



November 2025 Newsletter



CONGRATULATIONS TO VIVEAN POMELL FOR HER LITERARY MILESTONE!

Vivean Pomell, celebrated author, educator, entrepreneur, and founder of Learn with Lolonyo, which is based in Sandwell has become an inspiring part of Sandwell's cultural and educational landscape. Her books, *Patina's Poetry* and *Under the Mango Tree*, are now available at both Waterstones and Barnes & Noble an achievement she describes as "nothing short of a miracle."

Vivean extends heartfelt thanks to Helen Peach (Sandwell Business Development Hub) and Kit at Aspire 4u CIC for their invaluable support in nurturing the growth of Learn with Lolonyo.

REBUILDING CRYSTAL PALACE

AN ART WORKSHOP CELEBRATING THE CHANCE BROTHERS'
ICONIC GLASSWORKS IN SMETHWICK, SANDWELL

In 1851, Smethwick's Chance Brothers supplied the glass for London's Crystal Palace — a glittering marvel of light and innovation.

In this FREE workshop, you'll help "rebuild" the Palace as a collaborative artwork: painting and drawing its glowing structure, then filling it with our own characters, inventions and fantastical creatures. Re-imagining old histories and thinking of new futures!

Open to all, no experience needed with plenty of materials provided. Book on the QR code or show up on the day.

DATE: SAT 22 NOVEMBER 2025

TIME: 10:30 – 12:30
PLACE: SMETHWICK
LIBRARY, SMETHWICK, B66
1AA



ARCHIVES
REVEALED



Heritage
Fund



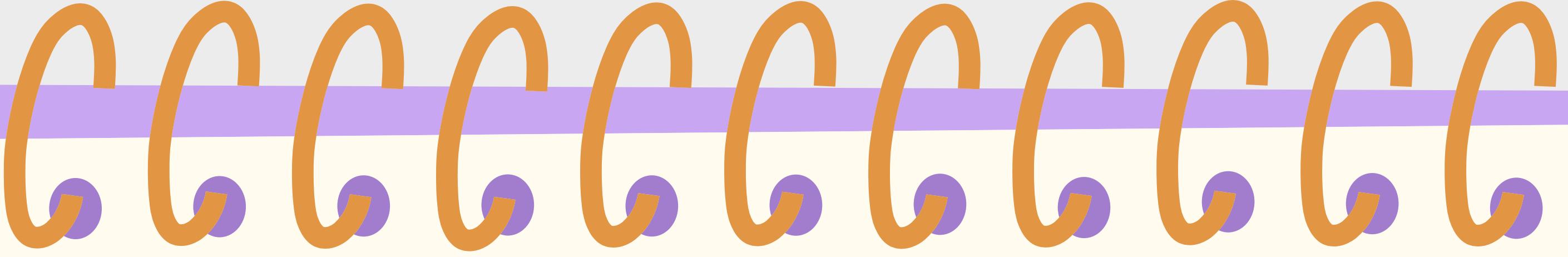
Pilgrim
Trust



The Wolfson
Foundation



THE
NATIONAL
ARCHIVES



JOIN OUR ROCK BAND!
a friendly group for adults that sing
or play an instrument

no need to
read music
notation

guided by
professional
leaders

rehearsals,
gigs and
socials

YOUR FIRST SESSION IS FREE



Mondays from 7:15PM - 8:45PM
during term times.
Great Bridge Library
40 Sheepwash Lane, DY4 7JF
call: 07305 043160
email: hello@misfitsmusic.org.uk
website: misfitsmusic.org.uk/trc



Sandwell Poetry Laureate Scheme coming soon!

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Charlotte McDermott, and a group of incredible experts will be launching the Sandwell Poet Laureate Programme within the next year! The Laureate scheme will seek to instate a Sandwell Poet Laureate and Sandwell Young Poet Laureate, through the means of a writing competition with a panel of proficient judges, that will be able to “tell the Sandwell Story and inspire the people of Sandwell to maximise their own creative potential.”

To do this, a team of experts will be gathered that represent the diverse, multi-faceted poetry community around the West Midlands and within Sandwell. We will launch an open mic pilot in 2026 to bring people together and read, write, and above all perform poetry in safe, accessible spaces, celebrating the beauty and unique twang of Sandwell, the Black Country, and the surrounding areas. This project will unite Sandwell and its towns under a poetical banner, providing opportunities for people of different backgrounds to take part in workshops, open mic events, festivals, charity fundraising, creative promotion, and many other delightful artistic ventures.

Job Opportunity at Stan's Cafe!

Project Manager / Facilitator (combined role)

Details/recruitment pack on our website: <https://stans.cafe/opportunities/>

We are looking for a fantastic Project Manager who is also an experienced Creative Learning Practitioner to lead our project Sharing Sister Dora from January 2026 until March 2027 with an evaluation period until June 2027.

Fixed-term contract / Part time.

The salary is £30,000 per annum pro rata.

Deadline for applications is 12pm Thursday 20 November.

PoArtry

An Evening of Poetry and Spoken Word

Tuesday, 18th Nov 2025
7:00pm – 9:00pm
(doors open 6:30pm)

To put your name into the performance hat
email: infoartyard@gmail.com

Events cost £3 on the door
With free - Tea/coffee and biscuits

The Art Yard
Tel: 01384 910968
The Art Yard, 19 – 20 Upper High St, Cradley Heath, B64 5HX

EXHIBITION
October – December 2025

FANTASY CHRONICLE
**BRAIDS,
MAPS &
MOTION**
THE HIDDEN KINGDOM
OF HAIR AND DANCE



WEDNESBURY MUSEUM
AND ART GALLERY
HOLLYHED ROAD, WEDNESBURY, WS10 7DF
Free entry

WASP



ADD YOUR EVENTS TO VISIT SANDWELL TODAY

If you have an event in Sandwell, PLEASE add it to Visit Sandwell by [clicking here!](#)

We want more Sandwell events on Visit Sandwell - if you need any help with adding events, please contact Stacey!

[A support video to add events on Visit Sandwell is here!](#)

Join the Sandwell Cultural Forum

NOW

Do you know someone who wants to join the Sandwell Forum?

Email Stacey via:
stacey_bagdi@sandwell.gov.uk



Call to action!

Yam from Here: Migration and the Making of the Black Country is a multi-year arts and heritage project funded by Heritage Lottery exploring the identity of the region.

We are looking for communities and partners to engage in our **free arts workshops**.

Our workshops are led by local artists who utilise the mediums of **painting, textiles, photography, and performance** to explore questions of home, journey, and community in the Black Country.

We would like to work with you!

Our audiences include:

Community groups and organisations interested in local arts, heritage, and history.

CIC's working with first-generation migrants and community groups and organisations interested in stories of migration.

We can organise venues in your borough through partners or come directly to you! We will organise the workshop for free.

You don't need to bring anything, just yourselves and your community.

Email: Piotr.kardynal@ewacic.com or Luccadivirgilio@ewacic.com to register interest!



Autumn at The Commons



9.30am - 11.30

Gardening including seed sowing and looking after the plants

12.30pm - 2.30

Nature based craft and art activities

The community garden can be found outside the hospital's main entrance near Costa and the grass circle

How to find us



wearespectra.co.uk/the-commons

Upcoming dates

2nd October

16th October

6th November

20th November

Just pop by or for more information email ruby@wearespectra.co.uk



[Visit wearespectra.co.uk/the-commons](http://wearespectra.co.uk/the-commons)

Congratulations to Big Bear Music as Birmingham Jazz & Blues Festival named Event of the Year

BIRMINGHAM'S long-running Jazz & Blues Festival has been named the city's best event at a prestigious awards ceremony – only months after local government funding cuts threatened its very existence.

The festival, which this year boasted a remarkable 178 live performances at 101 venues, most of them offering free admission, was named 'Festival or Event of the Year' at the annual Birmingham Awards.

[Read more here - Congrats to all!](#)



Congratulations to Creative Black Country and Sandwell Partners for their recent funding success!

Creative Black Country Awarded Three Years of Funding
We're thrilled to share that Creative Black Country has been awarded £999,999 in funding from Arts Council England to continue supporting creativity across the region from 2026 to 2029. This investment marks a new chapter in our 10-year journey of co-creation, community pride, and artistic innovation.

[Read More Here](#)

Festive Wreath Workshops at Lightwoods House



🎄 Festive Wreath Making Workshop with Vanilla Ruffles



Join us for a heart warming and creative experience as you learn the traditional craft of wreath making in this festive workshop hosted by Vanilla Ruffles.

🌿 What to Expect

Create your very own fresh wreath using a beautiful selection of seasonal foliage and natural accessories.

Whether you're a complete beginner or have some experience, this workshop is designed to be fun, relaxing, and inspiring. No prior skills are needed—just bring your festive spirit!

Tickets and further information can be found here:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whatson/bearwood/lightwoods-house/christmas-wreath-making-workshop/2025-11-30/d-krrlnotvmpblb>

During WWII many men of combat age were kept from active service due to their uncommon expertise without which the war could not have been won. These men were known as Reserved Occupationists

WWII WORKERS MONUMENT FIGHTING FROM HOME

A new 12 foot tall memorial by Black Country sculptor Luke Perry will be unveiled at 2pm on Sunday 9th November



St Luke's Church
Upper High Street
Cradley Heath
B64 5HY
2 pm Sunday
9th November.

For information
Email
mr.l.perry@gmail.com



THE Smethwick PUPPETRY FESTIVAL

Help us bring more puppetry magic to Smethwick in 2026

Donate to our
Crowdfunder!



Collecting Oral Histories: Chance Migration Stories

CALLING EX-EMPLOYEES OF CHANCE
BROTHERS GLASS WORKS, SMETHWICK.



ARCHIVES
REVEALED

Made possible with
Heritage Fund

Pilgrim
Trust

The Wolfson*
Foundation



Did you migrate to England to work for Chance in the 1960s-1980s, or know of someone who did?

Would you like to share your story? Then we would like to talk to you!

For more information, please contact Karen Davies, Project Archivist, at Karen_TracyDavies@sandwell.gov.uk



Black Country Touring are crowdfunding for The Smethwick Puppetry Festival 2026!

Every February half-term, the festival brings laughter, joy, and puppetry magic to the local community. In 2026, BCT is going even BIGGER - more performances, more workshops, more venues!

Your donation means we can:

- ➡ Keep the festival 'Pay What You Can' - so no one is left out
- ➡ Bring even more performances and workshops to the festival
- ➡ Reach more local people than ever before

Donate £25+ and get your hands on some limited-edition special rewards! 😍

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/smethwickpuppetryfestival>



Featured Events Listing



Click on the text below to find out more about the events and to book

Sandwell Museums:

Haden Hill House

- [Lots of exciting family fun events at Haden click here for the full list!](#)

Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery

- [Lots of history talks and family summer fun at Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery](#)

Oak House Museum

- [There's a ton of activities happening at Oak House this summer - click here!](#)

Bromwich Hall

- [Check out the amazing events happening at Bromwich Hall, including the Medieval Weekend!](#)

Galton Valley Pumping Station

- Galton Valley Pumping station is opened by our volunteers on the 2nd Saturday of the month from April to October 11am-3pm.

Sandwell Libraries:

- [Lots coming up, book via Ticketsource <-click here](#)

Sandwell Council:

- [Remembrance Sunday - Sunday 9 November 2025](#)

Sandwell Valley:

- [Fire Garden -Friday 7 and Saturday 8 November 2025](#)
- [Santa's Village at Sandwell Valley- Saturday 6, Sunday 7 and Saturday 13 December 2025. Santa Paws - Sunday 14 December 2025](#)
- [Christmas Pantomime - Sleeping Beauty - Friday 19 - Tuesday 23 December 2025](#)



Riverside

What's happening in your neighbourhood?



BINGO

Every Thursday, 12pm – 2pm

Myra Harris Community Room
Brickhouse Lane
West Bromwich
B70 0DZ

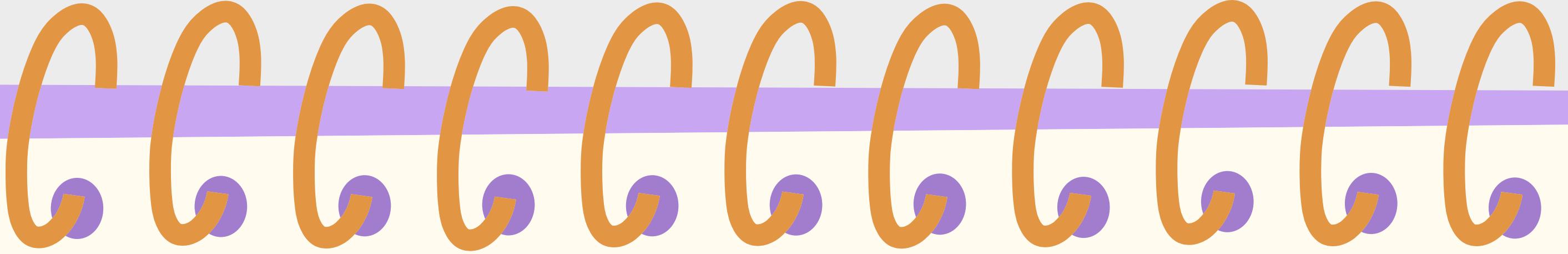
Come and join us for a friendly bingo session
every Thursday!

For more information, please ring Pam at
0121 522 3766



www.riverside.org.uk

The Riverside Group Limited (Reg No 30938R) is a charitable Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014



Cultural Forum Members List

1. [1000 Trades](#)
2. Anthony McFarlane (Artist)
3. [Black Country Touring](#)
4. [Bear Bookshop](#)
5. [Bearwood Community Hub](#)
6. [Bearwood Promoters](#)
7. [Big Bear Music](#)
8. [Birmingham Opera](#)
9. [Blue Sheep Books](#)
10. [Birmingham Music Archive](#)
11. [Canal & River Trust](#)
12. [City of Birmingham Orchestra](#)
13. [Chance Heritage Trust](#)
14. [Curl Girl Productions](#)
15. [Creative Black Country](#)
16. [Drama AND SOME cic](#)
17. [The Art Yard](#)
18. [Powered by Can](#)
19. [Kickstarts Dance](#)
20. [Outside Left](#)
21. [Wild Lives Forest School](#)
22. [Learn with Lolonyo](#)
23. [Luke Perry \(Artist\)](#)
24. [ME Dance](#)
25. [Method in Motion](#)
26. [Midlands Metro Hospital](#)
27. [Multistory](#)
28. [Fantastic Journeys](#)
29. Quennie Lim (Artist)
30. [Sandwell College](#)
31. Sarah Cole, writer
32. [SCVO](#)
33. [SIPS](#)
34. [Smethwick Heritage Centre](#)
35. [Stan's Cafe](#)
36. [SWEDA](#)
37. [The Parakeet](#)
38. [The People's Orchestra](#)
39. [We are Spectra](#)
40. [West Midlands Heritage Building Trust](#)
41. [Women & Theatre](#)
42. [Rage Arts](#)
43. [European's Welfare Association](#)

& Sandwell Council Officers



Next meeting date:

TBC

