



# Sandwell Community Information & Participation Service

## General Meeting 21st May 2024



**SCIPS would like to invite you  
to our May General Meeting.**

With National Volunteers Week just around the corner (3rd - 9th June 2024) we thought it would be an ideal opportunity to showcase volunteering. The opportunities that exist locally via LetsGoSandwell, and the 'Big Help Out'.



Kim Fuller, Growing Participation and Volunteering Mentor from SCVO, will be in attendance to share all things volunteering and we are hopeful we will also be able to highlight the experiences of some of the volunteers that give so much to SCIPS and all that we do.

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As always, SCIPS doors will open at 10am for a **10.30am** prompt start. We hope to see as many of you as possible.

As a reminder, SCIPS reimburse all travel expenses both for members who drive or those that use public transport / taxis.

Please attend if you can!

## Digi-Comm Know Your Neighbourhood - Pilot Feedback



The Know Your Neighbourhood funding enabled us to pilot the project in different community led spaces. There are 18 tower blocks across Sandwell that have a purpose built community room for the benefit of residents. These spaces are not well utilised by local people as they are often difficult to access, have no internet connection. We wanted to work with local people to develop new opportunities and services to encourage more use of these community spaces.



The additional resources from Know Your Neighbourhood enabled us to develop a bespoke volunteer offer based around our digital Click and Chat training program. We recruited a part-time volunteer co-ordinator to support, develop and train Digital Champions.

*Delroy Thomas - Volunteer Co-ordinator - St Albans Community Association)*

### Pilot Achievements



The Project delivered  
32 digital training  
sessions



A total of 43  
participants attended  
on average 6 weeks of  
training



18 digital champions  
were recruited, trained  
and supported



Created 36 volunteering  
opportunities for Digital  
Champions to practice  
their skills



The Digital Champions  
donated 350 hours of time  
to support the project



Through a WMCA project and  
SMBC we secured 15 digital  
devices which we distributed  
to the community with a value  
of £2,750 as match funding .

### Lessons Learned

#### What Worked Well?

Working with existing groups such as TRA's  
The bespoke volunteer offer and the one-to-one support provided  
Delivering in venues that are not well used enabled us to access new people  
Levels of engagement

#### What Did Not Work Well?

Access to rooms in some blocks was difficult  
Lack of connectivity in rooms using a 4G dongle to access the internet slowed things down in some venues  
Targeting a block whose residents were from a younger demographic the training was not relevant and we had little take up

#### Unexpected Outcomes

Securing equipment for free  
Exploring specialist technology for hard of hearing  
Development of a digital café and a new tenants and resident association  
Willingness of our Digital Champions to work outside their area to support other groups

Through an evaluation of the project, we identified the following information

#### What We are Most Proud Of

The Project Team and the way they have worked to deliver the programme.  
The ability to amend the delivery of the project to meet individual needs  
The development of the Digital Champions and seeing their confidence grow  
Groups want to carry on developing their digital offer after we have finished the training

## Legacy

We are committed to ensure that the successes and the learning we have gathered will be utilised in the future delivery of our digital offer this will include:



Working with officers from Sandwell Council Housing

Department to explore how we can get more community rooms opened up for community use. We are also putting pressure onto the council to find a way of providing a permanent internet connection In these community rooms. We are working with SMBC providing them with information for their new digital strategy



The Digi-Comm Partnership have Big Lottery funding for the next 2 years to deliver digital support in the community. It is our intention to incorporate the best practice from this project into our future delivery, particularly around the volunteering offer.

Through this project we have become members of the Good Things Foundation and are will be encouraging community centre's we work with to join. Membership gives groups access to valuable training and information about funding for digital projects. This will enable centres and individuals to access digital support and information to help them continue developing their digital journey.

**Good Things**  
Foundation



## How to make a Complaint to the Council regarding a Housing Service

### How to log a complaint

Sandwell Council (SMBC) aim to deliver a high quality service and are passionate about developing and improving our services and welcome all feedback from customers.

You can make a complaint if:

- you think SMBC did something wrong
- SMBC didn't do something well enough
- SMBC didn't do something quickly enough
- SMBC were inconsiderate or rude

A complaint is not a routine request for service e.g. fly tipping, street lights not working or missed bin collection, this is a request for service.

A request for service should be made via [MySandwellPortal 'Report it'](#) , unless you have previously made a report and received no resolution.

Ways of logging a complaint:

Online: [MySandwell Portal](#)

Email: [Customer Services](#)

Phone: 0121 569 7867

Write in: Customer Feedback Team, Sandwell Council, Roway Lane, Oldbury, B69 3ES.  
When you register a complaint SMBC will, where possible, attempt to resolve it as soon as they receive it. If that is not possible, then it will move to the formal 'Stage 1' complaints process.

## SMBC Housing Complaints Process

### Stage 1- Investigation

- Your complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days
- The service area will respond to your complaint within 10 working days
- If more time is needed you will be contacted to agree a new deadline

### Stage 2- Review

- If you are unhappy with the outcome of Stage 1, you can ask for it to be reviewed
- You will need to tell us the reason why you are unhappy with the response
- Your Stage 2 request will be acknowledged within 3 working days
- The complaint will be reviewed by a senior officer who will respond within 20 working days
- If more time if needed you will be contacted to agree a new deadline.

### Ombudsman

- If you are unhappy with the outcome of the Stage 2 then you can contact the appropriate Ombudsman

Local Government & Social  
Care Ombudsmen

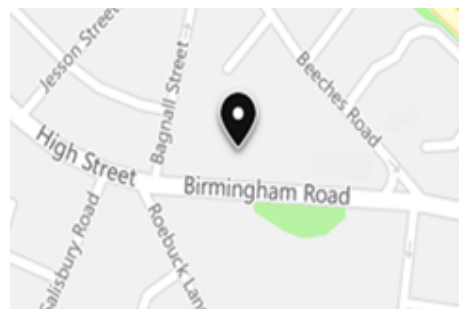
The Housing Ombudsmen

## Sandwell Community Information & Participation Service



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SCIPS is a registered charity no 1097702.

If you would like to find out more about us visit our website  
[www.scips.org.uk](http://www.scips.org.uk)

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