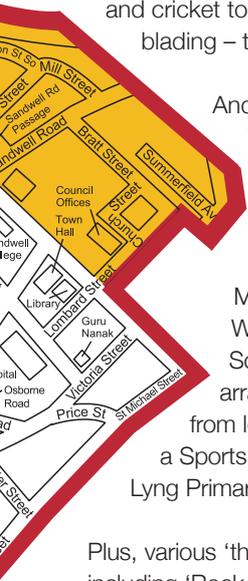
youngsters' overall health and wellbeing. We make staying fit a fun option."

And 15-16 year olds got the chance to brush up on their GCSE coursework, as booster sessions were held in art and design, photography, ICT, music, PE and English.

John Nicholson, Extended School Co-ordinator, said: "This is the first time we've organised a more structured Summer activity programme through a partnership between George Salter, the West Bromwich Albion Hat-trick project, the Central West Bromwich Extended Schools Co-operative and Sandwell Youth Service."

"This is just the start of this fresh approach to providing activities for young people in Greet's Green, and we'll be organising more during future school holidays."

John Nicholson, Extended School Co-ordinator, George Salter High School



Development plans for Central Square revealed

Work to create new homes in Greet's Green is progressing at the Laing Homes development on the corner of High Street and Dartmouth Street.

Laing Homes Midlands believes Central Square is ideally located in the heart of an exciting redevelopment area. Within hours of the first properties being released for sale they were already attracting interest from couples and families both locally and from further afield.

A number were snapped up from plan within days, even before groundworks commenced. The development consists of 124 homes ranging from two bedroom town houses to three and four bedroom three-storey houses.



Greet's Green Partnership's Housing Theme Leader, David Guy, said: "It shows developers have got the confidence to come to Greet's Green now because they can see things changing and the improvements being put in by the Partnership. They know it's a place worth investing in."

He added that the new homes may provide an option for some residents moving from clearance areas in Greet's Green, who may be eligible for grants to help them move.

For further information about Central Square, visit the Laing Homes marketing suite at the corner of Dartmouth Street and High Street or call 0121 525 9278.

HOUSING WINNERS



Congratulations to two local residents who shared their views on the local built environment and won a £25 B&Q voucher for doing so!

Sandwell Homes tenant, Ronald Bishop from Turner Street (above) and owner occupier, Wendy Ebanks from Bromford Lane (right), took part in Greet's Green Partnership's housing consultation events which were held at various venues in July.

The events were organised for Oakhouse and Hamblett's residents to find out their priorities for local housing and environmental works. Everyone who took part was entered into a prize draw.

Watch out in the next issue for details of the action being taken as a result of the



feedback gained from residents through the consultation events.

To contact the Greet's Green Partnership Housing Team, call freephone 0800 073 0798.

Important step for planning new homes in Greet's Green

The plans that will see the building of new homes in Greet's Green are moving forward after Government inspectors confirmed to Sandwell Council that proposals covering Claypit Lane / Wattle Road and the Housing Assessment Area (based round Edith Street / Chapman Street) are in the public interest and that a fair balance had been reached in the compulsory purchase of land required.

The Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, Ruth Kelly, has confirmed that the Public Enquiries into plans for the redevelopment of these areas can now go ahead. "It's an important step," said David Guy, Greet's Green Partnership's Housing Theme Leader. "It marks the point at which we can start talking to the developers who have shown an interest in building quality homes with the variety we want to make available in Greet's Green."

Greet's Green Partnership are working to implement the Greet's Green Housing Plan in partnership with Sandwell Council and Urban Living, with the support of Sandwell Homes and RegenCo to broaden housing choice and promote quality and innovation.

WINTER FUN

Remember to make a note in your diary!
On Saturday 9th December, there's a great
chance to enjoy some pre-Christmas
fun and entertainment.

Neighbourhood Support Worker,
Allison Franks, is busy organising
a Winter Fun Day which will take place
at the Memorial Gardens on the High Street.

She said: "If people want to help plan the
event, run a stall on the day, volunteer
to be a steward or provide entertainment,
they should get in touch with me."



FACE PAINTING

ICE SKATING RINK



BETHEL CHURCH CHOIR



Saturday 9th December
Memorial Gardens, High Street

The event is still
in its early stages of
development, so to get
involved, contact Allison on
freephone 0800 953 0215
or 0121 553 5059/5058.

Living Together, Working together

Residents across Greets Green are being encouraged to start 'Living Together, Working Together'.

The new Greets Green community cohesion strategy literally took off at the Summer Fun Day in July when it was launched by residents with a special balloon race. The residents taking part in the launch have all been involved in the consultation process to create the strategy.

During January and February, nine sessions were run with different community groups including the Youth Forum, the Pakistani Men's and Women's Steering Groups, the Yemeni Group, the Bangladeshi Women's Group and the Centre Point Group. More than 100 people from a broad cross section of the Greets Green community shared their views.

They were asked a range of questions including 'What do you think is meant by the term community cohesion?', 'What will a cohesive Greets Green look like in 2010?' and 'What particular barriers do you face?'

All the feedback was used to develop a 'Living Together, Working Together Action Plan' which details how Greets Green Partnership will work with local people to create a more cohesive community.

Initiatives outlined in the action plan include establishing multi-cultural cooking activities, putting notice boards in community venues to publicise activities and events across Greets Green, holding events which raise awareness and 'demystify' different cultures, and launching a programme of equality and diversity training.

To monitor whether the action plan is being done, a new Diversity Advisory Group (DAG) has been created which is made up of local residents and community organisations. The Group will also ensure that the programme of activity brings people together from all different backgrounds to work together.

"We're looking for new members to join the Diversity Advisory Group," says Katherine Hewitt, Community Empowerment Theme Leader. "If you're interested in helping communities work together better, please get involved."

"Community Cohesion is about mutual respect and everyone, regardless of background, being able to take part in whatever they choose"
Yemeni Management Group

"Greets Green will be a place where different communities work together to achieve the same goal"
Pakistani Women's Steering Group

"Community Cohesion is about people making an effort to work together to create a better understanding of each other"
Bangladeshi Women's Group

"We want to work to create even better relationships between communities"
African Caribbean Centre Point Group

"Community Cohesion is misunderstood. It's not just about race, it's about including everyone..."
Greets Green Youth Forum

I To find out more about getting involved in the Living Together, Working Together programme, contact Sam Watts or Ruphsana Nahar-Qayyum on freephone 0800 953 0215.



Youngsters learn all about art and faith

Children at Ryders Green Primary School created a stunning new display after taking part in an Art Through Community Beliefs project.

Youngsters from Years 3 and 4 visited various religious centres including a Christian church, a Muslim mosque and a Hindu temple, where they took photographs and made drawings of the various signs and symbols relating to the different faiths.

They then worked with two professional artists to design artwork which is now proudly on display at the School.



WHAT DO YOU WANT TO LEARN?

Many adults have signed up for a wide range of interesting courses to keep them busy through the long dark winter. But adult education workers now want to know what short courses you would like to take in the term starting after Christmas, so that they can start planning sessions now.

People living in Greets Green can get free or subsidised courses, plus support to attend them. There's already a huge choice of courses on offer, which residents have taken up this Autumn.

Some involve trying a new skill such as nail art or digital photography, while others develop creative skills such as flower arranging. People are also learning more about the internet, improving DIY

skills, learning a new language, or learning presentation and interview skills which could turn their life around. The Greets Green Adult & Community Learning Project aims to encourage and support people in the area to access local learning opportunities.

Marcia Roberts-Grey, Community Development and Marketing Officer, said: "We'd like people to call us now to

let us know what they're interested in doing after Christmas. Courses are for everyone - for people with no qualifications to those who want to progress and develop further."

And she stresses that Greets Green residents, even if they are in full time work, can still qualify for financial help towards courses up to A-level equivalent which might help them change career.

I To find out more about courses, or to let the team know what you want to study, call Marcia, Pam or Miranda on 0121 525 6457/6671.



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

Anyone for a dance this Christmas?

A Christmas Tea Dance for over 50s is to be held at West Bromwich Town Hall following the success of two earlier events held in July and September.



The dance will take place on 14th December from 1.30pm to 3.30pm and offers a great alternative to all that Christmas shopping! Admission is just £1 and includes a prize draw ticket.

The tea dances are organised by the Healthier & Safer Older Age Team in Greets Green with the message: 'It's never too late to boogie!' If you would like to know more, simply give the team a call on 0121 601 2208.



LIFESAVING PATCHES

Residents from the Bangladeshi community across Greets Green have been issued with CO2 patches which can detect if they have dangerously high levels of carbon monoxide in their homes.



Shabud Ullah, Programme Manager for the Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations, says: "We've been working with the Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens and have so far issued CO2 patches to 150 households. We've particularly targeted elderly and vulnerable residents, as they may not realise there's a problem until it's too late.

"These patches can literally save lives - they change colour if carbon monoxide is present so residents can seek help straight away."

For more information, call Shabud on 0121 500 5441.

SINISTER EVENT AT THE LIBRARY

Sandwell Central Library continues to celebrate its Centenary Year by hosting a special event in October.

As Hallowe'en draws near, the sinister side of the Black Country will be examined on 18th October when author and historian David J Cox comes to talk about his book 'Foul Deeds and Suspicious Deaths Around the Black Country'.

He promises to take the audience on a dark journey where he will look at some of the murders, conspiracies, executions and crimes of passion from around the Black Country.

The event starts at 7.30pm and admission is free. You must get tickets in advance from the library or by calling 0121 569 4911.

FOOD ACTION

The Food Action Fund is still offering grants to groups, businesses and schools in Greets Green who want to run healthy eating projects.

Grants range from £50 for one-off events to £500 for larger projects – and there's a whole range of project ideas to choose from. Possibilities include cooking up schemes such as healthy lunch boxes and tuck shops, creating fruit and veg stalls or running cookery classes. Groups may also have their own recipe for promoting healthy eating that they would like to try but need a bit of financial help to get it off the ground.



Interested? Call Tracy on 0121 612 2960, and ask about Food 4 U in Greets Green.

Partnership funds local jobs

A local businessman has received funding from Greets Green Partnership towards employing and training two people at his new shop on Albion Road.

Mr Sarai, whose family business is Trade, Windows, Doors and Conservatories Ltd, has recently opened a trade counter to sell windows, doors, conservatories and building plastics to local companies.

Two full time posts are to be advertised – one covering logistics and the other looking after the warehouse

and the retail trade counter. Anyone from the Greets Green area is invited to apply.

The successful candidates will not only receive hands-on work experience, but will also study for an NVQ qualification.

Mr Sarai said: "The funding from Greets Green Partnership is helping us create jobs for local people. We're a new company so we're looking forward to learning together with our new employees."

For more information, contact Mr Sarai direct on 0121 553 6655.



REPORTED



& SORTED!



When Greetings Green Neighbourhood Wardens noticed some fly-tipping which was creating an eyesore in Eaton Avenue, they got on the case.

The fly-tipping was recorded while the Wardens were out on patrol and the same day a waste action report was completed for the Environmental Pathfinder Team.

Clearing the three piece suite from Eaton Avenue was scheduled in for the Environmental Team the following week, the job was completed and residents no longer had to put up with the mess.

To report any issues to the Neighbourhood Wardens, call 0121 580 4481.



Course Success



A course designed to help volunteers involved in Greetings Green Partnership's work has enabled them to learn about governance, funding, roles and responsibilities.

The 15 week OCN Level 3 course ran until mid July and catered for about 17 volunteers and reps involved with either

the Board of Greetings Green Partnership or the management committee of an associated group.

It covered various issues relating to being a board member or trustee of an organisation, and a presentation was held after the Partnership's board meeting at the end of July to present certificates.

Women step out in style

Members of Greetings Green Women's Group went to the races in style after completing a project to create their own hats and bags.

The group designed and made their own accessories as part of a three month project culminating in a special ladies' evening at Wolverhampton Races at the end of August.



The group meets every Wednesday at SWAN – Sandwell Women's Agency Network – and its hats and bags project received funding from the Community Empowerment Network and Greetings Green Partnership's Community Fund, and was supported by Sandwell Adult Education.

The aim was to give women and mums vital time and space to themselves as well as a chance to learn new skills in a friendly environment.

SWAN Project Manager, Elaine Knowles, said: "I think it raised confidence and self esteem among the women and going to the races was a chance for them to dress up and have an evening out – it was a fantastic way to end the project. They're already planning next year's hats, that's how good it was!"

SWAN is based at the STA Building on Phoenix Street, West Bromwich. To find out more, call Elaine on 0121 553 7074.

Guide to healthy cooking

Sessions designed to raise awareness about how to cook healthily have been organised for members of the Pakistani community and are taking place at Lodge Road Community Centre in Greetings Green once a month. The sessions include advice on how to cater for conditions such as diabetes and high cholesterol.

For further information, call the Pakistani Women's Development Officer, Faiza Mirza on 07970 318032.



Flip magazine for 'Young Greetings Green'

young greets green

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2006

NEW SIXTH FORM OPENS ITS DOORS

at George Salter
High School



Have a go at our
prize competition,
open to all ages
see page 23

TOP RESULTS

Pupils at George Salter High School celebrated achieving the School's best ever GCSE results this Summer. And their successes have come in for some high praise.

A total of 63 per cent of pupils gained five or more passes at grades A*-C this year compared with 56 per cent last year and 16 per cent in 2003.

Across Sandwell the average score of pupils achieving five or more top grade passes has increased to 47 per cent from 43 per cent, which shows that at George Salter High School teenagers are doing better than the Borough average.

Shireland Language College, which George Salter High School is partnered with, also saw its best ever performance. Head Teacher, Sir Mark Grundy, said George Salter High School had achieved new heights.

He added: "Under the leadership of Mick Green the School has gone from strength to strength."

Sandwell Council's Cabinet Member for Schools and Lifelong Learning, Cllr Ian Jones, praised the efforts



and dedication of staff, governors, parents, and the LEA in achieving the results, and thanked pupils for working so hard.

He said: "I am particularly proud of the tremendous results at George Salter High School. To have gone from 16 per cent to 63 per cent is just incredible."

Greets Green's primary schools are also continuing to progress, which means we remain on course to meet the 2010 New Deal for Communities target to make Greets Green schools the equal of any in the Borough.

i For more information on George Salter High School, call the school direct on 0121 553 4665.

One Greets Green teenager who has achieved excellent GCSE results this year, is Aneeqa Anum Sharif of Brook Street. She started her education at Guns Village Primary School before moving to King Edward VI High School.

Her GCSE results included eight A* grades and two A grades. She also has a Level 2 certificate in CLAIT Plus, and a B in General Studies and Additional Maths. Aneeqa said going to the school on results day was 'nerve wracking.' She said: "I hoped I'd do well - I'd tried to." She got the top A* grades in Maths, French, Latin, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, History and RS. Aneeqa said: "I've gone back to school - I'm doing Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Further Maths and RS now. I hope to go into medicine like my sister."



SIXTH FORM LAUNCHED

A new sixth form centre has opened at George Salter High School and its first sixth form pupils are already enjoying studying there.

For the first time, pupils can now continue their studies locally after the age of 16. The sixth form has been launched in conjunction with Shireland Language College, which means that students can take a full range of options across the two sites, including A levels, foundation and work-related courses, and GCSEs.

Students in the sixth form have their own self contained part of the school, complete with kitchen, coffee room, common room, two IT rooms and classrooms.

Head teacher, Mick Green, said: "It's the first time we've ever had any post-16 education. We're delighted we've had over 60 students stay on, and we're hoping to double that next year."



COMMUNITIES BRING YOUNG PEOPLE TOGETHER

There'll soon be even more for young people to do in the area. Communities are coming together in Greet Green to set up youth activities which go across cultural boundaries.

The Sandwell Community Youth Network brings together Baljit Singh, Centre Manager at the Guru Nanak Community Centre, Roger Muflihi from the Yemeni Community Association, Syeda Nessa from the Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations and Imran Khan from the Jamia Community Association. Funded by The Big Lottery, the project will be led by the Guru Nanak Community Centre.

Baljit Singh explained: "The main aim is to provide activities around education, health, sports and safety for young people at the different community centres. Through this project we're hoping to build community cohesion so that the young people can have a better understanding and learn to respect different cultures and religions."

The project should be up and running later this month.

For more information on the activities on offer contact Baljit Singh, Centre Manager, Guru Nanak Community Centre on 0121 525 6923.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON NEW FORUM

Young people are to be given more of a voice in Greet Green as the Youth Forum is about to be revived. But it needs you to make it happen!

The group has previously been very active in the area but support and activities have recently faded away. Now the Youth Service has taken over the job of getting it off the ground again - but it needs support from lots of enthusiastic young people to get it going.

Senior Youth Worker, Ian Clews, said: "The focus of the Forum is to look at issues of concern and interest to groups in the community.

"It's about giving young people a voice and giving them a say in what's going on in their neighbourhoods. It can be anything from providing publicity for an event to looking at concerns such as crime or anti-social behaviour."

Ian hopes the Greet Green Youth Forum will gain extra knowledge and make its voice heard in a wider area by linking in with the West Bromwich Youth Council in the future.

So, come on, get involved and help get the Youth Forum off the ground.

If you're aged 11-25, contact Ian Clews on 0121 569 8441.

YOUNG PEOPLE HIT THE RIGHT NOTE

Young people in Greet's Green who took part in an African Caribbean music history competition are now looking forward to showcasing their work at West Bromwich Town Hall on Saturday 25th November.



The Young Black Impact Music Heritage Competition encouraged entrants to research and celebrate the contribution made by African Caribbean people to the UK music industry over the past six decades, from the 1950's to the present day. It provided an opportunity for young people to express themselves through music, drama, dance, song, art and media, and for them to ask the older generation for their memories.

YOUNGSTERS HAVE FUN MOVING ON

A Summer scheme in Greet's Green helped youngsters face the daunting move to secondary school.

The Place 2 Place project run by the Murray Hall Community Trust is a new scheme for local young people. Last term, project workers visited the five primary schools to look at pupils' fears and thoughts on heading to secondary school. But when the Summer holidays started, it was time for fun!

Acting Place 2 Place Co-ordinator, Lillian Muhsin, said: "On the Summer programme the five schools got together so that the young people made friends before they started secondary school. It's helped with their confidence and self-esteem."

They did lots of sports with a coach who visited the scheme, had street dance sessions and a special day trip to Drayton Manor Park.

All the activities took place at George Salter High School so it helped the 17 youngsters who took part get to know their new school as well. Youngsters who have now started at secondary school will continue to get help if they need it.

Promoted across local schools, youth clubs and organisations, the competition was aimed primarily at young people aged 13 to 20, of all ethnicities and abilities, and many were quick to take part. Entrants had to select a decade for research and come up with either a poster, dramatic piece, dance, cover version of a song, or video diary.

Rachel McFee, Greet's Green's African Caribbean Development Officer, said the showcase event will have something for everyone, ranging from art, music and drama to the recollections of older members of the community. "There will also be a fashion show of styles from the different decades, so there is going to be quite a variety," she added.

Young Black Impact (YBI) is the youth forum of OSCAR Sandwell, the Organisation for Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Research.

i For further information about the YBI Music Heritage Showcase or for tickets to the event, call OSCAR Sandwell on 0121 525 0556.

ACTION IN THE BLOOD

Youngsters with sickle cell and thalassaemia took to the stage to create a drama production based on their experiences during a Summer project run by OSCAR Sandwell.

Twenty-seven youngsters aged six to 15 years from across Sandwell, including Greet's Green, worked on the drama for four days and on the fifth day performed their production titled 'Action in the Blood' for parents. The production was videoed so that a DVD of it can be edited into a teaching tool. The work of the youngsters will also be highlighted at the YBI Music Heritage Showcase at West Bromwich Town Hall on 25th November (see above for more details).

OSCAR Sandwell – which works with people affected by the genetic blood disorders sickle cell and thalassaemia – holds an annual Summer project for youngsters with the conditions. Development Officer, Sharon Wilson, said: "The project encouraged the young people to write their own script around what it's like to have sickle cell / thalassaemia. We employed a drama expert to come in and work with them and the children wrote their own poems and lyrics and did dance and drama pieces.

"It was remarkable as they used themselves as veins and blood cells and created a dance around that. It was very imaginative."

i For more information on OSCAR, call 0121 525 0556.

BOXERS GO THE EXTRA MILE

Members of West Bromwich Amateur Boxing Club rubbed shoulders with celebrities after joining more than 6,000 people at Millennium Point in Birmingham to go the extra mile in aid of Sport Relief – the charity created by Comic Relief and BBC Sport.

Young people from the club helped to raise £630.50 through sponsorship for the Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile on 15th July. In addition to raising vital funds, club members also had the chance to meet football's Graham Taylor, Olympic rowing gold medalist Sir Steve Redgrave, and the Lord Mayor of Birmingham.

Club members were given VIP treatment at the event after benefiting themselves from a Sport Relief grant to fund coaching qualifications for volunteers at the club, and impressing the BBC with their work.

West Bromwich Amateur Boxing Club, which has received funding for health and fitness equipment from Greets Green Partnership through the Active Lifestyles Project, is run by Sandwell Asian Development Association (SADA).

i The club currently meets twice a week on Wednesdays and Sundays at Junction 1 Gym, 28-32 High Street, and is proving so popular that it is now looking for a new base. For more details, call 0121 580 0777.



15 young people from the Guru Nanak Community Centre also took part in the one mile run. It was the second year that the group had dug out their trainers and taken part. Everyone had a great day and enjoyed themselves – as well as raising £100 for the charity to help tackle poverty and disadvantage in the UK and beyond.

COMPETITION CORNER

Have a go at this issue's crossword. Simply answer the 10 seasonal questions, then send your entry by 13th November 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

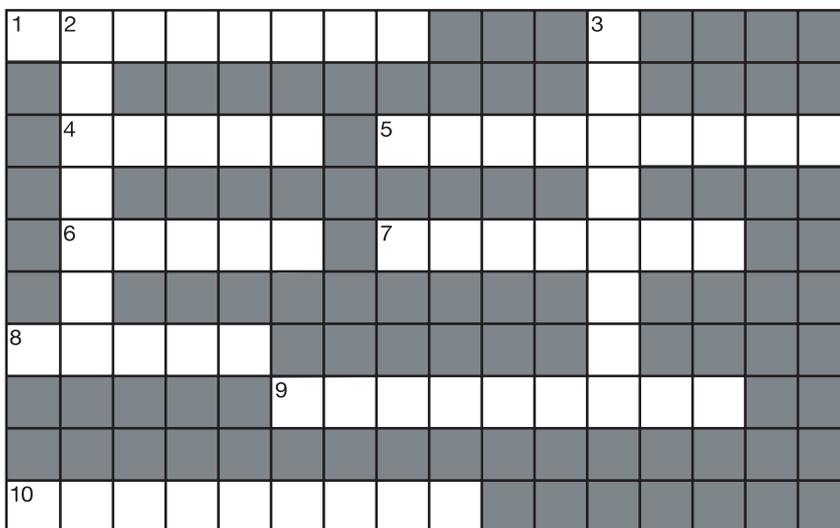
to Miss J Bevin, Tara Hancox and Mohammed Safyan who each won a £10 voucher from last issue's crossword.

Across

- In which month is Bonfire Night?
- Hallowe'en activity 'Trick or ____'?
- Man caught for the gunpowder plot?
- What colour are witches' cats?
- Which fruit is used to make lanterns on Hallowe'en?
- What witches use to fly?
- What lights up the sky on Bonfire Night?
- A '_____ Wheel' is a popular type of firework?

Down

- In which month is Hallowe'en?
- The name of a firework you hold?



Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel No. _____

This competition is open to all ages