

# greets green

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2010

## HANDING OVER THE KEYS TO GGCE

greetsgreen  
partnership

Final  
issue

[www.greetsgreen.sandwell.gov.uk](http://www.greetsgreen.sandwell.gov.uk)



Work still underway  
in the area  
see page 4

Greets Green is  
home to heroes  
centre pages

News from Greets  
Green Community  
Enterprises  
see page 13

*Partnership's Executive Director, Ally Allerson, hands over the keys to the former Robinson Brothers offices in Charles Street to GGCE's Chief Executive, Andrew Rainsford.*

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# Dear Resident

Welcome to the final issue of the Greets Green Magazine. Over the years, the magazine has shared vital news throughout the community and provided a lifeline to many. Looking back over the magazines produced since Greets Green Partnership began in 2000, you can see how much has changed in the area and how the quality of life has improved for so many people.

Although this is our last magazine, don't forget that the Partnership will continue until 31st March 2010. Money is still being spent in the area – see pages 4 and 5 for details.

Read our special feature on page 10 which highlights some of the many residents who've been involved in the Partnership and discover how they're continuing their community work with other organisations.

While one era is ending, another is just beginning. Greets Green Community Enterprises, which is continuing some of the work started by the Partnership, has really taken off and is expanding rapidly. Find out the latest in the GGCE section at the back of the magazine.

Look out for our special 10 Year Review coming out early in the New Year.

**BRIAN MCKINSTRIE**

Communications & PR Manager, Greets Green Partnership

## Congratulations

**to Safyia Saleh, Mr Clifford Partridge and William Wilkes who each won a £10 voucher from the October/November competition.**



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# End of an era

**It really is the end of an era as we say farewell to the Greets Green Magazine.**

**This is the last issue which will be produced by Greets Green Partnership and we hope that residents across the area, along with community groups and partner organisations, have found it a great read over the years.**

Right from the very start of Greets Green Partnership, we knew it was important that residents were kept informed about everything that was happening in the area and how they could get involved.

In the early days, an A4 newsletter, Talkback, was produced, with the first issue published even before the New Deal for Communities bid had been given the go ahead.

In November 2000, Talkback was replaced by Greets Green Community News, a free newspaper delivered regularly to every home in the Greets Green area. Local residents were invited to join an editorial board to help put the newspaper together.

As more and more projects got off the ground, a bigger and brighter publication was needed for residents, and the first Greets Green Community Magazine came out in June 2002.

In July 2004, a new team – Barbryn – came on board and have been producing the magazine ever since.

Every two months, the magazine has been letting residents know all about the work of Greets Green Partnership and featuring the hundreds of local people who've got involved in their community and made a real difference.

## The Greets Green story

**10 years ago Greets Green Partnership was launched to transform the area. And what a difference it's made!**

Do you remember...

- What the Memorial Gardens used to look like?
- Our Neighbourhood Wardens?
- When Wood Lane Community Centre opened?
- New community activities starting week after week?

**Watch out for your special 10 Year Review which will be coming through your letterbox in early 2010.**



## CELEBRATE WITH US

Everyone's welcome to join us at The Public on **Thursday 28th January 2010**. We're holding an Open House event from 6.00pm – 9.00pm in the Pink Tank. Refreshments will be available. Come along and celebrate 10 years of Greets Green Partnership.

# Work still underway

## HANDING OVER THE KEYS TO GGCE

**Our front page picture shows Greets Green Partnership's Executive Director, Ally Allerson, handing over the keys to the former Robinson Brothers offices in Charles Street to GGCE Chief Executive, Andrew Rainsford.**

Thanks to funding from the Partnership, GGCE now own these offices which will attract dozens of new businesses to the area. Great news all round, but a poignant moment for the Partnership all the same.

"The purchase of these offices is the final piece in the jigsaw for Greets Green Partnership and GGCE," explains Ally Allerson. "As we are winding down, GGCE, the organisation we set up to continue some of our work, is really gathering pace. The future is now in their hands."

Plans are underway to transform the building into Waterside House which will host up to 42 businesses and workspaces. GGCE's planning application includes changing the use of a drive-through area into workshop units, and offering a boardroom and a separate training suite for hire.

The project will also create new job opportunities at GGCE as the premises will need to be managed on a full time basis. GGCE Chief Executive, Andrew Rainsford, said: "Waterside House will attract new business into the area as well as helping existing ones expand.

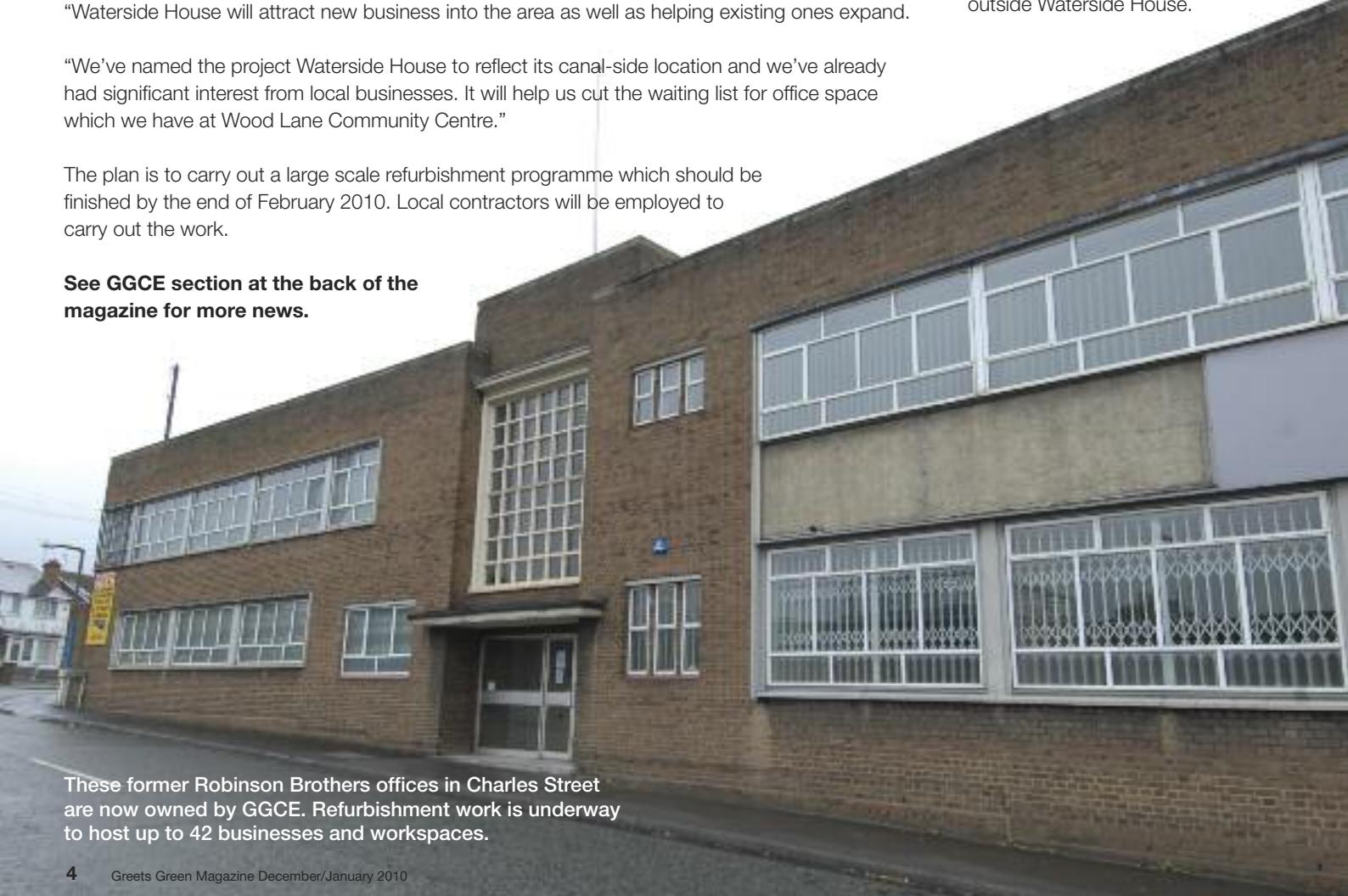
"We've named the project Waterside House to reflect its canal-side location and we've already had significant interest from local businesses. It will help us cut the waiting list for office space which we have at Wood Lane Community Centre."

The plan is to carry out a large scale refurbishment programme which should be finished by the end of February 2010. Local contractors will be employed to carry out the work.

**See GGCE section at the back of the magazine for more news.**



Ally Allerson and Andrew Rainsford outside Waterside House.



**These former Robinson Brothers offices in Charles Street are now owned by GGCE. Refurbishment work is underway to host up to 42 businesses and workspaces.**

**There are a few months left of Greets Green Partnership's 10 year regeneration programme and money is still being spent to improve the area. These pages feature some of the work that is ongoing...**

# Area's facelift continues...

**Major improvements to the routes we use through Greets Green have been continuing thanks to the work of the Partnership and Sandwell Council. The streets are certainly looking much better since the extensive environmental work was started and residents are delighted. So, what's been happening since our last feature in the August / September magazine?**

In Dartmouth Street (pictured below and right), work is now completed on a much-needed facelift, which saw boundary walls replaced, gates put in and the paths up to people's front doors improved.

Special materials have been used in keeping with the age of the properties. The pavements have also been resurfaced with attractive light-coloured paving slabs.

Ian Jennings, Project and Commissioning Officer, said: "At the end of Dartmouth Street we've improved the junction to make a safer environment. The road layout has also been changed to slow traffic and make it safer for pedestrians and motorists."

In Wood Lane, work is underway to replace gates and boundary walls, and improve paths.

On the development site off Dartmouth Street, the former Housing Assessment Area (HAA) around Edith Street and Chapman Street, Urban Living has finished the work to make the site more attractive to a potential developer.

Surveyors have checked out the things developers would need to know before investing, such as whether there are mine workings or soil contamination on the site.

Ian said: "We've been trying to reduce the risk for a developer to make the site as appealing as possible. Hopefully, as the market picks up, it will make it easier for the HAA site to be purchased by a developer quickly."

**For more details contact  
Christine Davies on 0121 533 3180  
or 0121 569 5314.**



## Sports for all!

**Greets Green Partnership has provided funding to George Salter Collegiate Academy to help it improve its sports facilities for pupils and the wider community.**

Rus Smith, Community and Sports Development Manager at George Salter, said: "We received a £500,000 grant from Sport England to build new netball and tennis courts and improve the existing small Astroturf."

"We then applied to Greets Green Partnership for additional funding, and received a further £28,000."

The school decided to carry out the project after consulting with its own pupils and Greets Green Youth Forum to find out what facilities young people wanted.

The money from Greets Green Partnership will provide new fencing and a bike shed and improve access to the new facilities when they're finished. As well as providing better sporting facilities for pupils, the school will be able to offer them to the community in the evenings and at weekends.



**To find out more, call George Salter Collegiate Academy on 0121 553 4665.**





# MOVING ON IN HEALTH

As Greets Green Partnership comes to an end, you might be wondering how you can get help with any queries you might have about health services.

Don't worry! A team of people working across Wednesbury and West Bromwich is here to help - and it even includes the Partnership's former Health Theme Leader, Sally Sandel.

Wednesbury and West Bromwich Practice Based Commissioning Cluster (WWB PBCC) is a group of GP practices supported by a Management Team who are aiming to develop more locally sensitive services for local people.

If you live in the Greets Green area and you have any queries about the health services available to you locally, call the Wednesbury and West Bromwich PBC Cluster on Sandwell PCT's main switchboard number 0121 612 1500.

**If you're unhappy with the service you've received from your GP practice, or you would like to know what services your practice offers,**

contact the Practice Manager. Alternatively, contact PALS on 0800 030 4654. This is a confidential service which listens to concerns, comments or praise.

**To ensure patients can access a high quality health service as close to home as possible, the team has been working to improve a number of services including:**

- diabetic services
- respiratory services
- cardiology services
- dermatology (skin) services
- support to carers
- giving up smoking
- addressing obesity through weight management and physical activity opportunities
- reducing alcohol intake
- breast and cervical screening programmes
- immunisations and vaccinations (eg flu vaccines)

# NEW POLICE SURGERIES

**Greets Green residents can have their say on a range of crime related issues at new Police Surgeries being held in the area.**

Representatives of the Greets Green Police Team will be on hand at the Guru Nanak Community Centre in Victoria Street to meet people face-to-face to discuss issues ranging from fly-tipping to anti-social behaviour.

The first of the sessions took place in November and was attended by the newest member of the Greets Green Police Team, acting sergeant PS Nicholas Hill.

PS Hill has four years experience as a neighbourhood response officer and was recently moved to Greets Green where he is working with existing Sergeant Kate Adams. As well as helping run the police surgeries at the Guru Nanak, PS Hill is involved in a number of other projects in the area including supporting the Swan Village Neighbourhood Watch Officer and working with bosses at the Yemeni Community Association at the Greets Green Access Centre in Tildasley Street.

He has also attended a number of youth meetings and youth forums as part of ongoing efforts to build stronger relationships with community groups in Greets Green. PS Hill said: "We're

working in partnership with a wide range of community groups to help educate them about the law. We want everyone to know that we're accessible and are here to engage people in a positive manner."

**The Police Surgeries will take place every two months. To find out more about the meetings, or to contact the Greets Green Police team, call 0845 113 5000.**



# BUSINESSES GET OFF THE GROUND

**Another 10 businesses have been given a chance to get off the ground after the Business Support project was extended for a further three months.**

In the April/May edition of the magazine we reported how the project was coming to an end and that in its four-year life span, 145 business ideas had become reality thanks to start-up grants. But then, Greets Green Partnership agreed to fund the project for a further three months and 10 more businesses have got off the ground!

Judith Bayliss, the Business Link Business Advisor who's been in charge of the project for three years, said: "Many of these businesses are still operating. Some have gone from strength to strength, while others have found it more difficult, which is natural. Overall, the Business Support project has been seen as a best practice model in its effectiveness, its enabling and its level of support."



## TASTING SUCCESS

**A new cake business on the High Street is constantly celebrating its success – with individually-designed celebration cakes made to order.**

Kalvinder Ram has been working in the bakery shop industry for 18 years and has now set up Kally's Cakes with business partner Shhinder Pal and the help of one of the last business start-up grants.

Kalvinder says: "I've run a bakery in London and Birmingham in the past

but wanted to start my own business. The grant helped us to buy another machine which means we can introduce a few more products."

The shop sells bakery products over the counter, as well as making special cakes for different occasions. It also sells party cakes and specialises in meeting dietary requirements.

**Call Kally's Cakes on 07545 320740 or pop in to order an extra special cake!**



## Looking for business support?

**Support is still available to entrepreneurs in the area through other organisations...**

- **Black Country Enterprise Loan Fund.** For more information visit [www.bcelf.org](http://www.bcelf.org) or call Christine Eaton on 07875 199254 or Jill Thorpe on 07875 199262.
- **The Black Country Reinvestment Society.** For details of the business loans available visit [www.bcrs.org.uk](http://www.bcrs.org.uk) or call 0845 313 8410.

## Making a bigger impact

**Since we first featured Impact Signs & Solutions, they've gone from strength to strength.**

The sign-making business was set up by James and Jan Aldridge after James, who had been in the industry for years, was made redundant.

They secured a start-up grant which they used to buy equipment, a laptop and driving lessons for James, so they could both be out and about independently. And they're already enjoying success!

Jan said: "We had a good summer and learned a lot of lessons about business practice. We've now moved to bigger premises in The Studio on the third floor of Central House right in the High Street.

"We've had a contract for the past nine months for a company which supplies schools and we've travelled all over the country. We've got the skills and expertise and now we've got premises where we can do large contracts as well as small ones – from six foot promotional banners to 30 foot signs on the side of a sports hall."

**For more details, call Impact Signs & Solutions on 07905 098981.**

# GREETS GREEN IS HOME TO HEROES

## Wendy's help is recognised

Wendy James has worked at SWAN, Sandwell Women's Agency Network, since August 2003, joining a few months after the organisation was set up.

Wendy was nominated for the award by Angela Rolls, who attends a social group at SWAN. She said: "I go to the anxiety and depression group on Tuesdays and Wendy has helped a lot of people with problems.

"She's always there if you want to phone up and talk to her. I think she's amazing and she works really hard."

Wendy, who said it was 'lovely' to be nominated, is responsible for the mental health and group work at SWAN. She said the mixed social group is very popular.

"We work with men and women to get them together and break the isolation," she explains. "We do different activities and give them support so they can build their own support network.

"I love everything about working at SWAN. I enjoy meeting new people, then watching them move on and grow in confidence."



During the past few years in the Greets Green Magazine, we've recognised many local residents as Community Heroes. Here we feature our final heroes who've all gone the extra mile to help others in their communities.

We're proud to have so many community-spirited people in the area and we hope that all the other unsung heroes continue with their excellent work.



## STEVE'S ON THE BALL

Steve Richards is the Coach and Manager of Greets Green Albion FC youth squad, which trains at Guns Village Primary School. He's gradually built the club by securing local sponsorship, so it now has several teams catering for Under 10s to Under 14s.

Steve was nominated by Rus Smith, Community and Sports Development Manager at George Salter Collegiate Academy, who said: "He's demonstrated great determination to set up, run and maintain Greets Green Albion Football Club. He's created new teams and increased the amount of young people taking part in football in Greets Green."

"I believe Steve is a worthy winner of the Community Hero award and the long term benefits of Greets Green Albion will be seen when more children and young people from Greets Green are playing and engaging in football."

Steve said it was 'really nice' to be put forward for the award. All his work for Albion FC is voluntary, and he works full time as well as being married and having three children. He said: "My wife's behind me 100 per cent but she'd like to spend some time with me instead of just talking about football all the time!"

Steve revealed he's already 'thinking big' for next year, with hopes for a couple of pitches on the Rec, possibly setting up a new local league, and introducing girls' football and other sports such as cricket. He's also recently gained some new kit sponsorship from Wednesbury Round Table.

He said: "My aim is to do other sports as well, and to keep it as cheap as possible. I want to get kids doing sport instead of sitting about at home or hanging about on the streets."

"Steve gained sponsorship for the Under 14s team by knocking on doors and, after two weeks, he had a kit sponsor."



## A team of heroes

The tireless work of the Krishna Community Forum has earned them a Greets Green Community Heroes award.

The four-person team: Jayesh Patel, Dipak Patel, Rajesh Patel and Reena Patel were nominated for the award by Greets Green Partnership Board Member, Madhu Patel.

It follows the official opening of the Krishna Mandir & Community Centre earlier this year, following an extensive refurbishment programme.

The centre, in Old Meeting Street, is now the base for a whole host of community activities, such as yoga, music classes, language classes and clubs for children and pensioners, following a complete facelift, which included extending the main hall and putting in new windows, floors, doors and a new dining area.

Madhu said: "Basically the members of Krishna Community Forum have turned the whole community around. Seeing the community hall looking

so fabulous and having access to so many more activities there, has invigorated everyone and given them a sense of belief in what can be accomplished."

Madhu has nothing but praise for the hard work put in by the members of Krishna Community Forum.

She says: "The commitment of the key people in making all this happen has been tremendous.

"They gave up their own personal family time for a project they passionately believed in and that speaks volumes. As a result we're all now reaping the rewards of their hard work."

**"The refurbished community hall has really cemented the community together."**

## Award for Abdul

Someone who has helped present several Community Hero awards over the years has now received one himself!

Abdul Monim Khan was nominated by Greets Green Partnership's Project and Commissioning Officer, Ian Jennings.

Ian said: "Abdul is one of a number of local residents who have been employed by Greets Green Partnership or one of the projects it has funded. Whilst having that additional vested interest in the area can make the work even more rewarding, it can also be additionally challenging. We wanted to recognise all of these people with this award to Abdul."

Abdul has worked at the Partnership since 2002, in a variety of roles including Community Participation Officer for the Housing team. He has also worked to set up the Housing Forum and the HAA Residents' Forum, worked on equality and diversity, community development and in neighbourhood management.

Recently as Community Services Officer he was involved in organising several well attended seminars to bring people from different statutory and voluntary organisations and parts of the community together to work towards making our community more cohesive, better and fairer.

Abdul was delighted with the award and said: "It has been a pleasure working for Greets Green Partnership."



## Thank you to all our heroes

Here's a reminder of all our Community Heroes:-

**Robert Payne, Linda Paskin, Bethel Youth Club workers, Andrew Hill, Pam Jackson, Pat Briscoe, Dave Heeley, Denise Barry, Tracey Richards, Peter Jones, Imran Miah, Paul Green, Malcolm Carr, Gill Cotterill, Ray Edwards, Pauline Robinson, Paul Coton, Sandra Carter, Salik Ullah, Aston Flemming, Jinder Cheema, Dorcas Marshall, ladies at the Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Billy Shepherd, Laurence Apperley and Bal Kaur.**



# RESIDENTS CONTINUE COMMUNITY WORK

**During the lifetime of Greets Green Partnership, many residents have been involved in initiatives, projects, and generally making their voices heard in their neighbourhoods. For some, working with the Partnership has been a springboard to working in the community in other ways.**

**We caught up with a few residents who've gone on to get involved in other community-minded organisations.**

## Jessica Ferguson

**Jessica Ferguson became a Board Rep for Hambletts South towards the start of the Partnership, and has been involved ever since.**

She had always been busy with full-time jobs, being a mum and also fostering, but working for the community was something new.

Jessica says she went from working in a sausage factory to suddenly sitting around a Board table with 20 people there. "You soon get into it and people are so good and kind to you if you make a mistake," she says.

She's now extended her community work into other areas. Jessica said: "I'm involved in Sandwell Homes and work on the community chest. People can put in a bid for up to £500 to put to good use.

"I'm also on the environmental group and we're trying to bring awareness of climate change into the area. And I'm on the services panel of Sandwell Homes which deals with all the day-to-day running of the organisation.

"I've just started a tenants' and residents group in the area too."

Jessica also finds time to be a company director of SCIPS (Sandwell Community Information and Participation Service) in Oldbury, and is a member of Time 2 Trade, through which she helps people with jobs around the home.

She said: "I enjoy all of it and if we can help tenants or someone in the community, then that's my reward. I wouldn't have missed being involved in Greets Green Partnership for the world. I can't believe these 10 years have gone so fast.

"I can see the difference in the area and I know what has also been achieved behind the scenes."

## Anam Choudhury

**Anam Choudhury worked for Greets Green Partnership as an employee and then as a Board member, and has since done no end of community work.**

In 1999 Anam was appointed to the Partnership's Outreach Team where he researched the needs of disadvantaged groups and community sector organisations. A year later he was asked to form the Greets Green Youth Forum. In 2001 he left the team and took on the voluntary role of Community Representative on the Greets Green Partnership Board.



Anam, aged 32, says: "I remember vividly the promises the Partnership made to the Greets Green community, and I hope over the past 10 years most of these promises have been fulfilled."

Anam went on to hold other positions on forums, including Sandwell Leisure Trust, and the Greets Green Gala Baths Steering Group, as well as being a school governor.

Between 2002 and 2005 he also led the delivery of a community regeneration programme with the Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations, and later worked for the Bangladeshi Islamic Centre as a Development Adviser. During this time he secured over £1.7million to deliver over 35 community-based regeneration projects.

Anam has gained an MSc degree in Urban Regeneration Research and Public Policy from the University of Birmingham and is studying for a PhD on Sustainable Neighbourhood Renewal, and has recently been appointed to the Board of Urban Living as a community representative.

He said: "I'm extremely delighted to have been appointed to the Urban Living Board, particularly because this is a great opportunity for the community to continue, post Greets Green era, with a sustainable regeneration agenda in Sandwell."

# Staff move on

## Pam Jackson

Pam Jackson has been on the Board of Greets Green Partnership for about three years and has loved being involved in what's being done to improve the area.

"It's been brilliant," she says.



Pam is also active in the area, running her own Swan Village Social Club.

She says: "It runs alongside the Swan Village Action Group. We do breakfasts on Tuesday, bingo on Wednesday, make cards and cakes and we had a gardening project."

Although that keeps her busy enough, Pam has also joined the Board of Greets Green Community Enterprises (GGCE) so that she can stay informed about what's going on in the area.

"GGCE has had funding from Greets Green Partnership and the community needs to know how it's being invested."

**"I'm really into the community and think it's important that we can influence what happens."**

## Ann Coll

Ann Coll became a Rep on the Greets Green Partnership Board after a chance remark at an open meeting back in 2001.

She'd been involved in other community projects on and off before, as well as working and bringing up three children, but says joining the Board made a big difference to her. She explains: "It really helped me with my confidence. Greets Green Partnership has done a lot of good things and helped a lot for people."

**"I enjoyed getting involved and meeting new people."**

Ann moved on to join Sandwell Leisure Trust, which looks after the swimming pools and sports centres in the area. She says: "I give an input from the community and I'm on the remuneration committee." Ann has also joined the Board of Greets Green Community Enterprises. She says: "I'm staying involved as much as I can."

Familiar faces from Greets Green Partnership are moving to new jobs as the organisation nears its end.



**Katherine Hewitt** was one of the very first staff at the Partnership and has become very well known throughout the area during the past nine years.

She's held four different posts, starting as Community Regeneration Officer, before becoming Community Empowerment Theme Leader, then managing the Jobs & Skills theme and, since April, being Programme Delivery and Success Manager.

Katherine said: "It's been brilliant. Working alongside the community and voluntary organisations in the area and the community and neighbourhood reps has definitely been a highlight for me. We've seen individuals really develop and grow in confidence.

"The willingness of people to get involved has been fantastic. Community and voluntary organisations have also grown over the past nine years. Some were quite fledgling and have now become big, sustainable organisations."



Katherine is now moving to Sandwell Council as Outcomes Based Accountability Manager within the Communities Unit. She said: "There'll be quite a lot of consultation work to do, so my experience at Greets Green Partnership will stand me in good stead."

**Ian Jennings** has also left the Partnership to become Town Centre Manager for Lozells and Soho. He spent five and a half years at Greets Green Partnership as Housing Renewal Officer, followed by Project and Commissioning Officer.



One of Ian's key highlights has been seeing the support the Partnership has been able to give to people moving out of the clearance areas in Claypit Lane and Wattle Road.

He said: "It was hard for those people but it's quite rewarding when you're able to offer help and support to them. My disappointment is I would have liked to have seen more of the redevelopment starting, but I'm looking forward to coming back in the future and seeing the radical change which has happened."

Other Greets Green Partnership staff who have moved on to new challenges are:

**Dorothy Gardner** was Evaluation Manager who assessed how well each project had worked and looked at lessons which could be learned. She's now moving to London.

**Maxine Millward** was Office Manager, and has gone to work for the Head of Urban Regeneration at Sandwell Council.

**Gemma Rock** worked for the Home Maintenance project before joining the Partnership's Community Services team. Latterly she was PA to Ally Allerson. She is now working with the Community Safety Team in Sandwell Council.

# Organisations offered a helping hand

**"We can help you!" That's what Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) is saying to all voluntary and community sector organisations in the Greets Green area.**

SCVO offers a range of services to support the development of organisations so that they have the skills and capacity to succeed. It can also help them get involved in local decision-making. Enquiries are welcomed from all groups including voluntary organisations,

community and neighbourhood groups, registered charities and charitable companies and enterprises.

Having supported organisations in Greets Green for many years, SCVO is currently working closely with Greets Green Partnership to raise awareness of its services and promote the support which will continue to be available once the Partnership finishes in March 2010. A range of help is on offer including one-to-one support, workshops and

training events. This may cover managing money, forming a new group, creating policies and procedures, or applying for funding. People can also be signposted or referred to specialist services.

**To find out more, call Carole Harte or Kally Matharu on 0121 565 8939 or email [enquiries@scvo.info](mailto:enquiries@scvo.info). For support with partnership working, email [martind@scvo.info](mailto:martind@scvo.info)**



SCVO's Kally Matharu and Stephen Awre with successful applicants to the Targeted Support Fund, which includes the Greets Green-based 6 Towns Credit Union, Confederation of Bangladeshi Organisations and SWAN Carelink.

## DARTMOUTH CENTRE UPDATE

An event to launch the Dartmouth Centre was held at the end of October at George Salter Collegiate Academy, with lots of activities for the community to enjoy, and a chance for the Dartmouth Group to get feedback on their plans.

The Dartmouth Centre at 315 High Street will hopefully be open by the end of the year. It aims to provide a community facility for the local Pakistani population, and is being helped with funding from Greets Green Partnership.

The launch included musical performances, an Islamic art exhibition and stalls offering advice on health and wellbeing. Dartmouth Centre Sessional Worker, Salma Begum, said: "The launch day was to kick-start activities."

**To find out more, email Salma on [nmbsalma@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nmbsalma@hotmail.co.uk) or call the Partnership on 0800 953 0215.**

## FORUM DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**There are three forums in Greets Green which give residents an opportunity to get their voices heard on important issues in the community.**

**They all meet quarterly, so there's a meeting of one of them each month. Why not go along?**

### Police Tasking Neighbourhood Forum

Meets at West Bromwich Town Hall at 6.00pm on Tuesday 25th January.

It has a panel consisting of a councillor, a Police Sergeant and either Neighbourhood Manager for Sandwell Council Communities Unit, Jez Hall, or a colleague. Residents can raise any issues of concern in their neighbourhoods, including crime.

All the issues are then looked at or forwarded to the appropriate agency, and the results are reported back at the next Forum.

### GGCE Community Forum

Meets on Wednesday 24th February at 6.00pm at a venue to be arranged.

Residents can raise any problems about their street, their neighbourhood or their community to GGCE. Call Jackie Owen on 0121 525 2772 for more details.

### Sandwell Tenants' and Residents' Association

Committee meetings are underway but its first public meeting is yet to be organised. For more information, call Bal Gill, Community Information Officer for Sandwell Homes, on 0121 569 5177.

# NEWS

## FROM GGCE

greets green  
community enterprises ltd



## GGCE IS LOOKING TO 2010

### "We're ready for the challenge ahead!"

That's the message from Greets Green Community Enterprises (GGCE), the successor organisation to Greets Green Partnership.

GGCE was set up four years ago to ensure some of the work of the Partnership continues after 2010. With both a commercial and a community focus, GGCE is bringing new opportunities to local people.

Chief Executive, Andrew Rainsford, says the organisation has grown very quickly.

GGCE currently has a Board of 11 people, and now employs 10 staff in roles including business

development and support, community development and engagement and running the after school club Woody's, based at Wood Lane Community Centre.

GGCE also offers training and workplaces for volunteers who provide office support as well as helping in GGCE's IT business.

Andrew explained: "We will recruit more staff to work in our new gardening business in the near future and priority will go to local residents aged 18-24."

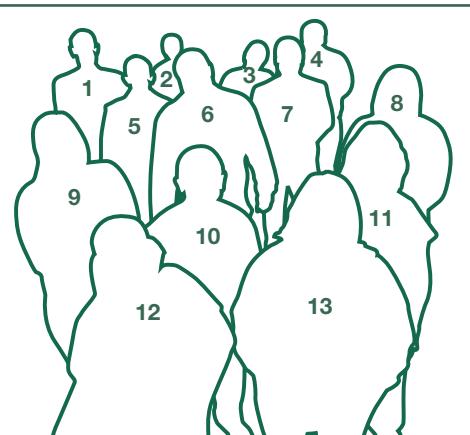
GGCE's aim is to build up a portfolio of social enterprises which employ

local people. All profits generated will be ploughed back into the community.

The organisation was originally based at Wood Lane Community Centre, which it now owns and manages. Its first major purchase was the £500,000 Belper Enterprise Park in Greets Green Road. The industrial estate has nine business units and an office suite, rented by a range of local firms.

Industrial units in Charles Street were purchased next, followed by the most recent acquisition – Waterside House – where GGCE is now based.

**continued on page 2**



### Staff and volunteers at GGCE.

Pictured are: 1. Phillip Briscoe, 2. Mikey Critchley, 3. Vincent Tustin, 4. Dan Sherwood, 5. Harvey Broome, 6. Andrew Rainsford, 7. Andy Grigg, 8. Naomi Nicholls, 9. Sharon Crowley, 10. Allen Sallis, 11. Ann Knowles, 12. Ameena Hussein and 13. Jackie Owen.

# FAMILIES GET FIT

Families are getting fitter and healthier at the new Family Fitness sessions at Wood Lane Community Centre.

The sessions kicked off at the end of October and, since then, people of all ages have been getting stuck in to the fitness and weight management activities.

Taking place every Tuesday evening from 6.00 – 8.00pm, the sessions are open to all families with children

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As well as owning property, GGCE already runs a variety of social enterprises. There's a marquee and party equipment business, and a play bus for hire, while GGCE's computer recycling business re-builds old computers to sell at very reasonable prices to the local community.

The community focus of GGCE is also expanding. An events group has been set up to organise local events and local teenagers are receiving support to form their own youth group.

Plus, residents are getting their voices heard at regular community forums organised by GGCE.

Andrew Rainsford adds: "It's a question of managing expectations. We're not going to be able to do as much as the Partnership did, but we're working in different ways to create opportunities.

"People can already buy a computer from us, hire our party bus or party equipment and rent business premises. It all puts money back into the community.

"We're using our resources in the best way possible and will be applying to bring additional funding into the area to provide opportunities for work, rest or play."

To find out more about GGCE, call 0121 525 2772.

aged from three upwards. The only criteria is that a member of the family must consider themselves to be overweight.

Every week there are 12 fitness stations where people can do exercise with a qualified fitness instructor. This can be tailored to each individual's level of fitness. Family members can also be weighed and get advice on weight management.

Once a month, a guest speaker talks about healthy eating and healthy lifestyle. Children aged 3 – 11 can do their own exercise



with qualified play leaders, with equipment including a Wii fit and dance mats. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

**The Family Fitness sessions costs £1.50 per adult and £1 per child. Book your place in advance by calling Jackie Owen on 0121 525 2772.**



## DANCE THE AFTERNOON AWAY!

The hugely popular tea dances are continuing every month at West Bromwich Town Hall – so come and get those toes tapping!

The dances start at 1.00pm and cost £2 which includes light refreshments. There's no need to book – simply turn up and enjoy the afternoon on...

**Thursday 17th December 2009  
Thursday 28th January 2010**

**All ages are welcome!**

### Tea Dance Holiday

A special Turkey & Tinsel Tea Dance holiday to Folkestone is taking place from 1st – 5th November 2010 and places are already getting booked up.

The holiday is open to anyone and includes a superb day trip to France, plus lots of dancing! The cost is £225.00 per person for half board accommodation.

**To book your place call  
Jackie Owen on  
0121 525 2772.**



## RESIDENTIAL MIXED WORK & PLAY

Young people who are keen on setting up a youth club in Greets Green spent a long weekend away on a residential to work out their ideas.

But the weekend wasn't all hard work – they had plenty of time for fun outdoor activities such as raft building, messing about on the river and enjoying the Derbyshire countryside.

Baljeet Singh from the Guru Nanak Community Centre went along with 12 young people. He explains: "The main agenda was to find out from the young people what they want to see in the youth club, rather than us putting activities on.

"It was good to take them to a totally different setting where they were all relaxed." Having held a brainstorming session to find out what the young people want to see in the youth club, they looked at how to achieve it, who could do what and how to deal with fundraising.

The group are now back and working on arranging regular meetings.

For more information on how to get involved call Baljeet on 0121 525 6923 or Jackie Owen on 0121 525 2772.



Greets Green Community Enterprises  
Waterside House, 21 Charles Street,  
Great Bridge, West Midlands B70 0AH  
Tel: 0121 525 2772  
Email: sharon.crowley@ggce.co.uk

## Property Portfolio Grows

GCCE is rapidly expanding its portfolio of premises, where local firms can rent offices.

### Wood Lane Community Centre

The ground floor of the centre is a popular meeting space for community groups, while the first floor is used as office accommodation. Refurbishment work is currently underway. To find out about activities at the centre, call Allen Sallis on 0121 525 2662.

### Belper Enterprise Park

The Enterprise Park comprises nine office and starter units of varying sizes which are rented by locally-run businesses. There are currently some units available. For full details, call Charles Caddick of Sellers on 01384 456 789.

### Great Bridge Business Park

GCCE owns the freehold on units 1-5 at the Business Park on Charles Street. There is currently one unit available to rent. For full details, call Charles Caddick of Sellers on 01384 456 789.

### Waterside House

GCCE's most recent acquisition is the former Robinson Brothers offices in Charles Street. Plans are underway to transform the building into Waterside House to reflect its canal-side location and host up to 42 businesses and workspaces. The large scale refurbishment programme should be finished by the end of February 2010. Local contractors will be employed to carry out the work. For more information, call Sharon Crowley on 0121 525 2772.

**Greets Green Partnership  
presents its**

# **10 YEAR CELEBRATION EVENT**

**THURSDAY 28th JANUARY 2010  
at The Public**

**Drop in anytime between 6.00pm and 9.00pm**

Residents, former staff members and representatives from our partners are all welcome at our celebration event. Catch up with some friendly faces and re-live some of the memories from the last ten years.

A buffet will be available throughout the evening and a special Greets Green Partnership cake will be cut to mark the end of an era.

**Make sure you join in the fun.**

