

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

At Age UK Sandwell we've been working hard to support older people who are especially vulnerable in this epidemic – as no-one knows better than all of you who use our services.

It has been the biggest challenge faced in Age UK Sandwell's history, requiring us to adjust our services almost daily as we respond to the unfolding demands of the pandemic. Throughout, our aim has been to provide you with the best possible support in this difficult time.

Thankfully we have a great and dedicated team, and we're trying to support them through all of this too. Some of our staff members have been self-isolating and of course a reduced staff team creates extra pressure - but protecting you, the users of our service, will always be our top priority

As you will know, the Prime Minister recently announced the first tentative steps towards moving the UK out of lockdown. You may be wondering how this will affect Age UK Sandwell. At present most of the restrictions we have are still in place including good social distancing measures and hygiene.

But I can reassure you that we are busy planning for the days ahead, looking at the changing needs of the people we support, as announcements are made to

reduce the lockdown over the coming months.

We know that many of you have been feeling more isolated and in need of the support and comfort provided through our services than ever before. We know that some of you have been ill yourselves or sadly suffered the loss of loved ones during this time. And we are also aware that for your own safety and well-being restrictions on normal life are likely to continue the longest for older people.

Be assured that my team and I are working and will continue to work for you and will adjust our services in whatever way is required to meet the changing needs in this new Covid world.

**Alison Beachim
Chief Executive—Age UK
Birmingham and Sandwell**





Strange times—new discoveries

Well this is surely the strangest time to be living in! We now stay at home and only see family if we are lucky and able, maybe through a computer screen. Whilst things have changed beyond recognition, we still try to hang on to some kind of normal - or is this the new normal?

So, how are we managing? Most of us are becoming more creative and in some ways busier than we have ever been. Cooking, playing quizzes online with friends and family or dusting off the board games. The new status quo can be quite relaxing and slower

Whilst things have changed beyond recognition, we still try to hang on to some kind of normal—or is

paced, but with a level of anxiety and uncertainty thrown in. It is for the latter reason that I find myself writing this article.

How do we keep our mental and physical health in a good place? We call it 'lock down' but this does feel negative. Maybe it is better to look at it as a 'safe haven' for ourselves and our loved ones. Viewing it like that we

can enjoy the space we have, to give our minds and body time to grow, learn and recover from our previous way of living. If we do this, when we eventually emerge from this pandemic, we will be strong, fresh and ready to take on the safe, clean and productive life we have always wanted.

Currently we are allowed to exercise outside and with limits meet other people. However for a lot of people, outside is not a choice and for some it's not been a possibility for many years. Let's not forget the 'lock down' way of life is the norm for a lot of individuals and families. A few of these people are actually thriving, finding comfort in knowing that now everyone is in a similar boat.

So with all this in mind how do we adapt and overcome, then move forward to begin a new journey of mental and physical wellbeing - and why should we?

We know that physical activity promotes the 'feel good factor' by releasing and improving uptake of the mood regulating chemicals. Increasing production of these chemicals has a positive effect on mood and may reduce or prevent symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress. Exercise has been

shown to release chemicals which decrease feelings of pain, increase immunity and may provide mood benefit.

Let's not forget the 'lock down' way of life is the norm for a lot of individuals and families. A few of these people are actually thriving, finding comfort in

So how can we get motivated and do our bit to stay well and mentally strong?

My own journey to achieve this, whilst staying in my 'safe haven' period has been bumpy to say the least. Luckily for me physical activity has always played a part in my life. Having said that, even knowing the positive effects of moving more and how good I will feel when I have achieved some activity, this doesn't prevent there being barriers that stop me doing it. I struggle even when I convince myself it is for mental well-being and to keep my joints mobile. So, how do we overcome these feelings?

The answer for me has been to rethink why I need to be active at



this time – why not just rest? (a constant battle!) I have never had more time for physical activity and relaxation and yet I let it slide. I realised I needed to concentrate on mindfulness and physical maintenance to enable me to stay mobile and flexible, as opposed to high intensity exercise.

The upshot was being kind to myself, recognising the need to learn to relax and repair. I am now embracing this as an opportunity to discover a new way of exercising and to find a love for activity, the experience of wellbeing and satisfaction, all at a gentle pace.

I do hope that I have inspired you to explore ways of being active which suit you. The internet now

has lots of free activities including seated exercise, yoga, Pilates and relaxation for all ages. (Of course, there are still high octane and energy busting sessions from effervescent Joe Wicks on 'You Tube').

If you don't have access to the internet, have a think about reading the book you always said you would. Deep long breathing; taking note of the new fresh leaves on the trees; eating foods you like; taking your time to let the chocolate melt in your mouth and savouring the flavour. Feel mindful when you're eating the meal you have lovingly cooked, or take it up a level and have a home mini spa day.

Take note of how you feel after you have pampered yourself. Be

mindful of all the things you do and see, rather than rushing through the day and forgetting about really living. Embrace and recognise your needs. Many of us constantly put others before ourselves. The blessing of the current situation is that you now have time to take a breath, remember and love the people and places you cherish, play your favourite track, immerse yourself in it – or if you prefer, dance to your heart's content.

Knock Knock
Who's there?
Amish
Amish who?
Oh that's nice I miss you too!
Hope to see you all soon.

Emma Humphries
Sandwell Community Support Manager



To make you smile



"I do all the exercises every morning in front of the television - up, down, up, down, up, down. Then the other eyelid."

A teacher asked her students to use the word "beans" in a sentence. "My father grows beans," said one girl. "My mother cooks beans," said a boy. A third student spoke up, "We are all human beans."

Knock Knock
Whos there?
Hatch
Hatch Who?
Bless you

Q: What did the duck say when he bought lipstick?
A: "Put it on my bill."

If I'm ever traveling near Loch Ness or Sasquatch's lair, I will carry a camera to be safe.
It's a documented fact that these creatures have never approached anyone who had a camera!

Supporting the over-50s and their carers through COVID-19

Information & Advice (I&A)

An independent, free and confidential service available to residents of Sandwell.

People aged 50 and over and their family members and carers can contact us for advice on a range of topics.

Shopping/Prescription Service

For anyone who is currently isolating and is struggling to get help with shopping. We can deliver anywhere in Sandwell. Delivery of shopping by safe distancing measures throughout — payment for shopping is taken over the phone. There is no charge for the service itself.

If you need a prescription collected from the pharmacy but are isolating, or are over 70, we can collect and deliver your prescription for you.

Telephone befriending service

Our telephone befriending service is available to those who live on their own in Sandwell, and have very little contact with the outside world.

We also support those who are caring for someone with a long-term health condition, especially those who are feeling lonely and anxious at the moment.

Activity Groups

In the Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell, as well as the shopping, telephone based information & advice and befriending services, we are offering virtual meets in place of our usual clubs.

Discussions cover a variety of topics
Space is limited but please contact us for availability.

Later Life Planning Service

Lasting Powers of Attorney and Wills services **starting in July** — contact llp@ageuksandwell.org.uk to register your interest for more information

Information & Advice line

0121 437 0479

General line

0121 437 0033

www.ageuksandwell.org.uk

info@ageuksandwell.org.uk

8 Common Myths About Exercise

There are a lot of myths out there about exercise, and the last thing you need is misinformation to discourage you. 'Seconds Count' sets the record straight, dispelling common exercise myths. So, the next time you are active, you will know for sure what you are doing is effective and worthwhile for your health.



1. You have to sweat!

Not necessarily. Moving your body and raising your heart rate relative to your fitness level are the most important parts of physical activity. The main purpose of sweating is to cool your body. You may sweat when you are active. But if you are just starting a physical activity plan, begin slowly and expect to sweat. But if you're older and perspire less, you may not sweat. If you are moving your body more than usual, you are working towards better fitness, sweat or no sweat.



2. Exercise turns fat into muscle

False. Exercise can't turn fat into muscle, as one type of cell can't turn into another. But exercise, particularly strength training, helps build muscle, and so burn more calories and lose fat.



3. Lifting weights makes women bulk up

False. Women have less testosterone than men, so it's not easy to bulk up their muscles by lifting weights (unless they are trying to do so). But strength training, or lifting reasonable weights, is an important part of physical fitness. If you are still worried about becoming too muscular, use less weight and more repetitions (10 to 15 repetitions per set).



4. Cut calories—lose weight

Many people think that restricting calories is the best way to lose weight, but research shows that changing eating behaviours to lose weight works better if you also exercise. Aerobic exercise burns the most calories, and strength training builds more muscle, using more calories, and making it easier to lose weight.



5. Abdominal crunches lose belly fat

False. You can't control which part of your body will lose fat when you are physically active. Genetics plays a big part in controlling body composition and shape. Crunches simply strengthen your abdominal muscles, which are underneath the layer of belly fat. However, if you balance the calories you eat with exercise to reach a desirable body weight, you should lose fat from various parts of your body, including your belly.



6. You must stretch before exercise

False. Warming up for at least 5 minutes (sometimes longer if you have special considerations) is crucial, because it gets your blood flowing to your muscles and lets your heart rate adjust. But most of the time, stretching is best done after the physical activity, when muscles are warmest.



7. Sedentary behaviour reduction alone won't improve physical fitness

False! Research shows that cutting back on sedentary activities, such as television viewing or video games can make you move more and lose more weight. In fact, a 70 kilogram (154 lb) person who adds two (cumulative) hours per day of light movement as part of a regular routine can lose an extra 15 kilograms (33 lbs) of weight per year. So, if you're standing up, you're on your way to moving more! **(continued over ...)**

Caution: Always speak to your doctor before you change, start or stop any part of your healthcare plan, including physical activity or exercise. Health and exercise information online may be helpful, but can't replace the professional diagnosis and treatment you might need from a qualified healthcare provider.

8. You will burn more fat exercising longer at a lower intensity

It's true that the percentage rate of fat burning is higher at lower intensity. However, the faster you walk or run, for example, the more calories you use per minute. And the most important focus in exercise and weight control is how many calories are burned. So, if you are able and you have clearance from your doctor, it makes sense to move more intensely to burn more calories in less time. However, high-intensity exercise is difficult to achieve and sustain if you are just beginning or returning to exercise, so you may not be able to exercise very long at this level. In fact, you may never be able to exercise like this if you have certain heart conditions. It is safest and most practical to start out at a lower intensity and work your way up gradually if it is recommended by your doctor. Or consider interval training, which alternates lower intensity walking with short bursts of higher intensity brisk walking, or running if you are able.



Summer Fun Quiz

1. What is the highest number used in a Sudoku puzzle?
2. What is the term for a positive electrode?
3. Which swimming stroke is named after an insect?
4. Which English queen has the same name as a type of plum?
5. How many dots are used in each letter in the Braille system?
6. Which movie won the Oscar for best actor, director and cinematography in 2016?
7. What is a female deer called?
8. What unit is used to measure horses?
9. Who is Reg Dwight better known as?
10. Who provided Nick Wilde's voice in the 2016 movie of "Zootopia"?
11. How many tenpin bowling skittles need knocking down for a strike?
12. How is 77 represented in Roman numerals?
13. Who is the patron saint of music?
14. What are birds of a feather said to do?
15. "Kiss Me Kate" is a musical version of which play by Shakespeare?
16. The single "Papa Don't Preach" came from which Madonna album?
17. Betz cells are found in which part of the body?
18. What is the only bird that can hover in the air and also fly backwards?
19. Who earned the nickname "Slowhand"?
20. Which country does opera singer Pavarotti come from?



Answers on page 11

The 1940's Wireless

"I love you, for sentimental reasons" - the Nat King Cole Trio are serenading my mom from that magical brown box hanging from a wall in that old house in Spinners End, Cradley Heath.

I'm learning the three R's at school, but much prefer the entertainment that emerges from the two R's at home. Radio Rentals.

It's 1947, I'm only six, and you know I'm absolutely amazed at what that box knows. It knew the war ended a couple of years ago - apparently mom and dad and myself jumped on a bus that took us up to 'The New Inns' in Quarry Bank to celebrate. We walked it back...well they did...I sat on dad's shoulders as they sang their way back home. People had legs then.

Let's get back to the radio, it was incredible how they all squeezed inside there. One man would be there just to announce the football scores to my dad, he listened intently.

And all those crooners that were singing to mom. A bloke name Bing Crosby, and a young whipper snapper by the name of Francis Albert Sinatra. But dad didn't seem to mind, in fact he sang along with them.

And then, and then, wait for it...6:45pm get ready for 15 minutes of suspense, Monday to Friday "Dick Barton Special Agent" oh, the excitement they gave me...Dick, Snowey, and Jock.

7:00pm the action stops and then they make me go to bed. Parents can be so cruel at times. On Saturday mornings at 11:00am I could listen to it all again in one long episode, in what the clever man inside the box called an omnibus edition. It didn't matter that I knew what was coming next, I was still excited.

There was another program "PC49". That was good, in fact very good, but he was just a nice policeman, I had seen them on the streets of Cradley Heath, but where was I ever going to see a Special Agent?

Dick Barton thrilled me from 1946 to 30th March 1951. They ceased broadcasting it because it was supposedly a bad influence on kids. All I can say to that is, is anyone monitoring the programs of 2020?

ITMA (it's that man again) was for the grown ups, but with us

huddled around one fire in the room where the 'wireless' was located, the kids also listened in. Perhaps that's why they shipped us off to bed so early.

But back in 1947, if you're not too old, and have never been told, well it was bloody cold. 'Sorry for the rhyme, I do it all the time'. If you don't know, well it day half snow. (Oops I've done it again) Massive snow drifts, they were so out of the ordinary that I, a six year old can remember. I vividly remember dad digging a pathway up our narrow entrance to get out into the High Street. I followed him, between great giant walls of snow, well above double my height. I waved him goodbye by our gate as he strode through the maze of snow towards Woodhouse Bros, chain works in Newtown Lane.

Seventy three years ago, I can still feel the cold; it was horrendous, animals froze to death or were starved to death. It was a big



concern whether the coal man would be able to deliver the coal. And please don't forget that week after week we had to go outside fighting through ice and snow, wind and rain to the outside toilet.

It's cold and dark and dank,
with just a shimmer
of light creeping under the door.

This torture chamber where
giant spiders wait
in the gloom of this 5 foot by 3 foot room.

This dungeon of despair
Where sinews strain before the chain

This water closet of pain
With teeth marks on the door frame

"Oh mommy let me out, comes the piercing shout.'
'The outside toilet.'

Thankfully snow thaws and the sun returns. Now we were well into the last years of the forties and I wanted to help in the garden. That garden was dad's oasis in a desert. Surrounded by smoke and hammers, and the shunting steam trains in the goods yard next door, that garden was a paradise. Dad could escape the chain links for a few hours and pursue something he loved. And he had me to help a little. "Feed the chickens, Harry. Collect the eggs. Don't forget to lock the door, keep Freddie the Fox away. Take the pig swill down to the pigsty"

"Can I dig some potatoes up dad?"

"Yes but don't get too close to the plant, you keep piercing the potatoes with the prongs of the fork".

Oops, but I was learning to be a good gardener. My dad could grow anything, and he was passing all those green finger tips down to me.

I was only a little kid, but I did something that surprised my dad, he talked about it for years. You see we had this big aggressive cockerel. He would attack you at



the drop of a hat, everyone kept away from him. I heard dad say that we would have to eat him at Christmas. Mom and dad had the shock of their lives when I walked in the house with it in my arms. I had carried it from the bottom of the garden over 100 yards away. It was nearly as big as me. Well it was nearly Christmas.

There were lots of play areas for me towards the end of forties, the field that ran behind my house, that led to what we called the

'wreck' a big bank and places to kick a ball that came out in Corngreaves Road opposite King Street. The 'wreck' is now an Industrial Estate. Similar to Porters Field, a big area where I later played football. Our school team 'Lomeytown' played the home games there. Porters Field also became an Industrial Estate.

If you went into the railway goods yard and walked along the tracks you came to the stepping bridge in Sutherland Road, then onwards to Codsall estate. Wherever I went I felt safe.

The forties slipped quietly away and the fifties pushed its way through. I was still a little kid and I dreamed of playing along side my heroes Ronnie Allen and Ray Barlow for West Bromwich Albion. But alas that was a pipe dream.

But oh, what days ahead. The age of the Teddy Boy. The excitement of becoming a teenager coinciding with the birth of the fabulous rock n roll. A television set, The Six Five Special.

But I've wrote enough for now.

I'll leave you in 1949, Vic Damone is singing to mom, "you're breaking my 

Harry Taylor



Recipe for Summer

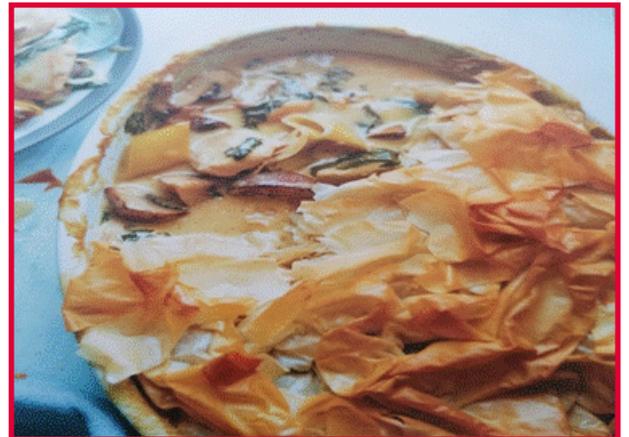
Joe's Chicken Pie—serves 4

Ingredients:

2 large knobs of butter	4 x chicken breast fillets cut into bite sized pieces	2 large handfuls baby spinach leaves
1 large leek washed and chopped into 2cm pieces	250ml chicken stock	About six sheets of filo pastry
200g mushrooms roughly chopped	1tbsp cornflour	Drizzle of olive oil
	100ml double cream	Salad or veg to serve

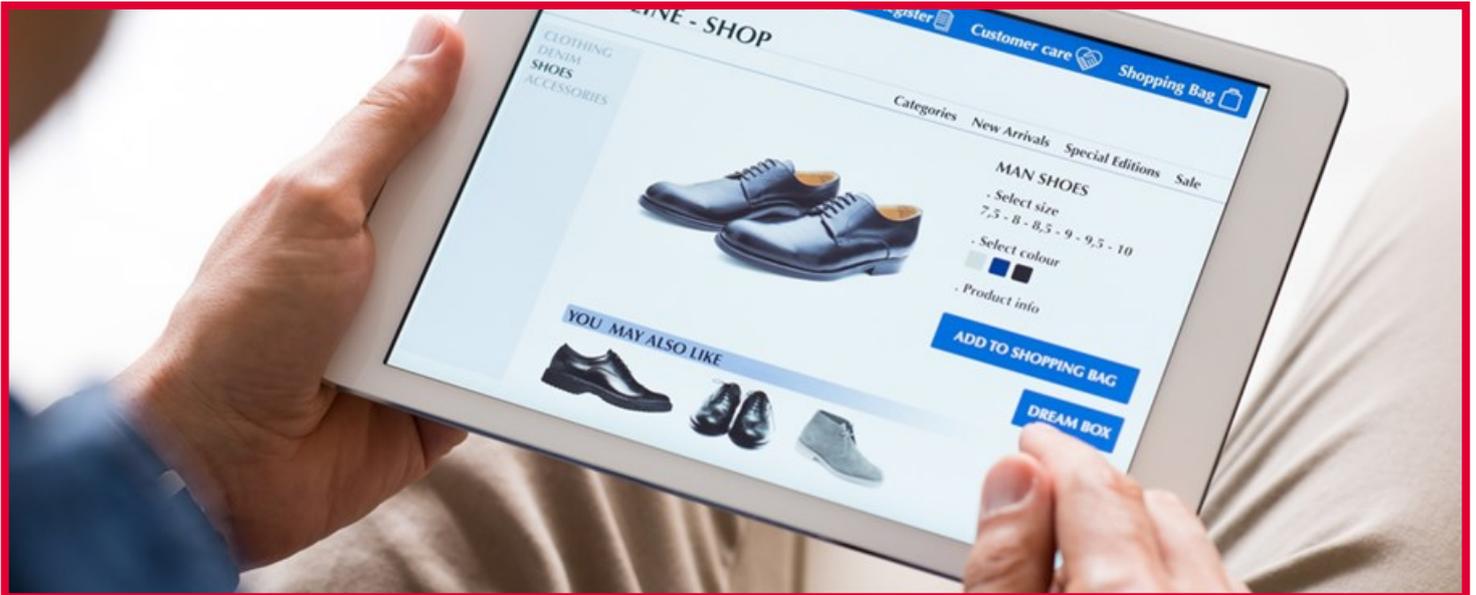
Method:

- * Pre heat the oven to 190 c (fan 170c, gas mark 5)
- * Heat the butter in a pan over medium to high heat. Add the leek and the mushrooms and fry for 2-3 minutes until they just start to soften. Crank up the heat to high add the chicken pieces and fry for a further 2 minutes. The chicken won't be cooked through at this point, then pour in the chicken stock and let it come to a simmer.
- * Meanwhile, mix the cornflour with 2 tablespoons of water into a smooth paste. Then pour into the pan, along with the cream. Bring back to the boil, stirring gently, and cook until the sauce thickens. Remove from the heat and stir in the spinach, then tip the whole lot into a pie dish. About 28cms x 15cms, set aside to cool a little.
- * Take a sheet of filo pastry and roughly crumple in your hands, there is no right or wrong to this method. Place the crumpled filo on top of the chicken filling, in the pie dish and repeat with the remaining filo pastry sheets until the top is covered.
- * Drizzle the pastry with olive oil, then bake for about 20 minutes, by which time the filo pastry will have crisped up and turned golden brown in places.
- * Serve you pie with fresh salad or some vegetables.



Happy Cooking!





Check out these top tips to help you and your family enjoy a secure online shopping experience. As well as avoiding scam websites and messages, these tips will help minimise any fallout should you be unlucky enough to fall victim to online crime.

1: Choosing where you shop

If you're making a purchase from a company or person you don't know and trust, carry out some research first, and ask a friend or family member for advice before completing the purchase.

If you decide to go ahead with the purchase, use a credit card if you have one, as most major credit card providers insure online purchases. You will need to check your card's Terms and Conditions for exact details.

2: Keep your devices up to date

Make sure you install the latest software and app updates. These usually contain important security updates that can protect you against fraud and identity theft.

Information can easily be found about how to install these updates from [Apple](#), [Microsoft](#) and [Google](#). Even better, just turn on automatic updates so your device will update itself in future.

3: Secure your email account

Use a strong, separate password and two-factor authentication (2FA) to secure your email account. Criminals can use your email to access other online accounts, such as those you use for online shopping.

4: Take care with links in emails and texts

Some of the emails or texts you receive about amazing offers may contain links to fake websites, designed to steal your money and personal details. Not all links are bad, but it's good practice to check by typing the shop's website address manually into the address bar of your browser, or find the website through your search engine (e.g. Google, Bing).

5: Turn on two-factor authentication (2FA)

To give any online account additional protection, where possible, you should [turn on two-factor authentication \(2FA\)](#). 2FA is a way for the service you're using to double check that you really are the person you claim to be, when logging in.

6: Use a password manager

If you have lots of accounts, the temptation to re-use passwords and usernames is pretty strong. A good way to get around this is to use a password manager.

These systems remember all your login details for you, so you can choose good passwords for each of your online accounts, without worrying about losing or forgetting them. The only password you'll need is the one for the password manager application itself.

7: Don't give away too much information

You shouldn't need to give out your mother's maiden name, or the name of your primary school, in order to buy something. There's some obvious details that an online store will need, such as your address and your bank details, but be cautious if they ask for details that are not required for your purchase.

Only fill in the mandatory details of forms when making a purchase. These are usually marked with an asterisk*. If you can avoid it, don't create an account on a new site unless you're going to use that site a lot in the future. You can usually checkout as a guest to make your purchase.

8: When things go wrong

We all make mistakes and these days the scams can be incredibly convincing.

If you think you may have been taken in by a bogus website, you should first, take a note of the website's address, then close down your internet browser. Then report the details to [Action Fraud](#) and contact your bank to seek advice.

Whether you've been a victim of fraud will depend on how much information you've provided to the website. So keep an eye on bank transactions, if you can. Contact your bank immediately about anything that you don't recognise, even small amounts.

Mary Knitting for Love

Over a thousand people in the West Midlands have been knitting hearts for hospitals and hospices across the region to give to patients and visitors. Our very own Mary is one of these lovely people in Sandwell and she is now knitting them for school children returning to school as well. Mary says "It's our way of saying 'Thank You'".

When the project began the knitted hearts were all red but as time has passed and wool has run low, any colour of wool is now welcome.

Mary runs the indoor bowls group at Hope Church in Oldbury which kept her fit and busy. Now while the sessions are on hold, Mary is using her time doing DIY around the house and cleaning windows.

In usual times Mary is active in the community running trips supported by the bowls group. Mary hopes everyone is keeping safe and well and she is looking forward to meeting you all at the bowls club soon and to the club getting stronger in the days ahead.



Summer Fun Quiz Answers

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Nine | 9. Elton John | 17. The brain |
| 2. Anode | 10. Jason Bateman | 18. Hummingbird |
| 3. Butterfly | 11. Ten | 19. Eric Clapton – contrary to popular belief, the name was not given to him due to playing the guitar slowly but rather due to the audiences giving him a slow hand clap while changing the guitar strings on the stage. |
| 4. Victoria | 12. LXXVII | 20. Italy |
| 5. Six | 13. Cecilia | |
| 6. "The Revenant" | 14. Flock together | |
| 7. Doe | 15. The Taming of the Shrew | |
| 8. Hands | 16. True Blue | |



Black Country la la la Black Country la la la

Once upon a time when the Black Country was young
When the wenches wun mekin nails. And the blokes wun
strong

Striking on chains, and grafting in the forge
Straining sinews, muscles engorged

Well quite a few pompous arses looked down on us
Comparing our Black Country to monotone drabness
Said we were strong in the arm and weak in the yed
Loffed at the way our words were said

Thought they were better than the likes of you and I
Lifted their noses towards the sky, as they walked by
But our ancestors carried on without a fuss
For they were making a history for us.

They played a leading part in the Industrial Revolution
Their efforts helped to put the Great in Britain
And now that the noise and smoke as stopped
Well the snotty noses have even dropped

For now they want to join our story
And be part of our heritage glory
Now they praise us, make a fuss
Even the Brummies want to join us

Our fame forged at the anvil
Our Museum, no other could hold a candle
The Black Country Bugle, and I don't want to brag
But we've even got our very own flag

We ain't weak in the yed, no matter what they said
Unspoiled character and good manners in us is bred
A unique sense of humour, a welcoming face
This Black Country of ours, is just simply ace

Harry Taylor



Customer update

Supporting our customers, making you count



May 2020

South Staffs Water is here to help...

We understand that this is a difficult time for us all as we adapt to new ways of living and working. During Covid-19 we don't want you to worry about your water supply, bills or payments. That's why we've pulled together many ways we can support you during this difficult time. You can find out more by visiting our website www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/coronavirus.

Sign up to our Priority Services Register

We want to make sure our vulnerable customers are supported during this time and encourage anyone who is vulnerable to sign up to our Priority Services Register. It's really important that our customers with a disability, mobility issue, chronic illness or a medical condition are registered on this free register. This will help us identify these customers quickly should they experience an issue with their water supply. To register simply go to www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/psr.

Bills

We appreciate that at the moment managing your finances and paying your water bill may be the last thing on your mind. We'll do all we can to support you with your recent bill and here is a list of the ways we can support you:



We have flexible payment plans that will allow you to split your yearly bill into monthly, fortnightly or weekly instalments.



If you need a payment break we can offer up to 3 months, fill in our simple form www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/COVID19-financial-support, as this may be useful if you hope to get back on track after lockdown.



We all need to stay safe, so if you can't get out to make a regular payment we have many other ways to pay such as:

- set up a Direct Debit online or by our Mobile App.
- make a one-off payment using the 'pay now' section on our website.

Top tip: have the customer reference number to hand, which can be found on the top of the bill.

Assure tariff

Covid-19 Assure tariff

We also have a **temporary** discounted tariff for people who find themselves **now** on a low income as a result of Covid-19. The tariff will provide you with a 60% discount off your water bill for the next 3 months to give you time to get back on your feet.

In order to apply, your income must be less than £16,380 per year at this time. If you have dependent children, please add £1,500 per child. For example, for two children your household income will be £19,380.

You will also need to provide proof your income has been affected due to Covid-19. This can be a HRMC letter, furloughed confirmation from your employer or isolation note (if you're currently on statutory sick pay). This tariff will close on 30 June 2020 to new applicants.

If your income is not affected by Covid-19

If your income hasn't been affected by Covid-19 and is less than £16,380 we have the Assure tariff that you may be eligible for.

If your household income is less than £16,380* per year, you may qualify for a discount on your water charge. If you are eligible and your application is successful, your charges will be discounted for two years, in the first year by 60% and the second year by 40%.

Find out more about our discounted tariffs.

Visit: www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/COVID19-financial-support.

* Terms and conditions apply.



We would like to thank you for your support during Covid-19. Please stay safe and well.



Getting to Know Knobby (Knobby Clarke aka Bob)

Knobby joined the armed forces as a boy. In 1962, nearly a man, he went on to serve in the armed forces as a Royal Signals regular for 22 years. He travelled all over the world, including Germany, the Far East, the Middle East, Northern Ireland and Malta. Knobby was decoding and coding for the Royal Signals and loved every minute of it. He married the love of his life, Avril, in Walsall in 1972 after returning from a Tour. Knobby and Avril had a daughter in Salisbury and a son in Germany. Knobby has been part of the Royal British Legion, Oldbury for many years.

What do you do for Royal British Legion?

I am an Information and Welfare Officer and we operate as a team to help and support veterans in Oldbury. In normal times, we run weekly sessions in Oldbury at the council offices and will resume as soon as we can. We signpost to organisations such as 'Combat Stress' and 'Walking with the Wounded', as well as liaising with Sandwell Council. I have the help and support of a great team - Reverend Dwayne McQuaid - RBL Welfare Team Office, Michael Horton - Ex Army Fusilier. Tennant - Ex Army Catering Corps, Tony Cockerill - Ex Army Royal Artillery.

What do you like about your role?

I love helping people; we have a great team of veterans working together. The job satisfaction is rewarding and following a person's journey from beginning to end can be very interesting and fulfilling. Often the story begins with me and my team, then leads in other directions to come back to finish with me again.

The outcome is always helping an individual or a family, supplying the correct information and advice to achieve a satisfactory end goal, and in doing so help to relieve stress and offer support.

Any interesting facts?

As a young soldier I enjoyed myself, but the best thing in my life is my marriage to Avril (known as 'mommy Av'). Avril also works tirelessly at the Oldbury Royal British Legion, supporting the veterans and cooking up a storm for the many events held there.



Knobby's heart is with the veterans. Even when he was a serving soldier, they always knocked on his door for advice. Knobby will be flying the Royal Core of Signals flag on 28 June, celebrating the 100th anniversary of their formation in 1920.

Summer

Find and circle all of the summer words that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining letters spell an additional summer item.

J U N E S T S S S S Y K S E U L B M
U S M E A U Y E O U H I K I N G S A
S M W E E A N L U B N W A S E Y R E
U T W I R R S G I C A B L N A R E R
N S H V M T C C L T E A U D T V L C
T Y U G I M Y S E A D B I R S S K E
A G L C I C I R N N S L R R N D N C
N R E U L F M N A U O S E A R G I I
O E A E J E R S G H S W E A B N R C
S E D A L B R E L L O R O S R I P R
C N A O F L O G T L T B T E E T S E
H G N I H S I F F A E O A E E A H C
O R C A M P I N G T W T H B Z O C C
O A C I N C I P A W A S P S E B A O
L S F L I E S K M O S Q U I T O E S
T S U G U A S I L L A B E S A B B O
G N I N E D R A G S U N S H I N E N

ANTS
AUGUST
BARBECUE
BASEBALL
BEACH
BEES
BICYCLE
BLUE SKY
BOATING
BREEZE
CAMPING

FISHING
FLIES
FLOWERS
GARDENING
GOLF
GREEN GRASS
HAT
HIKING
HOLIDAYS
HOT
ICE CREAM

JULY
JUNE
MOSQUITOES
NO SCHOOL
PICNIC
ROLLER BLADES
SANDALS
SKATEBOARD
SOCCER
SOLSTICE
SPRINKLERS

SUNBURN
SUNGLASSES
SUNSCREEN
SUNSHINE
SUNTAN
SWEAT
SWIMMING
U V RAYS
WASPS
WATER FIGHTS
WATERMELON



Growing Buddies at Malt House Gardens Smethwick



Summer is on its way! So why not check out “Growing Buddies” our outdoors feel good gardening sessions in partnership with ‘Ideal for All’. We have a fantastic gardening group in Smethwick.

Even in these times we can’t hold back nature, flowers are flowering and produce is popping out of the ground. Whilst now is not the right time to start joining a new group, we thought we would show the progress so far. When we are ready to resume an outdoors life we would love nothing more than to welcome you back or welcome new interest.

Come along and take part in growing food and healthy cooking sessions. It’s a fantastic way to meet people and build confidence and is free for over 65’s. If

gardening is not your thing, the venue is set up beautifully to enjoy a quiet haven of suntraps and flowers, take in the scenery and forget you are in a city.

Jamie is ‘Ideal for All’ Horticultural Health and Wellbeing Officer, who will guide you through the seasons, growing and harvesting.

Jamie says “Growing Buddies” is a chance to expand your knowledge on plants and make friends while you do this. From one of our three garden sites you can grow fruit veg and other plants and also learn to cook them and use them in other related tasks.

Finally—‘What do you call a man with a shovel in his hand?’ Doug!

We look forward to seeing you soon!

To find out more about Malt House Gardens and ‘Growing Buddies’ contact Emma Humphries (emma.humphries@ageuksandwell.org.uk or 07426 713 788)





SIGN UP TODAY

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are currently recruiting for volunteers to support us in offering a variety of services/activities for older people across Sandwell.

If you would like to help out or find out more, we'd love to hear from you

www.ageuk.org.uk/sandwell/get-involved/volunteer

volunteering@ageukbirmingham.org.uk

0121 437 0033



"It has been a great honour to give my service to deliver essential food and items to elderly people across Sandwell and Birmingham."

"Age UK are doing excellent work looking after those in isolation during this extreme time and being part of their initiatives is brilliant. I hope to keep continuing this work and I would recommend volunteering to anyone."

"This has been an important time to appreciate others and what we have and it is amazing Age UK Sandwell will keep doing this."

"I really enjoy shopping for people - after a delivery I have a big grin on my face all day"

"I just made my first volunteer shopping delivery, it was so emotional - and made the whole situation feel more real to me"



Emergency Contact Numbers

Age UK

National Advice Line

Tel: 0800 678 1602

8am to 7pm
365 days a year

West Midlands Fire Service

(Non-emergency)

Tel: 0845 5000 900

West Midlands

Police Service

Tel: 999 (Emergency)

Tel: 101 (Non-emergency)

Electricity Emergency

Power Cuts

(Western Power Distribution)

Tel: 105

Gas Emergency

(National Grid)

Tel: 0800 111 999

Water Emergency

(Severn Trent)

Tel: 0800 783 4444



Sandwell Council

(General Enquiries)

Tel: 0121 569 2200



Ring & Ride

Tel: 0330 053 8136

Social Services

Tel: 0121 569 2266

TrustMark

(Find a Tradesman)

Tel: 0333 555 1234

Samaritans

Tel: 116 123

(Free to Call)

Healthwatch Sandwell

Tel: 0121 569 7210

Silverline

(24hr Confidential Helpline)

Tel: 0800 470 8090