

The background is a dark blue gradient with a dense pattern of white snowflakes and stars. The snowflakes vary in size and color, including white, light blue, and pink. The stars are small white dots and larger white four-pointed stars. The overall effect is a festive, wintry atmosphere.

healthwatch
Sandwell

WINTER

Newsletter

The bottom portion of the image features a stylized winter landscape. It consists of rolling hills in shades of light blue and white, suggesting snow-covered ground. Several dark blue evergreen trees with white outlines are scattered across the landscape. The background of this section is a dark blue gradient with white snowflakes and stars, matching the top section.

Message from Healthwatch Sandwell Manager, Alexia Farmer

As the year comes to a close and the holidays are upon us, I cannot help but reflect on the past year. Winter arrives and the darkness of the short days can fall upon us in different ways. Hardship, illness, and failures can often overwhelm us for sure, but they can also awaken our hope and rally our strength and our support for each other. Its so important that we recall the brighter moments in life and not allow ourselves to spiral into negative decline.

Through the work and participation that Healthwatch has been involved in over the last twelve months, it is evident to see the strength and resilience that the communities of Sandwell have, and how a positive attitude and coming together can help us all get through the difficult times. We have been privileged to work with community leaders, voluntary sector organisations, the local authority and health and care providers who are all working so hard to shape the future in Sandwell, despite many obstacles that prevail.

We are in the midst of the festive season and our diverse community embraces this in many ways. Our towns are busy, lights are shining brightly, and the seasonal decorations are a pleasure to see. There is a buzz of warmth amongst people, helping hands and goodwill and despite the cost-of-living crisis, communities digging deep and giving, when there is little left to give.

Let us be positive as we begin a new year, show some pride in who we are, be responsible and look at ways we can help ourselves and others within our communities who need a helping hand. Let us show kindness, tolerance, and respect.

May the spirit of the holidays fill your home with love and peace.



Team Update

The team have been busy working on this year's priority project – **Diabetes: patient experiences of health, care and support services to help manage the condition**. We have been listening to local people and finding out what really matters to them.

We have visited different communities in Sandwell to get a good idea of how health, care and support works for different people. Thank you to those who have welcomed us into their groups, communities and at their events. We couldn't do what we do without your feedback.

We have carried out 13 Enter and View visits at services as part of our project! That is more than one a month! Thank you to all the service users who have shared their experiences with us so far.

The team are looking forward to sharing our findings with you all in the new year, so keep a look out for updates!

Over the year we held our Guided By You events and listened to people from 6 towns across Sandwell and shared our findings in our report – [Local People, Local Views, We are Guided By You](#). We have successfully started the second stage of these tours, we have already held our first workshop – *You Shared, We Heard*, which was at the Yemen Community Centre. Keep a look out for our next workshop date and venue.

We have had some amazing times through 2023 but our most favourites had to be.....

Pauls Higgitt's female kitten turning out to be a BOY and welcoming Rosie the love bird to the team!

Thank you

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers who give their time to help us with the work we do. And thank you to our Health Advisory Board for your support throughout 2023.

Thank you to our partner organisations who work alongside us to make Health and Social Care better for those who access it. We look forward to working with you all next year!



Merry Christmas from the Healthwatch Sandwell team, all our
Volunteers and our Health Advisory Board.
Have a wonderful time!



Christmas Fun

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

SANTA
SNOW
GIFT
THANKS
XMAS
HOLLY
JOLLY
STAR

Knock knock! Who's there? Tree! Tree who?

Answer: Tree wise men!

Why didn't the skeleton go to the Christmas party?

Answer: He had no-body to go with.

What kind of pictures do elves take?

Answer: Elfies

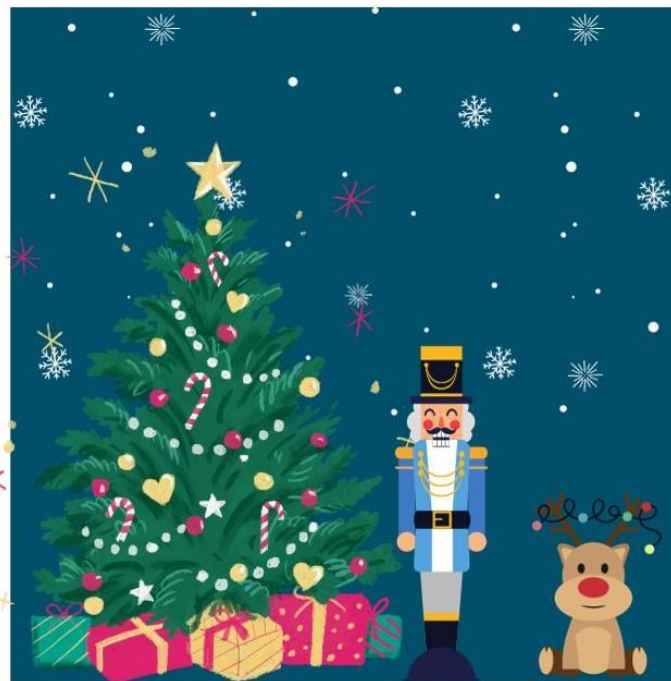
Where do snowmen go to dance?

Answer: The snowball

How does a snow globe feel?

Answer: A little shaken!

Spot the difference



Brain teasers

A farmer needs to cross the river with his chicken, a sack of corn and a fox. His boat unfortunately can only fit himself and one other thing. The fox and chicken are hungry, so if he leaves the fox with the chicken, the chicken will get eaten, whilst if he leaves the chicken with the corn, the corn will get eaten. How will the man get safely across with all 3?"

The man takes the chicken across and then goes back for the fox. He can't leave the fox and chicken together so when he drops the fox off, he picks up the chicken. He then goes back for the corn. He can't leave the corn and the chicken together so when he picks up the corn, he drops off the chicken. When the corn is safely with the fox on the right side of the river, he goes to collect the chicken.

Tracy's mother had 4 children. The first child was named April, the second was named May, the third June. What was the 4th child called?

Winter Information

NEED YOUR COVID-19 OR FLU VACCINE?



- Get your first, second, third or booster dose (depending on age and eligibility)
- For people aged 5 and over (5-16 year olds will need to attend with a parent or guardian)
- Suitable for anyone who is pregnant or breastfeeding
- No NHS number or residential address needed
- No need to be registered with a GP
- Translations available

PORTWAY LIFESTYLE CENTRE, NEWBURY LANE, OLDURY, B69 1HE

FRIDAY 22 DECEMBER 10AM-2PM
FRIDAY 29 DECEMBER 10AM-2PM



**PROTECT YOURSELF
PROTECT SANDWELL
GET VACCINATED**






AGED 40 - 74?
• HOW HEALTHY ARE YOU THIS HOLIDAY SEASON?

Event	Date	Time	Address
Smithwick Library	Monday 9 th December	10.00 - 14.30	High Street, Smithwick, West Midlands, B66 5AA
Breadhouse Community Centre	Tuesday 10 th December	09.45 - 14.30	Breadhouse Lane, Smithwick, B66 5BQ
Tipton Library	Wednesday 20 th December	10.00 - 10.30	Unity Walk, Owen Street, Tipton, West Midlands, DY4 9QL
Dorothy Parkes Centre	Thursday 21 st December	10.00 - 10.30	The Dorothy Parkes Centre, Church Road, Smithwick, B67 6EH
Cradley Heath Community Link - Ranley Regis	Friday 22 nd December	10.00 - 10.30	72 High Street, Cradley Heath, B64 5HA
West Bromwich Leisure Centre	Saturday 23 rd December	12.00 - 18.00	Moor Street, West Bromwich, B70 7AZ
Cape Hill Aisle	Thursday 28 th December	9.00 - 10.30	68 Woodhill Lane, West Midlands, B64 3EN
Wednesbury Leisure Centre	Friday 29 th December	10.00 - 10.30	High Balam, Wednesbury, West Midlands, WS10 7HP
Smithwick Library	Saturday 30 th December	10.00 - 14.30	High Street, Smithwick, West Midlands, B66 5AA



Find out by booking your free NHS Health Check today
<https://nhshealthcheck.randox.com>
 or scanning the QR code
 Alternatively call us on **0800 2545 163**
 Receive a free three-month gym membership upon completion of a health check to kickstart your 2024.

*Partnerships subject to availability. Services/Leisure Trust and Places of Leisure business. Subject to availability.



Keeping warm and well: staying safe in cold weather

Plan ahead


 Check the weather forecast and the news


 Make sure you have sufficient food and medicine


 Take simple measures to reduce draughts at home

Keep yourself warm


 Heat rooms you spend most time in to 18°C if you can


 Keep bedroom windows closed


 Wear multiple layers of thinner clothing

Prepare your home


 Check what financial support may be available for you


 Use energy saving tips to save money on heating


 Make sure appliances are safe and working well

Look after yourself and others


 If you're eligible, get vaccinated against flu and COVID-19


 Check on others who may be vulnerable


 Get help if needed. Call NHS 111 or in an emergency 999

For more information go to:
[Top tips for keeping warm and well this winter - www.GOV.UK](https://www.GOV.UK)

Useful Links

[GOV-UK - Keeping warm and well: staying safe in cold weather](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/keeping-warm-and-well-staying-safe-in-cold-weather)

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64fb2e2157e8840013e127ac/winter-leaflet-v3.pdf>

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/resilient-residents/food-banks-food-emergency>

<https://www.healthysandwell.co.uk/winter/>

<https://icb.nhs.uk/your-health/hblackcountryhealth-advice/think-this-winter>

Healthwatch Sandwell September Insight Report

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Contact us:

**Call: 0121 569 7211 between the hours of
09:00 – 17:00 Monday to Friday.**

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Grange, Central Avenue, Tipton, DY4 9RY**

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