

ISSUE 4

# NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS

CASTLE VALE

*Stadium Launch  
pg8*



## CASTLE VALE FESTIVAL

Find the article on pages 5-7



## SUPPORT ON THE VALE

Back to school can be a challenging time for all. Read on to find out what services there are in place to offer support.

# WELCOME TO THE LATEST EDITION OF OUR NEWSLETTER. WE HOPE YOU ALL HAD A FANTASTIC SUMMER AND ARE READY FOR THE SEASONS AHEAD.



In this edition, we have lots of information about the activities and support available to you across Castle Vale. This includes the wealth of opportunities you can access from Compass Support, the charitable arm of The Pioneer Group. Many of you will already be aware of the huge range of activities we provide for children and young people, families, and adults which include employment support, careers support, supporting independence, improving health and well-being, as well as local projects such as Happy Streets where we use simple acts of kindness to improve community spirit and encourage a strong sense of community. Drop in and see us at The Sanctuary or The Stadium. We recognise that this can be a difficult time for many people,

and so we have lots of information about how to access financial support to ensure that everyone knows how to get help if they fall on hard times. Our Communities Team have restructured the way they work and you'll find all the details on **page 4**, with information about who your Community Co-Ordinators are and how to contact them. As ever, we bring you news from our local Police Team as well as lots of information about people, activities and developments on and around the estate that can continue to make us proud to be part of the Castle Vale community.

**We look forward to seeing you soon,**  
**Lisa**

## Youth Club

There are lots of positive activities for young people being held at the Sanctuary on a regular basis **Monday to Friday 1:30-4:30**. So why not take the opportunity to try new things and meet new people by popping into the Sanctuary to grab a registration form.

## Job Club

Getting into work for the first time, after a long break or looking for a career change can seem daunting, but our team are here to help.

So whether you're looking for help with your job search, some interview tips or the confidence to learn new skills, we're here to help! **Every Monday & Thursday 9:30-12:30pm.**

## Computer Club

It doesn't matter if you've never touched a mouse or a keyboard before, or if you don't know where to begin with a tablet, this is the place to get started.

If there's something you need to know about using a computer, phone or tablet, pop down to The Sanctuary **9:30-12pm on Fridays** to find your digital side.





# MONEY ADVICE

The Pioneer Group works together with Spitfire Services to offer a money advice service for our residents.

When a new customer signs up for a tenancy with the group they are automatically referred for a financial health check to ensure they have the best possible start to their occupancy. This way, if there are any issues, help can be offered straight away! While not everyone will require this service, it is provided as an option to all customers in case it is something they will benefit from.

CVCH residents receive a priority advantage from Spitfire Services as the team are able to refer directly. This means residents wouldn't need to attend their weekly drop-in sessions on Wednesdays as Spitfire Services will call CVCH customers to make a personal appointment.



Spitfire Services can assist with a wide range of financial issues including:

- Assisting with claims for Discretionary Housing Payments
- Negotiating with non-priority creditors to accept affordable re-payment plans
- Liaise with The Pioneer Group to support tenant's circumstances
- Assisting with new claims for Universal Credit
- Appealing against decisions made by DWP including Universal Credit
- Assisting with Housing Benefit backdates

So if you have any concerns with your financial situation, contact The Pioneer Group on **0121 748 8100** for a quick referral for specialist support.

## UNDERSTANDING UNIVERSAL CREDIT

### What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a new benefit system designed so that you will be better off in work. It will replace the existing legacy benefits such as Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance, Housing Benefit, Employment Support, Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit merging them into one single payment.

### How can I make a claim?

If your circumstances have not changed then you will automatically migrate over to Universal Credit. However if your circumstances have changed, you will need to make a claim online at [www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)



### Who is eligible?

People who are of working age and on a low income.

### How does this affect my rent payments?

If you are eligible and need assistance with paying your rent, you will need to request for Housing Cost to be paid in your universal credit payments. As Universal Credit is paid in arrears you will need to contact your landlord to discuss and make payment arrangements.

### Who can I talk to for more information?

If you need assistance with your Universal Credit claim or require more advice, you can speak to your work coach at Universal Credit or contact CVCH on **0121 748 8100** to speak to a Welfare Advisor.

# Community Action Plan



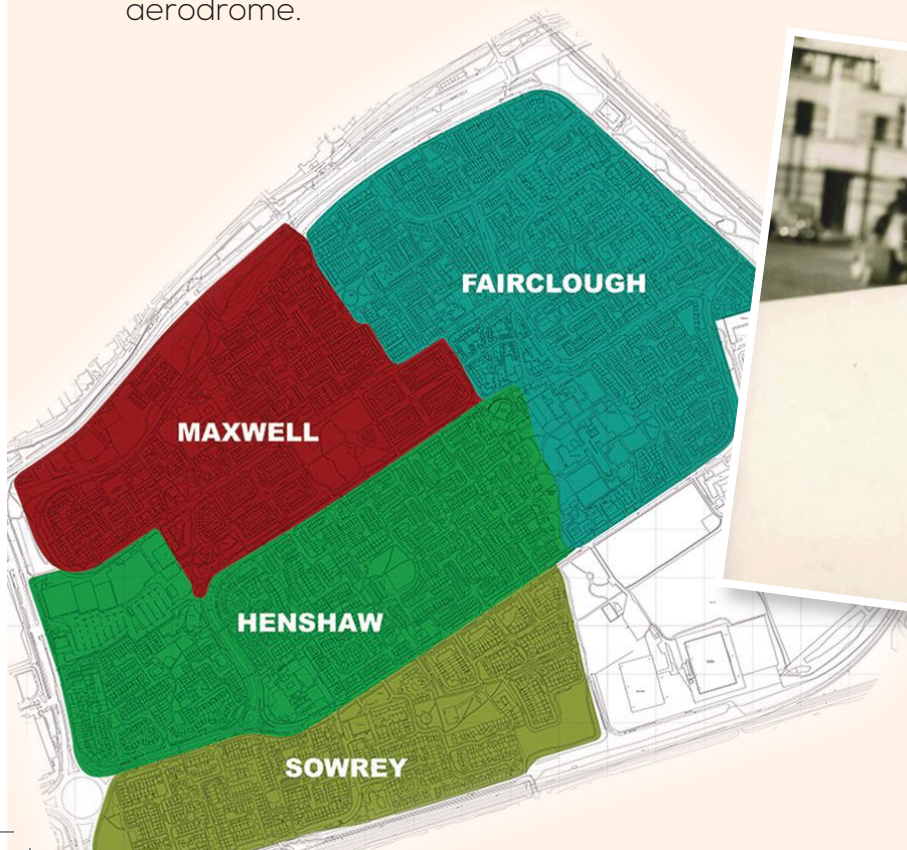
Our new Neighbourhood Action Plans use information from employees, residents and community partners to make targeted improvements in your neighbourhood.

We grouped similar areas into four new Neighbourhoods and now we're making sure the right resources are in place to target issues directly. Have a look at the map opposite to see your Neighbourhood!

Our Neighbourhood Team will be delivering these plans, as they are responsible for tenancy matters, from name changes to antisocial behaviour.

As part of the changes, you'll see we've given each new Neighbourhood a name. We've canvassed residents through our regular Tasking meetings and Community Chat, and decided on names that reflect Castle Vale's astonishing history as an aerodrome.

Our street names pick up names of planes and airfields, so it seems appropriate to honour some of the pilots! Alex Henshaw was Chief Test Pilot at the Castle Bromwich factory from 1940, testing flights throughout WWII and was awarded an MBE for his work. Arthur Bradfield Fairclough, a WWI flying ace, was a member of No. 19 Squadron, formed at Castle Bromwich, and was awarded the Military Cross in 1918. Frederick Sowrey, another member of No. 19 Squadron, was awarded the Distinguished Service Order, the Military Cross and the Air Force Cross – as well as shooting down a zeppelin in 1916. Finally, from No. 54 Squadron, formed at Castle Bromwich in 1916, Reginald Maxwell, MC, DFC & Bar, AFC, was a flying ace who served in both WWI and WWII.



Alex Henshaw

# CASTLE VALE *Festival*

The sun had his hat on and spirits were high at this year's Castle Vale Festival.

The event held at Castle Vale Stadium saw hundreds of residents entertained by a packed programme of activities on Friday 23rd August 2019.

There was something for everyone on the day such as a circus workshop, inflatables, rides, garden games, face painting, zorbing, sumo suits, the animal man and guest appearance from Mad Dominic – a stilt-walking, comedic entertainer.

To work up those summer vibes, we welcomed everyone to relax at Castle-Vale-on-Sea at the pop-up beach featuring sand, buckets & spades, deckchairs and a surf simulator. We really hope you enjoyed the sea-side theme with an ice cream and background music hosted from Switch Radio.

In an exciting addition, Castle Vale hosted its first ever Colour Run. Arranged by Compass Support, the 5k course saw crowds of participants run, jog and walk in groups of friends and families while getting coated in a spectrum of coloured powder paints.

Charity football matches were also in play, both on the day and in the evening. The Pioneer Group hosted the day event, raising money for their nominated local charity, Promising Futures, with Sports Development UK coming out as champions. Samsung hosted an additional tournament in the evening, making full use of the stadium's Fifa-accredited 3G pitch.

The new location of the Castle Vale Festival also gave everyone an opportunity to check out the fresh look of the Stadium's function room, with the party continuing after 4pm in the newly-fitted, contemporary bar.

An incredible amount of work and commitment has been put in to making the day a success and we would like to thank all our partners and volunteers that helped take part in the day. The entertainment and activities really gave us fantastic opportunity to meet more Castle Vale residents. We hope everyone had as much fun as we did.

We all are delighted that local residents could experience such a festival on their doorstep, and want to thank everybody who came along and supported the event. We look forward to seeing you next year!

**Simon Wilson, CEO of The Pioneer Group**



We've had the best day. Towards the end of the school holidays you're always looking for something to entertain the kids with so when I heard this was on it was perfect! I took my two little boys and we all had a brilliant time. The little ones especially liked the beach, petting zoo, and inflatable village.

The colour run was a great addition as well. There were so many groups of friends and families walking around covered in amazing colours for the day afterwards. It was definitely a great way to start the summer bank holiday.





# SHOW US YOUR FESTIVAL FACE!

It was fantastic to see so many happy faces on Bank Holiday Friday at the festival. We all enjoyed the family fun day in the sun and hope you did too! Here are some of our favourite snaps from the day and more can be found on our Facebook Page!









# FRESH NEW LOOK FOR CASTLE VALE STADIUM'S BAR!

Castle Vale Stadium has recently opened their doors with a brand new look, ready for bookings as the start of the football season kicks off. Open from 5 -10 pm every day of the week, the updated bar invites all residents to pop down and check out the facility.

Showcasing a newly-fitted bar with a modern lounge area, the room is also fitted with brand new air conditioning, ceiling and lighting.

It's exciting to provide a welcoming social space for the close-knit community of Castle Vale.

Just a few years ago, the stadium was falling into a state of disrepair until The Pioneer Group stepped in. Over £1 million was spent on replacing the traditional grass pitch with a new state-of-the-art FIFA accredited 3G pitch, which allows play in most weather. A new pitch was just the first step in ensuring that the stadium continued its use as a hub for community activities."

## **Laura Hawkins, Facilities Manager at Compass Support who manages the Stadium**

The Pioneer Group, the Premier League and FA Facilities Fund, and the Castle Vale Endowment Trust Fund provided the funding. Local football clubs – Castle Vale Town FC, Castle Vale Concorde and Romulus FC – provided feedback on bringing the pitch up to scratch – and are still using the stadium today to nurture the love of football in the area.

Today, we're especially proud of the bar area which has been totally transformed – it's now modern and more welcoming. With the removal of the traditional booths, the space is more open and available for hire to a wider range of community groups and events.



With plentiful parking, and CCTV covering the building and the carpark, the facility is easy to access and secure. New LED lighting will also be installed over the next few months.

The Pioneer Group welcomes any daytime booking of the function room, whether that's for dance groups, reading circles or even regular coffee mornings. The space would also be ideal for birthdays, baby showers and other special occasions.

To find out more visit our website [www.castlevalestadium.co.uk](http://www.castlevalestadium.co.uk) or like us on Facebook to find out more about our entertainments schedule.





What are you most proud of in your community? Is it the close connections between neighbours? Or number of local businesses the area has to offer? Whatever the reason, we're keen to continue help making Castle Vale a place where people take pride in living and working. There are some simple things you can do to take care of the area you live, love and laugh in:

- Dispose of your rubbish properly
- Consider the environment and recycle sensibly
- Always take waste bags out with you on dog walks
- Report any fly tipping to your neighbourhood team

If you see anything to cause concern within your community, you can now report the matter through text! Simply text **'VALE'** followed by your message to **86688** and this way Castle Vale's dedicated community team can look into the issue.



Advance Credit Union is a financial not-for-profit co-operative that offers people help with managing their money. The service offers a convenient and safe way to put money away for the future and a cost-effective way to borrow ethically and responsibly.

Credit unions are for everyone in our community, regardless of income. For this reason Advance Credit Union especially provide essential financial services to many people who would otherwise be financially excluded and susceptible to loan sharks and sub-prime lenders.

For more information about this service, you can visit

[www.advancecu.org.uk](http://www.advancecu.org.uk) or call **0121 350 8883**.

## SERGEANT SPEAKS STREET WATCH

Street watch is a community initiative that gives residents an opportunity to get involved and make a difference to where you live. Members work in partnership with the local police to keep their neighbourhoods safe by patrolling their area and sharing any information.

Similar to a neighbourhood watch, participating residents can patrol the area in pairs or small groups for two hours or more each month at a time that suits best. While out and about, members can talk with neighbours explaining the programme and encourage them to take an active interest in keeping the area safe. So residents know what members are there for, the Street Watch team will be given a high visibility jacket to wear.



In addition to being supported by the police, the local street watch co-ordinator will provide day to day assistance advising participants on what to look out for.

Street Watch is a programme that has been successful in other areas and is now established in the West Midlands. If you would like more information, please visit our website at **[www.west-midlands.police.uk](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk)** or email **[streetwatch@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:streetwatch@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk)** to register your interest in becoming a member.



# LOCAL BUSINESS WINS AWARD!

Local business, Desirees, recently won the People's Choice award at The Phoenix Newspaper Awards. Read on to find the exclusive interview behind their business achievement.

## **What inspired you to start your business?**

I started the business after seeing a gap in the market of a brow bar which over the years evolved into a full service hair and beauty salon. After humble beginnings I am now located in the heart of Castle Vale, boasting high customer service and an award winning business.

## **What is your business motto?**

You're never too old to start an empire, your never too old to follow your dreams. Female Empowerment and Confidence is the corner stone of our business.

## **What does it mean to have won this award?**

I didn't expect to win the award, as being a leader comes naturally. I am grateful to be recognised within the community and will continue and stride to build Desiree's Studio.



## **What is your proudest achievement in business?**

My proudest achievement is moving the business to Castle Vale and being welcomed by the community.

## **What do your customers value most about your business?**

At Desiree's studio, we have a friendly, happy but professional working environment, making our customers feel welcome, relaxed and at home while having their treatments.

## **Who has inspired you most in your business life, and why?**

Born into a family with an entrepreneur background, I look up to people like William D Wallace, Rhonda Rhymes and Napoleon Hill.

## **What advice would you give to any aspiring professionals?**

Rome wasn't built in a day. Dedication, commitment, continued learning... AND KNOW YOUR LIMITS!!!!

## *Electrifying News*

After months of uncertainty thousands of jobs have been safeguarded with Jaguar Land Rover's announcement that they intend to build a range of electric cars with investment at the Castle Bromwich plant. The first to be built will be the all-electric version of the Jaguar XJ. Batteries for the new electric XJ will be made in Hams Hall and the electric motors manufactured at the Wolverhampton Plant.

Discussions are to be held with JLR exploring how local communities surrounding the plant, including Castle Vale, can access future employment and training opportunities. Currently, there are around a 100 workers who live around Castle Vale.

We will update residents in future newsletters on this great opportunity.

## NEWS





# CASTLE VALE COMMUNITY PLEDGE

In 2015 we made a pledge to the community to continue delivering the range of 'added value' services that are beyond our core landlord responsibilities. Each year there is a minimum of £500k investment and we wanted to share the brilliant things that took place in 2018/2019 because of this.

**Last financial year, we invested a whopping...**

**£320K**

## COMPASS SUPPORT

Funding for support services such as open access Job Clubs, Family Support, Youth Activities and much more



## CCTV/SAFETY



**£153K**

Operating 79 cameras throughout the estate, reporting incidents to the local police team

**£36K**

Access to debt advice service for Castle Vale tenants & residents to help anyone who finds themselves in a financial crisis

## DEBT ADVICE



## DIGITAL INCLUSION



**£22K**

Offering help to all Castle Vale residents to increase confidence with computers and accessing services online

## CASTLE VALE STADIUM



**£36K**

Maintaining Castle Vale Stadium as a community facility for club, resident and school bookings with a fully operational team

**£58K**

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIPS



Enabling residents, community groups and partners to work together to make Castle Vale a better place to live

## ESTATE SERVICES



**£65K**

Helping keep our community safe and clean by reducing litter, fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour

**£36K**

## APPRENTICES



Offering a year placements that provide successful local candidates with a formal qualification, work experience and a clear career path

**£727,000!**

**FINANCIAL COMMITMENT 2018/2019**

## Clear Account Reward

In 2018 CVCH contacted around 450 tenants who were part of the reward scheme, to inform them of the changes to the VIP rewards scheme.

### The scheme previously

Following a handover from the Housing Action Trust to then CVCHA, anyone who had a zero or credit balance was included in this scheme.

Castle Vale Community Housing (CVCH) had in place a VIP scheme for selected tenants and leaseholders, whereby they are gifted for every week they are in credit or have a zero balance on their rent account.

The scheme paid up to £1 for every week the rent account was at a zero or credit balance.

The scheme benefited some tenants and leaseholders, however the VIP scheme was excluding around 1200 households with a consistently healthy rent account which

we believe did not support our current strategic goals, values and mission of 'not leaving anyone behind'.

### The New scheme

CVCH is an organisation that prides itself on the fair and inclusive treatment of all households, so the scheme has been replaced. The new scheme will enable all tenants with a clear rent account the opportunity to be rewarded.

It consists of a twice yearly draw (July & December) of £250.00 for all customers who have a zero or credit balance on their rent account.

To be entered into the next draw, you will need to have a clear rent account by 13th December 2019.



## WORD SEARCH

Can you find the following word in the puzzle? All words have a theme from the newsletter and can be hidden horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Good luck!

ADVICE	JOB
AWARD	MAXWELL
BUSINESS	MONEY
COLOUR RUN	PLEDGE
COMMUNITY	REWARD
COMPASS	SOWREY
FAIRCLOUGH	STADIUM
FESTIVAL	UNIVERSAL
FOOTBALL	CREDIT
FUNDING	VALE
HENSHAW	

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

## DESIGN YOUR OWN KIT!

In celebration of our football stadium reopening, why don't you design your own football kit? We'd love to see all the creations you come up with so be sure to bring it into office, take a photo and send it to us at [marketing@pioneergroup.org.uk](mailto:marketing@pioneergroup.org.uk) You can even post your designs on social media and tag Castle Vale Stadium's facebook or twitter for the team to see!

