

# SANDWELL CULTURAL FORUM

## September 2025 Newsletter



**IMPORTANT  
ANNOUNCEMENT**

**DO YOU RUN COMMUNITY GROUPS IN SANDWELL?**

We are offering 6 x free 1.5hr workshops including all materials - for all community groups across Sandwell.

Contact:  
richardmole@artstherapiesuk.org.uk



### Funding available for community groups from Arts Therapies UK

Arts Therapies UK currently have funding to provide 6 free 1.5hr therapeutic creative workshops to any charity/ CIC or community group in Sandwell thank you to our National Lottery Community Fund grant.

See here for contact details

## THIS MONTH'S FEATURED MEMBER IS... SANDWELL ARCHIVES

Sandwell Archives, also referred to as Sandwell Community History and Archives Service, collects and preserves original archives and published material relating to the history of Sandwell. If you are interested in finding out more about local history or tracing your family tree, Sandwell Archives holds a vast wealth of material to help you!

This year they have been successful in receiving two grants from The National Archives!



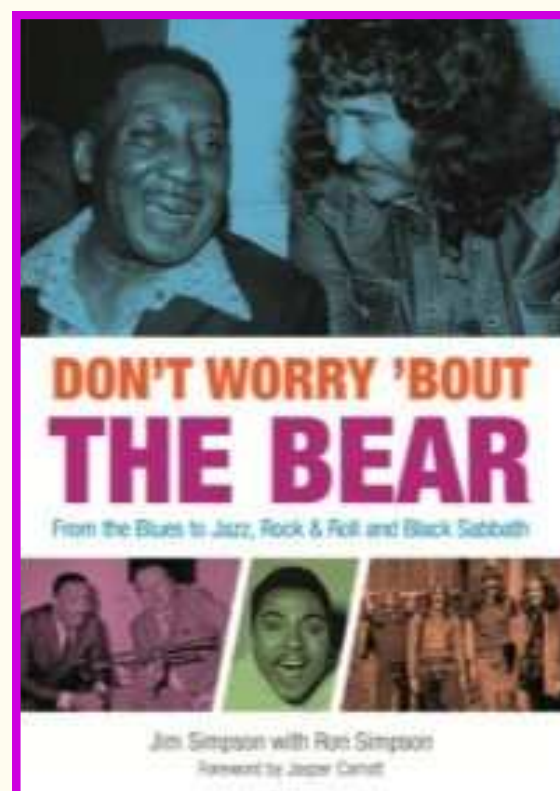
To find out more about Sandwell Archives, visit their [website here!](#)



**New book: Don't Worry 'Bout The Bear.**

The story of Jim Simpson's 60 years in jazz, rock and blues, written in collaboration with Ron Simpson

Available from  
<http://www.bigbearmusic.com/product/dont-worry-bout-the-bear/>



'In sum, a beautiful book, warm, funny, touching, utterly transparent... This has to be one of the best autobiographical reads out there right now.' – Simon Spillett, *The Jazz Rag*

'This is the best book on British music I've read for a very long time.' – Andrew Liddle, *Yorkshire Times*

'...must surely be on every jazzers' Christmas list – if you can wait that long, that is' – Lance Liddle, *Bebop Spoken Here*

'...a tale of fortunes found and lost, impossible optimism and moments of musical magic...' – Stuart Constable, *Living Blues*

'Teeming with insight and anecdote about so many names known in so many households' – *Just Jazz*

**VACA MARIPOSA / BUTTERFLY COW  
FINALLY FOUND, LAST SPOTTED AT  
THIMBLEMILL LIBRARY!**

*Mischief portals have been sighted, proceed with caution!*



*La Vaca Mariposa / The Butterfly Cow* an art exhibition  
by Bearwood-based artist Abigail Villarroel on view from  
22 August to 13 September

@ Thimblemill Library, Bearwood, B67 5RJ





## THIMBLEMILL LIBRARY ART WORKSHOPS

*in collaboration with La Vaca Mariposa / The Butterfly Cow art exhibition*



### Still Life Drawing Afternoon

**Sunday 21 September / 12:00 - 2:00pm**

*Try still life drawing in a relaxed, creative workshop, perfect for beginners or experienced artists looking to play and explore!*



## THIMBLEMILL LIBRARY ART WORKSHOPS

*in collaboration with La Vaca Mariposa / The Butterfly Cow art exhibition*



### Sketching Fashions

**Sunday 7 September / 12:00 - 2:00pm**

**Friday 12 September / 6:30 - 8:30pm**

*Discover fashion illustration in a fun, experimental workshop inspired by couture runways, hosted at Thimblemill Library!*



## JOB OPPORTUNITY

Spectra is seeking a freelance researcher to evidence, analyse and demonstrate the impact of our work, using historical and newly collected data to create a report or resource about our current and potential impact that is both meaningful and genuinely accessible to people with learning disabilities.

Terms: Freelance contract, October 2025 – February 2028

Fee: £9,600 inclusive of travel, expenses and VAT

Location: Hybrid – Sandwell, West Midlands, and working remotely

DEADLINE: 9am, Tuesday 16 September 2025

If you think this job looks great but you're a bit cautious about putting yourself forward, please get in touch with Kerry for an informal chat. We're very happy to talk through the role, to find different ways of communicating this job description, and to explore how different kinds of experience could contribute to fulfilling this role well.

This role is made possible by funding from The National Lottery Community Fund

[APPLY HERE](#)

## 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

### Upcoming dates

18<sup>th</sup> September

2<sup>nd</sup> October

16<sup>th</sup> October

6<sup>th</sup> November

20<sup>th</sup> November

The community garden can be found outside the main entrance of Midland Metropolitan University Hospital!

**Just pop by or for more information email  
[ruby@wearespectra.co.uk](mailto:ruby@wearespectra.co.uk)**



Supporting public funding by  
ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND



Funded by  
UK Government



## 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](mailto:stacey_bagdi@sandwell.gov.uk)



free live music  
vintage vinyl dj sets

**OUTSIDELEFT**  
night out

**JANIQUE  
JAMES**

**dj woodenhand**

**FREE ADMISSION**

**Saturday September 6th, 7.30-11  
1000 Trades on the Park, Bearwood**

more info: [outsideleft.com/ianiquejames](https://outsideleft.com/ianiquejames)

[ticketsource.com/outsideleft](https://ticketsource.com/outsideleft)

Outside Left are always  
looking for writers  
whose interests tend  
towards otherwise  
unloved not so  
mainstream music arts  
and culture.

If you are interested,  
please contact  
[lamontpaul@gmail.com](mailto:lamontpaul@gmail.com)





INFAMOUS ARTS PRESENT

# THE TOYMAKER



A FAMILY FESTIVE SHOW OF  
TRADITIONAL STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD



**"ABSOLUTELY CRACKING SHOW. SO GOOD TO HEAR DARKER STORIES ABOUT THE WINTER SEASON. BEAUTIFULLY WRITTEN, PERFORMED, EXECUTED AND THE DESIGN HAD LOADS OF DELIGHTS AND SURPRISES"**

**"BEAUTIFUL SHOW, LOOK FORWARD TO WATCHING IT AGAIN. ENGAGING, INVENTIVE, INFORMATIVE AND FUN - EVERYTHING YOU WANT IN A SHOW!"**

**"VERY LOVELY STORY, MY KIDS LOVED IT. THANK YOU VERY MUCH"**



DEvised & CREATED BY  
MATT LLOYD JACK TROW



**INSPIRED BY VARIOUS TRADITIONAL FESTIVE STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD, VISIT THE TOYMAKER IN HIS WORKSHOP AS HE PREPARES TO GO OUT ON HIS DELIVERIES. A STORYTELLING PERFORMANCE, PERFORMED BY ONE ACTOR WHO SKILFULLY ANIMATES VARIOUS PUPPETS AND PROPS TO WEAVE TOGETHER ALL THE DIFFERING STORIES TO CREATE A FUNNY, ANARCHIC, MOVING AND BEAUTIFUL JOURNEY THROUGH VARIOUS CULTURES AND MAKES FOR VISUALLY STUNNING THEATRE.**

**THIS IS A 45 MINUTE PERFORMANCE AND TWO SHOWS AT THE SAME VENUE CAN BE PRESENTED IN ONE DAY AND IS FLEXIBLE REGARDING PERFORMANCE DELIVERY SO WE CAN MEET THE NEEDS OF FESTIVALS, SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, AND ARTS VENUES. THE PERFORMANCE IS SUITABLE FOR FAMILIES AND FOR ALL AGES OVER 5 YEARS**

**THE TOYMAKER IS TECHNICALLY SELF-SUFFICIENT AND TOURS WITH IT'S OWN SOUND EQUIPMENT AND LIGHTING AND WOULD REQUIRE ACCESS TO AT LEAST 4 X 13AMP SOCKETS. FOR VENUES WITH THEIR OWN FIXED LIGHTING RIG A WARM GENERAL COVER IS REQUESTED AS IS LARGER VENUES WITH IN HOUSE PA SYSTEMS WE MAY REQUIRE TO RUN OUR SOUND THROUGH.**

**PERFORMANCE SPACE NEEDED IS 4M DEPTH X 5M WIDTH MINIMUM, WITH 3M HEIGHT, AND IS AN END ON PERFORMANCE.**



**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TOUR BOOKINGS PLEASE CONTACT  
INFO@INFAMOUSARTS.CO.UK  
0121 439 5410  
WWW.INFAMOUSARTS.CO.UK**





# Feature 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

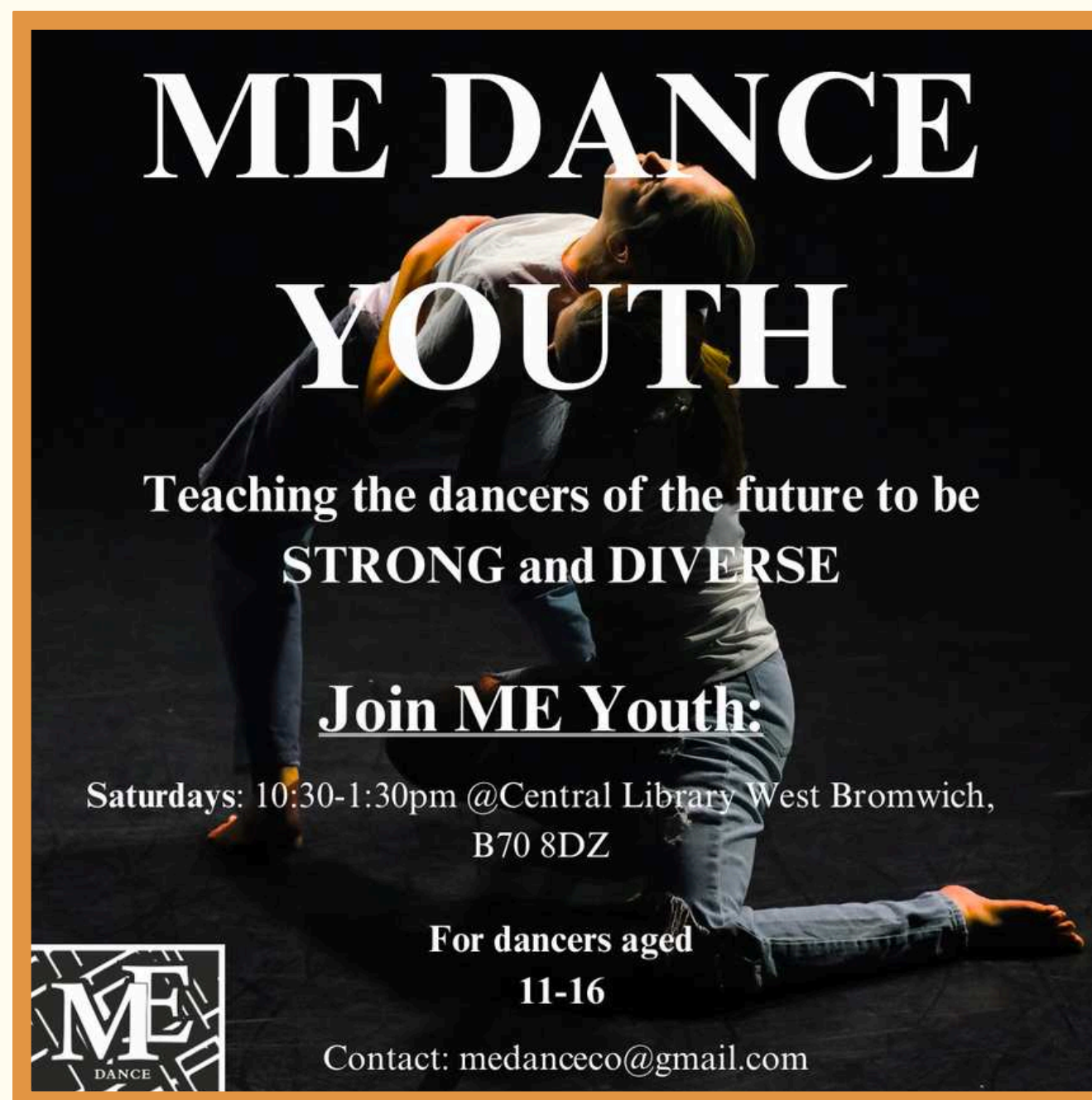
- Galton Valley Pumping station is opened by our volunteers on the **2nd Saturday of the month from April to October 11am-3pm.**

## Sandwell Libraries:

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



## Feature Events Listing



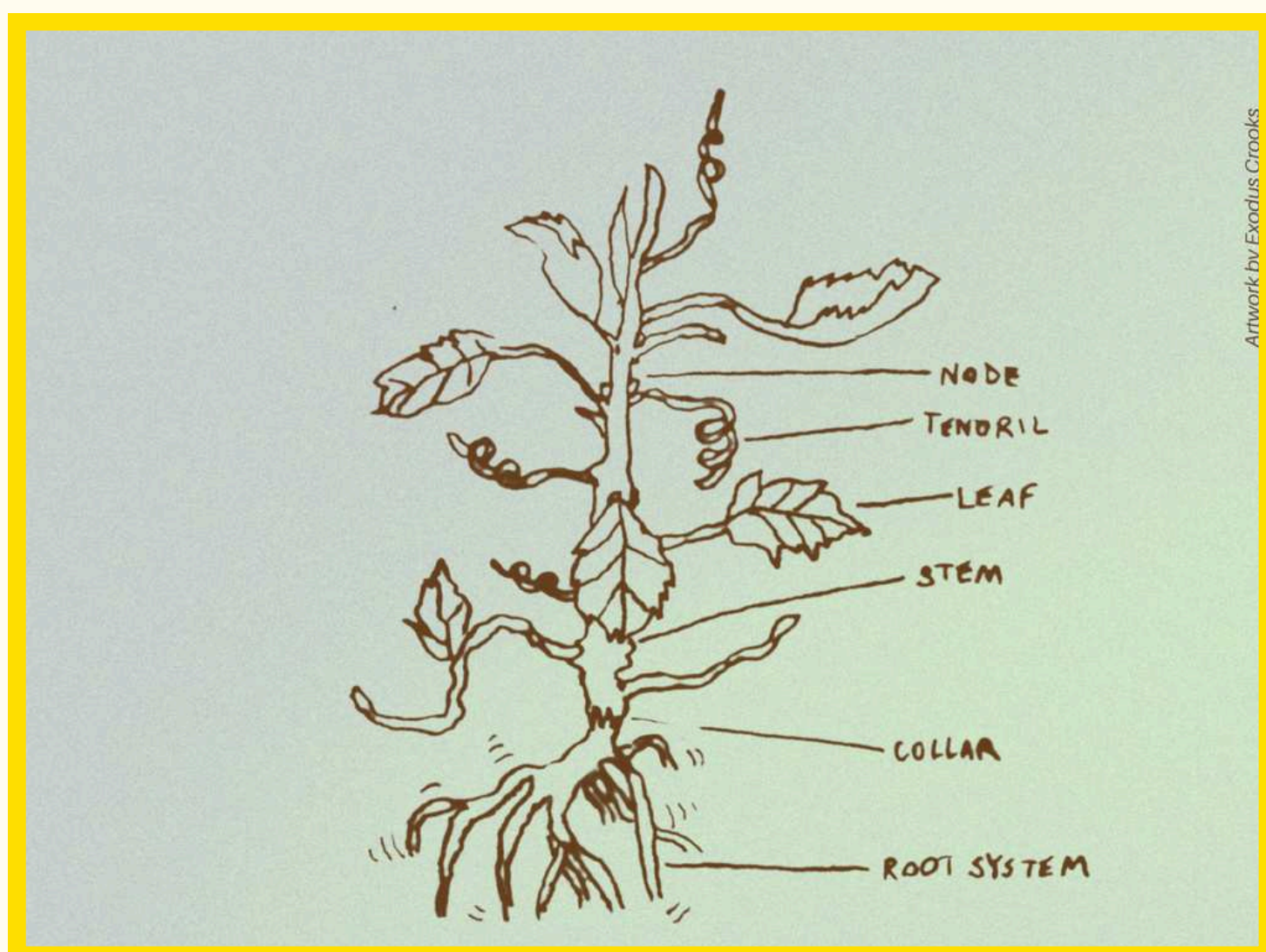
### You're Invited to Multistory's Journal Launch!

**Journal Launch: The Ground is Singing, The Printing Room Issue 2**

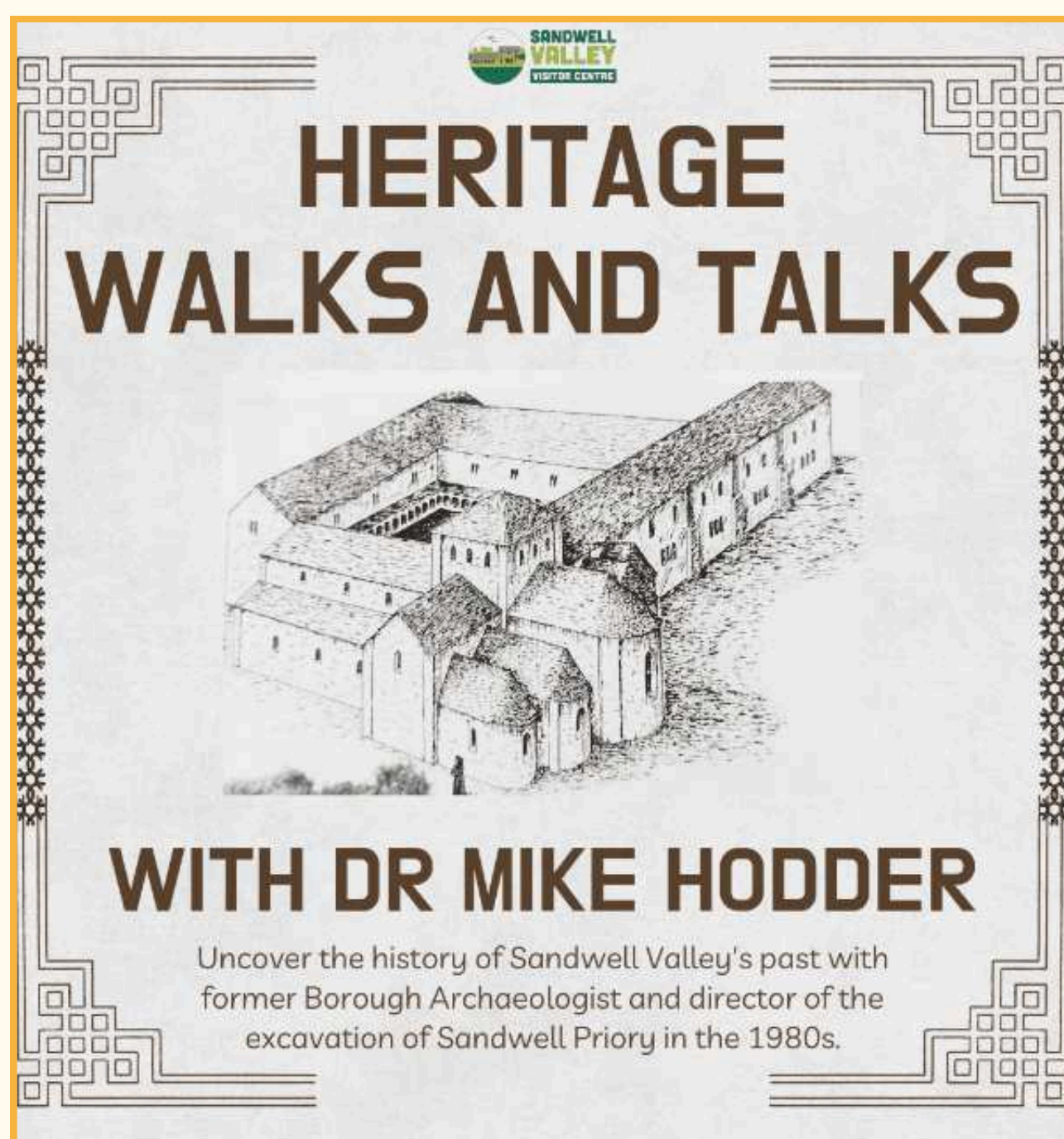
**Friday 19 September, 6.15-8pm at space.  
(Wolverhampton)**

**Join Multistory for the launch of the second issue of The Printing Room, The Ground is Singing. The Printing Room is a yearly journal that publishes newly commissioned art writing from Sandwell and the Black Country. This year's cohort of artists are Exodus Crooks, Billy Haynes, Laura Onions, Lorna Rose and Abigail Villarroel, and we welcomed artist Cathy Wade as guest mentor and co-editor.**

**\* Readings by the artists \* Pick up a copy of the journal \* Drinks and food served at the bar \***







Join us for Dr Mike Hodder's illustrated walks and talks about the archaeology and history of Sandwell Priory and its relationship to other parts of medieval West Bromwich, including Bromwich Hall and All Saints' church. Coffee and Tea will be provided by our Tea Rooms.

Heritage Open Day Walk - FREE  
Thursday 18th September 2025

Event Details

From 11:00AM to 12:30PM

Location

Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre (formerly Sandwell Park Farm), West Bromwich, B71 4BG

[More information and to book click here](#)

## Celebrate Heritage Open Day with Chance Heritage Trust



Join Chance Heritage Trust on Saturday, 13th September at Smethwick Library, where, along with our colleagues at Smethwick Archives we will be celebrating the legacy left by Chance Brothers & Co.

There will be an unveiling of our fascinating new interactive map, showcasing the locations of over 2,500 lighthouses equipped with the iconic Chance Brothers lens. Find out more via [www.chanceht.org.uk](http://www.chanceht.org.uk)



# Celebrate Heritage Open Day with Sandwell Archives



**SANDWELL**  
**ARCHIVES**

**HERITAGE OPEN DAY**  
**ILLUMINATING**  
**THE CHANCE**  
**GLASSWORKS**  
**COLLECTION**  
**SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER**  
**10AM - 4PM**  
*Discover how the Chance Brothers put Smethwick on the map!*



- Creative Chance Workshop
- ‘When the Chances Came to Smethwick’ talks
- Archive-handling opportunities
- Chance glass displays
- Meet our volunteers
- Activities with the Chance Heritage Trust

Sandwell Archives  
Smethwick Library  
High Street  
Smethwick  
B66 1AA



heritage open days





# Celebrate Heritage Open Day with Sandwell Archives



**FREE  
CREATIVE  
CHANCE  
WORKSHOP**

**SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER,  
SMETHWICK LIBRARY  
13:30 - 15:00**

**CREATE YOUR OWN ART INSPIRED BY THE CHANCE ARCHIVE  
COLLECTION. HOSTED BY SANDWELL ARCHIVES.  
FAMILY FRIENDLY. PLACES LIMITED. BOOK YOUR SPOT HERE:**



**WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK AND SEARCH 'CREATIVE CHANCE  
WORKSHOP'**

**ARCHIVES  
REVEALED**

Made possible with  
**Heritage  
Fund**

**Pilgrim  
Trust**

**The Wolfson\*  
Foundation**

**THE  
NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES**

**Sandwell Libraries & Archives**



# Celebrate Heritage Open Day with Sandwell Archives



## JOIN US!

SANDWELL ARCHIVES HERITAGE OPEN DAY

**13 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**10AM - 4PM**



Enjoy a day of activities, displays and demonstrations showcasing the Chance Collection.

**Drop in and discover the wealth of fascinating items, photographs and records that make up the Chance Collection.**

### EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES:



<p><b>Creative Chance Workshop</b></p> <p>Try your hand at fun, family-friendly crafts inspired by the famous Chance Glassworks.</p> <p>Limited places available.</p> <p>Book your place through Ticket Source.</p>	<p><b>‘When the Chances Came to Smethwick’ talk</b></p> <p>History talk given by Maureen Waldron.</p> <p>Fascinating stories about the Chance family and how their innovations shaped the world, including making glass for lighthouses worldwide.</p>	<p><b>Archive handling opportunities</b></p> <p>Get up close with historical documents and rare materials from our archives – a chance to handle history yourself!</p>
<p><b>Meet our Volunteers</b></p> <p>Chat with those helping to list and preserve the history of Chance.</p>	<p><b>Chance Glass Displays</b></p> <p>See stunning examples of Chance glassworks courtesy of Sandwell Museums.</p>	<p><b>The Chance Heritage Trust</b></p> <p>The trust will be unveiling their fascinating new interactive map, showcasing the locations of over 2,500 lighthouses equipped with the iconic Chance Brothers lens.</p>



Sandwell Libraries & Archives

**ARCHIVES REVEALED**



Made possible with  
**Heritage Fund**

**Pilgrim Trust**

**The Wolfson\* Foundation**

THE	
NATIONAL	
ARCHIVES	



# Celebrate Heritage Open Day with Sandwell Archives

## **FREE CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP**

With Brendan Jackson

Explore ways to use archival materials and personal  
histories as a source of inspiration for your writing.

**WEDNESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025**

11am to 1pm

**PLACES ARE LIMITED, SO  
CALL SANDWELL ARCHIVES  
ON 0121 569 4985 TO BOOK  
YOUR PLACE.**

Sandwell Archives, Smethwick Library, Smethwick, B66 1AA





BIRMINGHAM OPERA AND YMCA WEST BROMWICH PRESENT

# SYNONYM FOR SANDWELL:

A guide to discovering stories

..AS PART OF "SANDWELL GRIP"

**ATTENTION ALL YOUNG PEOPLE  
AGED 16-25**

**BE A PART OF AN EXCITING WRITING  
PROJECT WITH BIRMINGHAM OPERA  
WORKALONGSIDE POET**

**Sipho Eric Ndlovu**

**TO DISCOVER YOUR WRITING VOICE, EXPLORE STYLES AND USE MUSIC TO CREATE STORIES!**

**9TH SEPTEMBER - 28TH OCTOBER**

**EVERY TUESDAY 12:45 - 2:15PM**

**YMCA, WEST BROMWICH**

**OPEN SESSION ON TUESDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER**

**LUNCH AND TRAVEL EXPENSES ARE COVERED!**

**TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT, DM US ON INSTAGRAM @BIRMINGHAMOPERA CO,  
TEXT 07739952330 OR EMAIL CREATE@BIRMINGHAMOPERA.ORG.UK**





**'Birmingham Opera Company team up with YMCA West Bromwich to bring you a project that will expand how we tell stories through words and music.**

**Working with West Midlands based artists, Sipho Eric Ndlovu and Reisz Amos, you will discover your stories and explore how to tell them through spoken word, poetry and music.**

**These sessions will run every Tuesday 12:45pm - 2:15pm at YMCA West Bromwich. We are holding an informal session on 9th September for you to find out more about the project and have a go at some writing.**

**These sessions will run until 28th October, ending with an event as part of the Sandwell Literature Festival. Be a part of something exciting in Sandwell**

Birmingham  
**OPERA**  
company





## New Exhibition at Walsall Art Gallery by Multistory

Multistory are thrilled to present **Nothing Gold Can Stay**, a group exhibition of newly commissioned work made during the second iteration of Assembly, an annual exhibition programme of newly commissioned work by emerging artists based in Sandwell and the Black Country. This year, the exhibition features the work of Mia Banks, Mandeep Dillon, and Tegen Kimbley. The artists' work explores the complex tensions between time, the production of images and the ethics of viewership, exploring how practices of slowness and deep attention ask us to view the world differently.

Come and see Nothing Gold Can Stay for yourself at The New Art Gallery Walsall.

Opening times and dates:

Tuesday to Saturday 10 am to 5 pm; Sunday 12 noon to 4 pm; closed Monday and Bank Holidays.

The exhibition runs until 9 November 2025.

Free entry.



# 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:



**Tuesday 9th September**  
**1pm-3pm**  
**Oak House Museum**