



# SUPPORTING SANDWELL WITH THE COST OF LIVING



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

Winter 2022/23

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# INTRODUCTION

Councillor Kerrie Carmichael,  
Leader of Sandwell Council



With the temperature dropping and the nights drawing in, winter is well and truly with us. The cost of living increases will have an impact on many of our lives this winter. This booklet is aimed at providing a practical guide to keeping well during the colder months. It's jammed packed with helpful tips, advice and guidance on all the various offers available to keep us living and feeling well. Please keep this booklet close by to check the support the council and its partners are providing for Sandwell people this winter.

*Councillor Kerrie Carmichael*

For an online version of this booklet please visit [www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell)

ਇਸ ਕਿਤਾਬਚੇ ਦੇ ਔਨ ਲਾਈਨ ਸੰਸਕਰਣ ਵਾਕਿਰਧਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਦੇਖੋ:  
[www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell)

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ملاحظہ کریں [www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell)

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এই প্রুষ্ঠিকাটির অনলাইন সংস্করণের জন্য অনুগ্রহ করে [www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell) দেখুন

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Puteti consulta versiunea online a acestei broşuri aici: [www.sandwell.gov.uk/warmspaces](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/warmspaces)

للحصول على نسخة من هذا الدليل على الإنترنت، يُرجى زيارة الموقع الإلكتروني  
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[www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/supportingsandwell)

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# SECTION 1

## LIVING WELL



## COST OF LIVING: WE'RE HERE TO HELP

We know many of our residents are struggling to make ends meet due to the increased cost of living.

Go online for advice and support offered by Sandwell Council, the



Government, partner agencies and community organisations on support available:

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

You can request council services and report problems to the council 24/7 with MySandwell. It's easy to create an account – go to: [www.sandwell.gov.uk/mysandwell](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/mysandwell)

You can also download a free MySandwell app where you can access a growing number of services. Download it from the App Store or Google Play Store.

Sandwell Council Benefits  
Phoneline:

**0121 368 1155**

Available:

Monday 8.45am - 5pm  
Tuesday 8.45am - 5pm  
Wednesday 9am - 5pm  
Thursday 8.45am - 5pm  
Friday 8.45am - 5pm



# WELFARE RIGHTS TEAM

## HELPING THE RESIDENTS OF SANDWELL

### WHAT WE DO

Refer for debt advice  
Budgeting support  
Help claim millions of pounds of unclaimed benefits  
Represent clients where claims have failed  
Offer help and advice through completing our online form at [www.sandwell.gov.uk/welfarerights](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/welfarerights)

**OPERATE AN ADVICE LINE  
ON 0121 569 3158**

**OPENING TIMES**  
**MONDAY - THURSDAY 9.30 - 4PM**  
**FRIDAY 9.30AM - 3.30PM**

### WHO WE HELP

Older people  
Families with children  
People with ill health  
Carers  
People with mental ill health  
People with learning disabilities  
Those in low paid work



## COST OF LIVING PAYMENT

If eligible, you will have received an extra payment to help with the cost of living if you're entitled to certain benefits or tax credits. If eligible, you will have received a payment automatically in the same way you get your benefit or tax credits.



You can find out more at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment)

Find out what other benefits and financial support you might be able to get to help with your living costs by visiting:  
[www.gov.uk/helpforhouseholds](http://www.gov.uk/helpforhouseholds)



You can use an independent, free and anonymous benefits calculator to check what you could be entitled to. This will give you an estimate of the benefits you could get and how much your benefit payments could be.



Find out more at:  
[www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators)

## HOW WE'RE HELPING FINANCIALLY...

The Household Support Fund is money given to councils by the Government to help people in need of financial support. Sandwell Council has received £3.4million to help residents between October 2022 and March 2023.

Here's how we're helping:

- Funding food vouchers for 18,000 children eligible for free school meals over the Christmas, February half-term and Easter holidays
- Helping low income households that missed out on the £650 Cost of Living payment
- Supporting care leavers, foster carers and special guardians.
- Funding payments to households in financial crisis

- Helping fund local food banks
- Supporting disabled households most affected by increasing energy bills
- Helping council and private tenants with rent and rent arrears
- Supporting Sandwell families who are hosting refugees from Ukraine with increased household costs.
- Funding the running of the council's Warm Spaces.

Most of these payments will be made automatically to eligible households so there's no need to apply. For more details go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/householdsupportfund](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/householdsupportfund)

If you are in financial crisis and you need emergency help, go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk/localwelfareprovision](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/localwelfareprovision)



# BEWARE PAY DAY LOANS THIS CHRISTMAS

Christmas can be an expensive time of year for many of us and so-called pay day loans can look very appealing.

However, they are a very expensive borrowing option which can plunge many of us into further debt. For example, high interest credit cards might charge borrowers an annual percentage rate (APR) of 28 to 36%, but the average payday loan's APR is commonly 398%! Due to high fees and short terms, borrowers often can't repay on time and have to keep rolling over or taking out new payday loans to cover the last.

**For practical advice and tips on how to make the most of your budget check out**

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



# HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES IN SANDWELL



**We have a range of exciting activities to keep children entertained and active during school holidays. There is something for everyone and its great value with many activities being free and including lunch.**

Our pick and mix menu means we have lots of activities including:

- Live festive panto, Winter Wonderland Holiday Clubs, multi sports including football, dodgeball and other sports
- Winter arts, crafts and decoration making, learn an instrument, perform in a band



**And much, much more! To register or find out more about activities**

**visit: [www.sandwell.gov.uk/holidayactivitiesandfood](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/holidayactivitiesandfood)**

# BLACK COUNTRY TOY APPEAL

For details of how to donate to the appeal, go to: [www.sandwell.gov.uk/blackcountrytoyappeal](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/blackcountrytoyappeal)

**Santa's Black County Toy Appeal supports children from 0-16 year olds whose families may be struggling at Christmas by making sure that they receive a gift.**

## How can families access support?

They take requests from not-for-profit organisations across the Black Country, which may be a voluntary, community, faith sector group, or a statutory service including local social workers, council staff, schools and the NHS.

They cannot deal with parents directly – if you need support please ask at your child's school, your social worker, or someone else who supports you to refer you to them. Email: [santabctoyappeal@gmail.com](mailto:santabctoyappeal@gmail.com)

**Find out more: [www.bc-santa.co.uk/about-us](http://www.bc-santa.co.uk/about-us)**

# HELP WITH BROADBAND AND PHONE COSTS

The government has worked with a range of Internet Service Providers (IPSS) and Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) to deliver low-cost broadband and phone service packages, called social tariffs, for those on low incomes. Social tariffs are available for people

claiming Universal Credit, Pension Credit and some other benefits, with some providers offering deals from £15 a month. For more information visit <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk>



# MORE MONEY SAVING TIPS

**MoneySavingExpert.com** is a one-stop-shop for everything you need to help you manage your money and get the best deals. The website has money-saving guides, tips, tools, articles and a forum covering everything from mortgages to credit cards and loans.

A good starting point is the Money Makeover guide which will help you cut your bills, then sign up for the weekly email to get the best deals and keep on top of your money.

**Warmer Homes West Midlands offers personalised energy advice service to households who are currently struggling to heat their home. Find out more and get in touch at [www.warmerhomeswm.org.uk](http://www.warmerhomeswm.org.uk)**



## STRUGGLING TO HEAT YOUR HOME? GET ADVICE

We know how energy bills are going up. One way to try and control your bills is by following a few, simple energy saving tips. These can not only help you save energy but are also good for the planet.

- Check your thermostat – turning it down just one degree will save you money. But remember to heat your home to at least 18°C (65°F) to stay warm
- Replace bulbs with LEDs – they use only half the electricity
- Plug those gaps – a simple draught excluder can help
- Wash clothes more efficiently – do full washes at lower temperatures
- Only boil the water you need – the more water you boil the more energy you use
- Don't leave your devices on standby, this can save up to £40 a year

- Use your radiator thermostats – turn off heating in unused rooms
- Bleed your radiators – they become more energy efficient
- Insulate your hot water cylinder – a hot water jacket could save around £40 a year
- Keep an eye on your boiler pressure – if it's too low your boiler will be inefficient
- Make sure you are receiving the income you are entitled to. You can get advice about benefits, and claiming



help that you may be entitled to, by contacting Sandwell's Welfare Rights Team. Visit:

**[www.sandwell.gov.uk/welfarerights](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/welfarerights)** or call 0121 569 3158



**For more information on energy saving tips, including our short video giving further advice and information, visit: [www.sandwell.gov.uk/energysavingtips](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/energysavingtips)**

# WARM SPACES IN SANDWELL

**We know residents are worried about the rising cost of living.**

All Sandwell libraries are providing a warm, welcoming space. These are free, safe and supportive spaces you can visit during the colder months.

At our Warm Spaces, you can also have a chat with staff about other support services available. Get advice and information about benefits, energy support, managing bills, how local charities can help, and how to access community support to help with loneliness.

Wherever you live in Sandwell, you can access any of these Warm Spaces.



**For information, advice and support, visit: [www.sandwell.gov.uk/warmspaces](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/warmspaces)**

Keep an eye on the webpage for the latest information – new Warm Spaces may be added.

### Who can come to a Warm Space?





Warm Spaces are open to everyone. Wherever someone lives in Sandwell, they can access any of Sandwell's Warm Spaces.

### Warm Spaces open on Sundays, 10am-3pm

- West Bromwich Leisure Centre, Moor Street, West Bromwich, B70 7AZ
- Portway Lifestyle Centre, Newbury Lane Oldbury, B69 1HE
- Tipton Sports Academy, Wednesbury Oak Road, Tipton, DY4 0BS
- Tipton Leisure Centre, Alexandra Road, Tipton, DY4 8TA
- Haden Hill Leisure Centre, Barrs Road, Cradley Heath, B64 7HA
- Smethwick Swimming Centre, Thimblemill Road, Smethwick, B67 5QT
- Wednesbury Leisure Centre, High Bullen, Wednesbury, WS10 7HP



**See pages 12-17 for a list of our Warm Spaces and opening times**



Town	Location Address	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	1 Glebefields Library, St Marks Road, Tipton, DY4 0SZ	9am - 5.30pm	9am - 5pm	9am - 5pm	9am - 5pm	9am - 5pm	10am - 2pm	Closed
	2 Great Bridge Library, Sheepwash Lane, Great Bridge, Tipton, DY4 7JF	9.30am - 5.30pm	Closed	9.30am - 5pm	Closed	9.30am - 5pm	10am - 1pm	Closed
	3 Tipton Library, Owen House, 17 Unity Walk, Tipton, DY4 8QL	9.30am - 6pm	9.30am - 1pm	9.30am - 5pm	Closed	9.30am - 5pm	10am - 1pm	Closed
	4 Bleakhouse Library, Bleakhouse Road, Oldbury, B68 9DS	9am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	9am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	9am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	9am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	Closed	10am - 4pm	Closed
	5 Brandhall Library, Tame Road, Oldbury, B68 0JT	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	Closed	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	Closed	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 2pm	Closed
	6 Langley Library, Barrs Street, Oldbury, B68 8QT	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	Closed	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	Closed	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	10am - 2pm	Closed
	7 Oldbury Library, Sandwell Council House, Freeth St, Oldbury, B69 3DB	9am - 5.30pm	9am - 5.30pm	9am - 5.30pm	9am - 5.30pm	9am - 5pm	10am - 2pm	Closed
	8 Rounds Green Library, Martley Road, Oldbury, B69 1DZ	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	Closed	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	Closed	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 1pm	Closed
	9 Smethwick Library, High Street, Smethwick, B66 1AA	10am - 5.30pm	10am - 5.30pm	10am - 5pm	10am - 5pm	10am - 5pm	10am - 4pm	12noon - 4pm
	10 Thimblemill Library, Thimblemill Road, Smethwick, B67 5RJ	9am - 1pm 2pm - 6pm	9am - 1pm 2pm - 6pm	9am - 1pm 2pm - 6pm	9am - 1pm	9am - 1pm 2pm - 6pm	10am - 4pm	Closed
	11 Central Library, High Street, West Bromwich, B70 8DZ	9.30am - 7pm	9.30am - 6pm	9.30am - 6pm	9.30am - 6pm	9.30am - 6pm	10am - 4pm	Closed
	12 Stone Cross Library, Beverley Road, Stone Cross, West Bromwich, B71 2LH	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	2pm - 5.30pm	Closed	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 4pm	Closed
	13 Hamstead Library, Tanhouse Centre, Hamstead Road, Great Barr, B43 5EL	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	2pm - 5.30pm	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5.30pm	Closed	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 2pm	Closed
	14 Great Barr Library, Birmingham Road, Great Barr, B43 6NW (B43 6PF sat nav)	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	Closed	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 4pm	9.30am - 1pm 2pm - 4pm	10am - 4pm	Closed
	15 Yew Tree & Tamebridge Community Centre, Redwood Road, WS5 4LB	9am - 1pm	9am - 8pm	9am - 4.30pm 6pm - 8pm	9am - 1pm 4.30pm - 6.30pm	9am - 1pm	Closed	Closed
	16 Blackheath Library, 145 High Street, Blackheath, Rowley Regis, B65 0EA	9.30am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 5pm	10am - 4pm	Closed
	17 Cradley Heath Library, Upper High Street, Cradley Heath, B64 5JU	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	Closed	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 2pm	Closed
	18 Cradley Heath Community Centre, Reddal Hill Road, Cradley Heath, B64 5JG	10am - 1pm	Not available	10am - 1pm	Not available	9am - 11am	Closed	Closed
	19 Oakham Library, Poplar Rise, Tividale, B69 1RD	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	Closed	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	Closed	10am - 1pm 2pm - 5pm	10am - 2pm	Closed
	20 Wednesbury Library, Walsall Street, Wednesbury, WS10 9EH	9.30am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 5.30pm	9.30am - 1.30pm	9.30am - 5.30pm	10am - 4pm	Closed
	21 Hill Top Library, Park Buildings, Hill Top, B70 0RZ	1.30pm - 5.30pm	Closed	1.30pm - 5.30pm	Closed	10am - 2pm	10am - 2pm	Closed

# COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR WARM SPACES

Town	Location Address	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Life in Community CIC, 54 Lichfield Street, DY4 9PB		3.30pm - 7.30pm	3.30pm - 5.30pm				
	Bangladeshi Women's Association, Powis Avenue, DY4 0RJ					9am - 3pm		
	Bangladeshi Women's Association, Wellington Road, DY4 8RS				9am - 3pm	9am - 3pm		
	Tipton Community Association, 1 Brook Street, DY4 9DD		12.30pm - 3.30pm					
	Murray Hall CT, St Marks Road, DY4 0SL	10am - 4pm	10am - 4pm	10am - 4pm	10am - 4pm	10am - 4pm		
	New Beginnings, Thimblemill Road, B67 6LP			10am - 11.30am				
	Oldbury Salvation Army, 6 Merton Close, B68 8NG		9.30am - 6.30pm					
	Lion Farm Action Centre, Shelsley Avenue, B69 1BG		12 Noon - 3pm	12 Noon - 2pm	Noon - 2pm	1pm - 2pm		
	St James CofE Church, Shelsley Avenue, B69 1BG	12 Noon - 3pm	9am - 11.30am		9am - 12 Noon			
	King's Community Church, Tame Road, B68 0JP				9.30am - 4.30pm			
	Sandwell Churches Link, 291 High Street, B68 0EL	10am - 4pm		10am - 4pm		10am - 4pm		
	Sandwell Irish Community Association, Langley High Street, B69 4SL	10am - 2pm	10am - 2pm				10am - 2pm	10am - 2pm
	NSDT Brasshouse, Brasshouse Lane, B66 1BA	10am - 4pm	10am - 4pm	10am - 4pm	10am - 4pm	10am - 4pm		
	Abrahamic Foundation, 215 High Street, B66 3AH	10am - 2pm	10am - 2pm				10am - 2pm	10am - 2pm
	Ileys Community Association, Corbett Street, B66 3PU		9.30am - 2.00pm		9.30am - 2.00pm	3pm - 7pm		
	Soho Victoria Friends and Neighbours CIC, Regent Street, B66 3BQ	11am - 3pm						
	SPMA Ltd., Suffrage Street, B66 3PZ	8.30am - 3.30pm		8.30am - 3.30pm	8.30am - 3.30pm			
	U-Island CIC, 318 Summer Lane, B67 6LP							10am - 3pm
	Bearwood Community Hub CIC, St Mary's Road, B66 4HA			11.30am - 6pm				
	Jamia Mosque Anwar Trust, Windmill Lane, B66 3EU	9am - 8pm	9am - 8pm	9am - 8pm	9am - 8pm	9am - 8pm	9am - 8pm	9am - 8pm



# COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR WARM SPACES

	Yemeni Community Association, Tildasley Street, B70 9SJ							12 Noon - 8pm	
	Just Straight Talk, 38 Carters Green, B70 9LG	10am - 2pm	10am - 2pm		10am - 2pm	10am - 2pm	10am - 2pm		
	Gayton Road Community Centre, Gayton Road, B71 1QS	8.30am - 9pm	8.30am - 9pm		8.30am - 9pm	8.30am - 9pm	8.30am - 9pm		
	Yew Tree and Tamebridge CC, Redwood Road, WS5 4LB	9am - 1pm	9am - 7pm		9am - 3pm	9am - 1pm	9am - 1pm		
	West Bromwich Dartmouth CC, Birmingham Road, B71 4JQ	9am - 11pm	9am - 11pm		9am - 11pm	9am - 11pm	9am - 11pm	9am - 11pm	9am - 11pm
	European's Welfare Association, CIC, 350 High Street, B70 8DJ							9.30am - 2.30pm	
	Holy Trinity, Old Hill, B64 6JA				1pm - 3pm				
	Lifecentral Church, Little Cornbow, B65 8HS		11am - 2pm						
	Cradley Heath Community Link, 29a Upper High Street, B64 5HA	1pm - 3pm			10am - 3pm	10am - 3pm	10am - 3pm		
	Wednesbury Sons of Rest (Community Centre), 1 Foley Street, WS10 9HG						10.30am - 1pm		
	Friar Park Millennium Centre, Friar Park Road, WS10 0JS	9am - 9pm	9am - 9pm		9am - 9pm	9am - 9pm	9am - 9pm	9.30am - 1pm	
	Lea Brook Methodist Church, Leabrook Road North, WS10 7LY				10am - 12.30pm				
	Wednesbury Community Association, Hall Street, WS10 9DQ		10.30am - 4.30pm						

# SECTION 2

## FEELING WELL



## NOURISH MIND AND BODY

A healthy diet gives you the right amounts of energy, vitamins and minerals so that your body can work properly. It also helps to reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes, strokes and certain cancers.



You should try to aim to eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. You'll find some cheaper ways to stock up on fruit and vegetables at:



[www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/5-a-day-on-a-budget](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/5-a-day-on-a-budget)

Eating breakfast is a really good way to start your day. The right breakfast provides you with all the nutrients and energy you need in the morning and can help prevent unhealthy snacking throughout the morning. It can also help increase concentration levels.



There are some great, healthy breakfast ideas at: [www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/breakfast](https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/breakfast)

# GET INTO THE HABIT OF MEAL PLANNING

Drawing up a weekly meal plan can help you to eat well and feel great. Plan ahead with your meals and keep your cupboards and freezer well stocked to avoid making extra shopping trips in the cold weather.

Plan your meals so all the ingredients on your shopping list get used, then freeze any unused food.

Getting into the habit of cooking extra portions for your evening meal means that you can have the leftovers for lunch the next day, or freeze them so you've got a supply of homemade ready meals available.

Frozen fruit and vegetables also make great freezer staples because they're ready to use and are often cheaper than buying fresh. They are frozen to seal in their nutrients so they are just as good for you.

# FEEDING YOUR FAMILY ON A BUDGET

You'll find a great range of affordable recipes for feeding a family on a budget on our website. Just go to [www.sandwell.gov.uk](http://www.sandwell.gov.uk) and search for 'recipes'.

They have all been shared by our local community groups and can be adapted depending on how many you are cooking for!



# NEED TO TALK?

If you're feeling low anxious or lonely – or if you know someone who is struggling, you do not have to struggle with difficult feelings alone.



Visit [www.healthysandwell.co.uk/mental-health-wellbeing/](http://www.healthysandwell.co.uk/mental-health-wellbeing/) for more information on support available.

Here's a list of organisations you can talk to:

## Black Country Mental Health Helpline

Contact our 24/7 mental health support line which is available for Black Country residents of all ages 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Please call 0800 008 6516 or text message 07860 025 281.**

## Papyrus (Crisis Line for Young People)

Are you, or is a young person you know, not coping with life? For confidential suicide prevention advice contact HOPELINEUK.

**0800 068 4141 (Hopeline UK 9am – Midnight)**

## Samaritans

**116 123**

## Kaleidoscope Sanctuary hub

0800 008 6516 (Monday to Friday 6pm - 11pm; Saturday & Sunday 12noon - 11pm)

## Cruse Bereavement Care

**0808 808 1677** (Helpline, Monday – Friday 9.30am – 5pm)

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9.30am – 8pm, Weekends 10am – 2pm)

## Tough Enough To Care (Local men's support group)

**[toughenoughtocare.help/support-groups](http://toughenoughtocare.help/support-groups)**

## Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS)

**0300 111 5065** (National Helpline, Monday to Sunday 9am – 9pm)



# EVERYBODY NEEDS GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Check in on vulnerable neighbours to make sure they are safe, well and warm, especially at night.

If you're worried about a relative or older neighbour contact Sandwell Council's Adult Social Care team on **0121 569 2266** or call the Age UK helpline on **0800 678 1602**.



# DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT

Tensions can escalate as household budgets are stretched and financial pressures can increase abuse risks for victims.

Black Country Women's Aid provides support to female and male victims of all ages, all ethnicities and backgrounds, including those from the LGBTQ+ communities and people with disabilities.

You can call 24 hours a day on **0121 552 6448** or via text and WhatsApp on **07384 466181** (9am-9pm weekdays).

Visit [www.blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk](http://www.blackcountrywomensaid.co.uk) for more details.



Sandwell Council provides safe accommodation for victims and their children.

Call the Housing Team on **0121 368 1166**.



There's more advice at:

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



# FALLS PREVENTION DURING WINTER

The winter months bring additional challenges with wet, cold weather. Falling leaves, ice and snow can become hazardous. Falls are one of the main causes of older people attending accident and emergency departments.

Follow these basic tips to prevent falls this winter:

- Take extra care if the ground is slippery.
- Wear shoes with good grip.
- Consider keeping a salt and sand mixture handy to grit paths.
- Ask neighbours for help to clear paths or driveways in bad weather.



[www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/exercise/falls-prevention](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/exercise/falls-prevention)

## Prevent falls by improving balance

Improving strength and balance is important. People aged 50 and over in Sandwell can access a free programme called FallsFree4Life Sandwell which is aimed at preventing falls.

If you or someone you know would like to receive a falls risk assessment and access to exercise sessions please contact via email at [fallsfree.sandwell@nhs.net](mailto:fallsfree.sandwell@nhs.net) or telephone on **0121 769 1327** or **0800 246 5290**





# LOOKING FOR A FRESH CHALLENGE?

## Volunteering could be the answer?

If you're looking to learn something new, get involved within the community, meet new people, make new friends, gain experience, get active, share your skills, develop new ones, give yourself a challenge, help others, or just have some fun – then volunteering is for you.



Check out  
[www.letsgosandwell.info](http://www.letsgosandwell.info)



## Christmas Evening at

# West Smethwick Park

Sat 17 Dec

- 🧑‍🎨 Enjoy the festive season in our Pavilion building
- 🛠️ Craft and community stalls
- 🎵 Live music and entertainment
- ☕ Festive food and drink

**FREE  
ENTRY!**

Find out more and book now at

[www.visitsandwell.com](http://www.visitsandwell.com)

# SECTION 3

## KEEPING WELL



## ARM YOURSELF AGAINST FLU AND COVID-19 THIS WINTER

**Join the millions who have already been vaccinated to help protect yourself and your loved ones. If you are aged 50 or over, go to [www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations](http://www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations) for advice on how to book, contact your GP practice or visit a participating pharmacy. Call 119 if you need advice by phone.**

Some people under 50 are also eligible for these vaccine doses, including pregnant women, frontline healthcare workers and some children. If you have a specific health risk or condition, are a carer or live with someone who has a weakened immune system, check your eligibility on the NHS website.

If you're eligible for the free flu vaccine, it's likely you can get the Covid-19 seasonal booster.

Getting both vaccines is important because:

- more people are likely to get flu this winter
- you're more likely to be seriously ill if you get flu and Covid-19 at the same time.



If you're aged 65 or over, or have certain health conditions, you are also eligible for the pneumococcal vaccine, also known as the pneumonia vaccine. Ask your GP practice for more information.

## GET ACTIVE, STAY WELL

**Did you know? Just moving around more can result in massive health benefits for everyone! You can boost your energy levels and break up the day with some bitesize chunks of movement.**

Any exercise we do is better than none, and you don't need a gym membership or fancy kit to get moving. There's lots you can do either at home or outdoors.



**Find out more at:**  
[www.healthysandwell.co.uk/movemoresandwell](http://www.healthysandwell.co.uk/movemoresandwell)



**You'll find more great resources on the NHS Better Health website to help keep you active at: [www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active](http://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active)**



# KEEP WARM AND HEALTHY



**Whether we're staying indoors or getting out and about, it's important to keep warm in winter – especially for people aged 65 or over and those with long-term health conditions.**

Keeping warm can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems. You may be able to claim financial and practical help to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help with bills.

Visit [www.gov.uk/improve-energy-efficiency](http://www.gov.uk/improve-energy-efficiency) or call 0800 444 202 to speak to an advisor. Warmer Homes West Midlands [www.warmerhomeswm.org.uk](http://www.warmerhomeswm.org.uk) offers personalised energy advice service to households who are currently struggling to heat their home.



**If you're worried about an older relative or neighbour, call Sandwell Council's Adult Social Care team on 0121 569 2266.**

**Age UK have also produced some great advice on staying warm and well as we get older. Search Stay Healthy in Winter at [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**

**They also offer support through their free advice line on 0800 678 1602. Lines are open 8am – 7pm, 365 days a year.**

Key tips for staying well:

- Stay active when indoors, avoid sitting still for too long
- Heat your home to at least 18°C (65°F)
- Wear several layers of light clothes to trap warmth.
- Check your heating and cooking appliances are safe – [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)
- Concerned someone may have hypothermia? Call NHS 111.



Visit [www.nhs.uk/live-well](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well) for more tips on staying well, including eating a healthy, balanced diet.

# LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY



**Get advice if you feel unwell.**

If you are aged 65 and over or in one of the other high risk groups, it is important to get medical help as soon as you feel unwell.

You can get help and advice from your local pharmacy. Pharmacists can give treatment advice for a range of minor illnesses and can tell you if you need to see a doctor. You may be able to speak to a GP online or over the phone, or go in for an appointment if they think you need to.

If you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do, do not wait. Go to **111.nhs.uk** or call 111.

**Some self care tips to help you feel better:**

- ask your pharmacist to recommend medicines to help with symptoms or pain
- get plenty of rest
- make sure you and any children you care for drink enough to avoid feeling thirsty
- fever is a sign the body is fighting infection and usually gets better itself in most cases. You can use paracetamol if you are uncomfortable as a result of a fever
- use a tissue for your nose and wash your hands frequently to avoid spreading your infection.



**If you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do, do not wait. Go to **111.nhs.uk** or call 111.**

# TAKE YOUR DOCTOR'S ADVICE ON ANTIBIOTICS

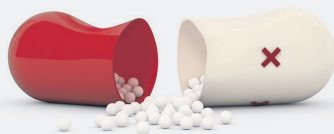
Antibiotics are vital medicines that are used to treat a wide variety of infections, but experts are worried over-use is making them less effective.

Using antibiotics when they are not really needed, or not taking them properly when prescribed, can cause bugs to become resistant, meaning antibiotics won't be as good at helping you to fight off future infections.

## What you can do:

- Check your medicine cabinet for any old antibiotics and return them to your pharmacy on your next visit.
- If you are prescribed antibiotics, always follow your clinician's instructions on how to take them and make sure you finish the whole course, even if you feel better. This will help prevent the infection returning.
- Only take antibiotics that are prescribed for you, and don't give your antibiotics to anybody else. Don't keep leftover antibiotics to use next time you feel ill, as these are unlikely to be the right type and could make the problem worse.
- And remember: never throw antibiotics in the bin, toilet or down the drain, as they can get in the water supply and harm the environment. Always take any unused antibiotics or other medicines to your local pharmacy, where they will be disposed of safely.

**Taking  
ANTIBIOTICS  
when you don't  
need them puts  
you and your  
family at risk**



**TAKE YOUR  
DOCTOR'S ADVICE**

# CHECK YOUR MEDICINE CABINET

Ask your pharmacist what medicines should be in your cabinet to help get you and your family through the winter season.

Many over-the-counter medicines (including paracetamol and ibuprofen) are available to relieve symptoms of common winter ailments such as colds, sinusitis or painful middle ear infection (earache).

Your pharmacist can help if you need any advice.

For more information search 'medicine cabinet' on [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## Reminder for prescription medication during the festive period

Make sure you get your prescription medicines before your pharmacy or GP practice closes for Christmas.

And, if you've been prescribed antibiotics or any other medication, **make sure you take them as directed.**

Don't go to a pharmacy if you have symptoms of Covid-19. You can order prescriptions via GP or pharmacy websites and apps or by calling them. Ask a friend, relative or volunteer to collect medicines for you.

You can also order your repeat prescriptions via the NHS App, as well as make GP appointments.



The NHS App is available on the App Store and on Google Play. For more information visit [www.nhs.uk/nhsapp](http://www.nhs.uk/nhsapp)



**HEALTHY  
SANDWELL**

We find the support you need



Healthy Sandwell is a one stop shop for information on keeping healthy in Sandwell.

Call us for FREE on 0800 011 4656\* or 0121 569 5100

Text: GETHEALTHY to 87007\*

Email: [ls@nhs.net](mailto:ls@nhs.net)

Find us at [www.healthysandwell.co.uk](http://www.healthysandwell.co.uk)





# GET COST OF LIVING TIPS AND ADVICE TO YOUR PHONE



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

