

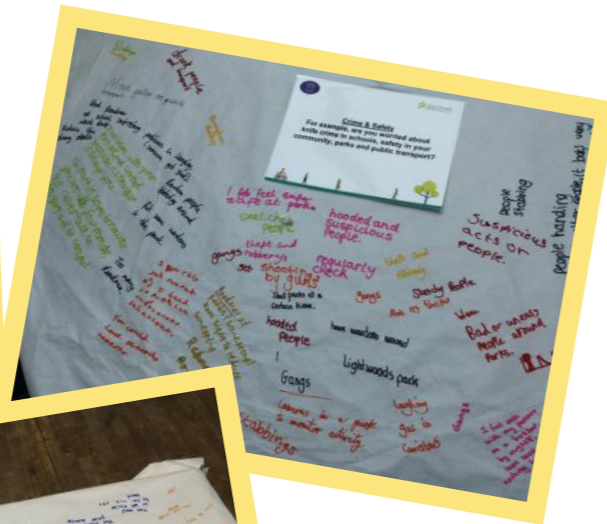
A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED SHAPE
AND BRING THIS PLAN TO LIFE.



SHIRELAND
COLLEGIATE ACADEMY



ST MICHAEL'S
Church of England High School



SHAPE



SANDWELL'S YOUNG PEOPLES

CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2026



SHAPE



Building upon the school engagement element of the Corporate Plan, the aim was to create a young person's version of the Corporate Plan that highlights the priorities of young people in Sandwell, giving them a voice to help shape Sandwell in the future. The plan is created and owned by the young people of Sandwell.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- Young Peoples Corporate Plan is owned by the SHAPE Forum
- Based on the Corporate Plan refresh 2021, where seven schools (Four secondary and three primary) were engaged with. (Q3 Tipton, Q3 Langley, Shireland Collegiate Academy, St Michaels Secondary School, Grove Vale Primary School, Christchurch Church of England School and St Phillips Primary School)
- Several workshops with SHAPE and Care Leavers were conducted
- Three workshops in Primary Schools in 2022 took place (Grove Vale, Christchurch and St Phillips)
- SHAPE conducted a workshop in Q3 Langley and the results from SHAPE survey (795 children and young people aged 9 – 18) also formed part of the findings
- Performance indicators/ milestones were developed following conversations with several teams across the Council and Children's Trust



Following extensive engagement nine key themes were identified

CRIME & SAFETY

ACCESSIBLE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

FINANCIAL SUPPORT & LIFE SKILLS

MENTORING & EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

VOLUNTEERING & JOB OPPORTUNITIES

DIGITAL

PUBLIC SPACES & FACILITIES

HOUSING

CLIMATE CHANGE

CRIME & SAFETY

Issues that concern young people in Sandwell

Knife crime has become a nationwide issue

Young people are aware of gang culture and can feel intimidated when accessing places/ services

Violence against women and girls is an issue that young people feel strongly about

Social use of laughing gas is a nationwide issue, abuse of laughing gas impacts the health and safety of young people

Thefts/ robberies have increased

Some care experienced young people are not aware of their rights and entitlements when in custody or when they come out of prison



What can we do to improve this?

We will:

Provide knife crime education and amnesties in Sandwell

Raise more awareness and education regarding violence against women and girls ([Domestic Abuse Strategy](#))

Have more CCTV cameras and LED lighting in the Borough

Implement the [Sandwell Community Safety Strategy](#). This will ensure robust and effective victims pathways are in place to support victims of crime

Work with community partners and agencies such as WMP to jointly tackle crime

Have wardens patrolling public facilities and spaces

Work with partners to conduct more proactive stop and searches in public spaces

Develop a local offer for care leavers in custody

Have detached youth workers in key public spaces/ facilities to support young people and ensure they feel safe

Performance measures/ milestones

SHAPE Survey

How safe/unsafe do you feel from being hurt by others in the following places? (Primary & Secondary)

Sandwell Resident and Wellbeing Survey

Thinking about this local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are? (People using or dealing drugs & Groups hanging around the streets)

National crime data

Number of incidents and feeling safe

Number of modern day slavery victims identified

Number of domestic abuse incidents reported to police

Development of the local offer for custody



ACCESSIBLE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



Issues that concern young people in Sandwell

There is a stigma around mental health and accessing support

Where to access support is not promoted widely, currently young people do not know where to access support services

There is a need for more diverse accessibility for mental health services, and that the support is provided in several formats

More education/ training is required for parents to allow them to spot the signs that their child is struggling with their mental health

Support organisations such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) have long waiting lists

More funding is required for schools and other mental health organisations so that they can have designated resources to support mental health

Affordability and accessibility to medical, eye and dental for care leavers due to living independently

What can we do to improve this?

We will:

Continue to improve support available for all children by promoting whole-school approaches to wellbeing, building resilience, and ensuring early identification of need and early access to mental health support

Ensure the multi-agency governance for the Thrive Plan in Sandwell is clear and effective. Thrive Board to be the place where strategic decisions are made for emotional wellbeing/ mental health for children and young people in Sandwell

Invest and support community mental health programmes (including pre-and post-natal support groups; a parenting programme; an anti-bullying campaign)

Work with partners such as SCVO to help shift more resources towards local community projects ([Stronger Sandwell](#))

Promote and map a list of all organisations that provide mental health support in the Borough

Promote the use of the School Nursing Service

Secure funding for free prescriptions, eye and dental for young people

Performance measures/ milestones

Number of grants provided concerning Vision 2030, Better Mental Health and Healthy Lifestyles

Free prescriptions for care leavers eye, dental and medical

Develop a wellbeing hub to support mental health and wellbeing for children in care and care leavers

Schools to be supported to apply for funding, attend training and have a senior mental health lead within their school



FINANCIAL SUPPORT & LIFE SKILLS



Issues that concern young people in Sandwell

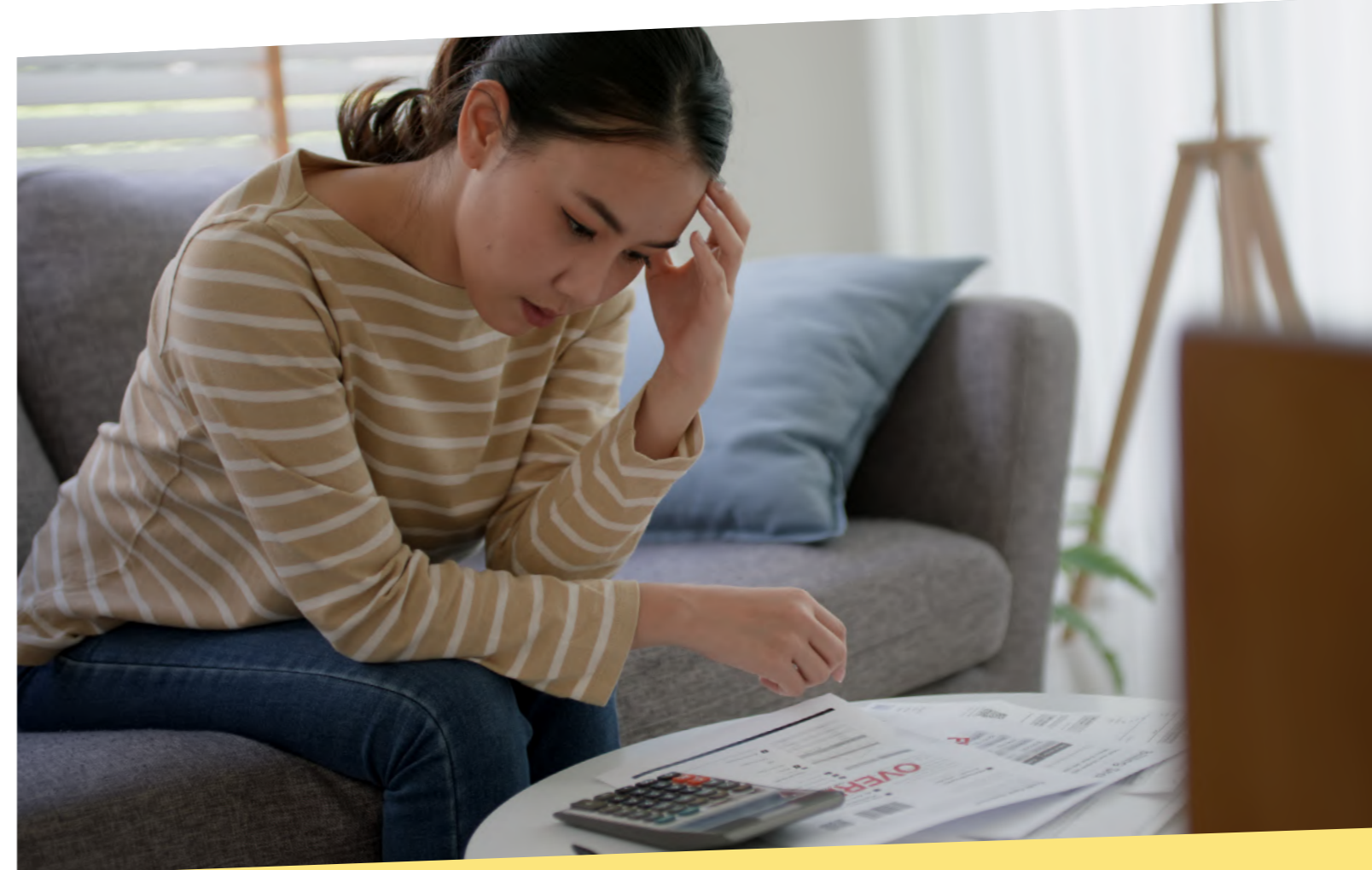
- Not taught about budgeting and finance management in schools
- There needs to be more support for low income families
- Cost of higher education (student fees), and the application process is not explained
- Parents not teaching life skills to their children, so there is a gap in knowledge for some young people
- Online scams and fraud have become more prevalent
- More education around the dangers of gambling is required
- More first aid training for young people is needed

What can we do to improve this? We will:

- Provide independent information to young people, making them aware of all their options to enable them to take up employment, an apprenticeship or further learning and training opportunities to fulfil their potential (Sandwell Connexions and Employment & Skills)
- Provide both financial and physical support to tackle the Cost of Living crisis
- Provide Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) to cover the Easter, Summer and Christmas holiday period for 2023 to support school aged children and young people to access healthy food and enriching activities free of charge
- Deliver free play & youth services for Children & Young People across Sandwell (Go Play Sandwell) (Justyouth)
- Deliver anti bullying roadshows in Sandwell schools in Anti Bullying Week
- Work with partners such as Healthy Sandwell to provide and promote information regarding the dangers of gambling, spotting online scams and substance abuse in various formats and locations
- Deliver first aid training in schools, youth clubs and community centres

Performance measures/ milestones

- The total monetary value of benefits awarded assisted by the Welfare Rights Service
- Number of people assisted by the Welfare Rights Service to claim additional benefits
- Number of Council Tax reduction scheme cases processed
- The total amount of Council Tax Reduction
- scheme assistance provided
- Number of Housing Benefit cases processed
- Number of young people attending, HAF, Go Play and Play Making a Difference and Youth Service



PUBLIC SPACES & FACILITIES

Issues that concern young people in Sandwell

Some young people's perception of parks is that they can be overcrowded at times with young adults who appear threatening and engaging with drug use

We want a graffiti and litter free clean Borough

Young people want libraries to be open for longer hours so that they can make the most of them

Safety and cleanliness are two reasons why young people are deterred from using public transport

Free sports activities in school holidays need to be promoted more effectively to young people and parents

The different locations of community centres in the Borough need to be mapped and promoted more effectively to young people



What can we do to improve this? We will:

Work with partners at the West Midlands Combined Authority to make public transport safer ([Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy](#))

Strive to maintain Green Flag status, whilst also working to enhance our existing green and open spaces. We will create new places to play and commit to plant a tree for every child starting school in Sandwell up to 2030

More CCTV cameras and LED lighting in the Borough

Develop and deliver a libraries strategy that works for the community. We will start to roll out the Open+ model which represents a different way of working for public libraries

Wardens will patrol public facilities and spaces

Deliver free play & youth services for children & young people across Sandwell ([Go Play Sandwell](#)) ([Justyouth](#)) and continue to provide Holiday Activities and Food ([HAF](#)) programme

Continue to enforce fines for littering and graffiti. Also signpost our services which help remove graffiti in public spaces and report ASB

Promote all locations where our community centres are located

Performance measures/ milestones

Sandwell Resident and Wellbeing Survey

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with the: (Council's library services, Council's parks and open spaces?)

Thinking about the local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are? (Rubbish or litter lying around, Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles)

Physical visits to library sites (rate per 1,000 population)

1,000 activities delivered in libraries by year end

Local authority playgrounds per 1,000 population

Number of events per 1,000 population

Number/ percentage of cases or incidents where action was taken to reduce/ manage ASB



MENTORING & EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT



Issues that concern young people in Sandwell

School staff want to mentor young people and help, but they are limited by time and resources

Mentoring is needed for all young people not just high achievers

Schools need to help develop career options and map education routes

Sandwell has no University or Campus, so young people must leave Sandwell for higher education

Interview practice for young people is needed for college interviews and job interviews

The curriculum needs to cater for the new and future job market

Care Experienced young people do not have access to a sufficient range of non-social work adult role models to advocate on their behalf

What can we do to improve this?

We will:

- Work with schools and other learning providers to improve educational outcomes for children and young people
- Work with partners to make sure that vulnerable children in our community receive the right support to enable them to thrive and have successful adult lives
- Work with partners to deliver life skills sessions in schools in several formats and promote these services on our shared digital platforms
- Promote the Councils mentoring service for apprentices in the private or public sectors (Employment and Skills team)
- Provide independent support to young people highlighting all their options to enable them to take up employment, an apprenticeship or further learning ([Connexions Sandwell](#))
- Recognise that transport can be a barrier to work and accessing further education, we will work with our partners (WMCA) to ensure that our young people can access employment and education opportunities across the region particularly by public transport
- Provide mentoring support for children in care and care leavers to reach their goals and aspirations in life

Performance measures/ milestones

- Number of young people being mentored by the Employment & Skills team
- Key Stage 4: Attainment 8 - Reduce the Points gap between the LA Disadvantaged and Non-Disadvantaged pupils nationally
- SCT Ofsted rating
- % of Schools 'Good' or 'Outstanding' OFSTED rating (Primary, Secondary and Special)
- % of children in care and care leavers accessing continuous support from mentors, advocacy, independent visitor and lifelong links
- Number of engagement events held in schools and the community



CLIMATE CHANGE

Issues that concern young people in Sandwell

- Not enough education is given about the dramatic effects of climate change
- More partnership working around climate change is required
- More homes need to be "Eco Homes", this includes existing homes and new builds
- Cost of electric vehicles to replace diesel cars
- There is a continued trend of cutting down trees and building on green spaces
- Need more electric car chargers/ charging points and solar panels in the Borough
- We need to reward people for being greener and reward the use of public transport
- There is a need to produce food locally



What can we do to improve this?

We will:

- Work with partners to deliver initiatives that will help up to achieve our [climate change strategy](#) and the target of being a carbon neutral borough by 2041
- Embed climate change considerations into our decision making to enable us to become a carbon neutral Council by 2030
- Invest in our buildings and fleet, so both are low carbon and compatible with 2030. Working with our partners, we will make refuse collection and street cleansing greener with the rollout of electric street cleansing vehicles and participation in pilot projects to test other green vehicles
- Work to make our own housing stock greener by implementing minimum energy performance standards for existing and new build council homes and exemplar schemes for modern methods of construction
- Increase recycling rates and encourage cultural change
- Continue to implement Sandwell's Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and deliver a programme of infrastructure improvements across the Borough
- Ensure that all public transport options available locally are as green as possible, including lobbying for clean green buses for our Borough
- Continue to invest in green infrastructure and increase the amount of EV charging points in the Borough
- Plant a tree for every child starting school in Sandwell up to 2030

Performance measures/ milestones

- % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting
- Number of public EV charging points
- Number of passenger journeys on public transport
- Existing buildings showing an improvement in energy ratings
- Annual reduction in corporate carbon emissions
- Plan and rollout of electrification of Council fleet vehicles



VOLUNTEERING & JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Issues that concern young people in Sandwell

- More job opportunities are needed locally in Sandwell
- Need volunteering opportunities after school/ college hours
- Employer fares needed in schools or in towns to show the types of jobs and opportunities available
- Without experience harder to get a job because you have no experience
- We need to do more to attract big employers to Sandwell
- There is an assumption that young people have a home and parents that can support the young person financially, allowing them to do the unpaid work
- Need to support care leavers and other young people who may need specific employment over specific time periods due to commitments e.g. childcare



What can we do to improve this?

We will:

- Strengthen our business sector so that local people can benefit from quality jobs that are stable and well paid through our work with Stronger and Inclusive Economy Board
- Give young people access to job opportunities through the Connexions and Employment and Skills team in the Council
- Support people into employment through the delivery of the Skills Strategy with our strategic partners in the Employment and Skills Partnership
- Work with our partners to support the development and growth of business start-ups in Sandwell
- Offer quality work experience placements within the Council
- Continue to deliver the Apprenticeship Levy and increase the take up of apprenticeships, particularly within small businesses in Sandwell
- Work with schools and employers to develop the skills necessary for work and to improve the opportunities for young people to access apprenticeships and permanent employment
- Provide a broader offer to young people with SEND to include different supported internship and apprenticeship models
- Deliver engagement events to showcase the Sandwell offer. We will promote this by using our social media channels

Performance measures/ milestones

- Number of young people supported into apprenticeships (Inside and outside the Council)
- Children in care who have left school that are engaged in training, employment, further education up to the age of 21
- % of young people who are NEET
- Number of work experience placements provided in the Council
- Number of young people supported into employment
- Number of employers the Employment & Skills team has engaged with



DIGITAL

Issues that concern young people in Sandwell

- Affordability of broadband and mobile data
- Not everyone has access to a digital device
- Age restrictions on apps and webpages not followed by young people
- Cyber bullying is on the rise
- Cyber security training and awareness is needed more than ever
- Overuse of the internet can cause health problems due to altering leisure patterns
- Care experienced young people are digitally excluded from accessing services, entitlements and opportunities



What can we do to improve this?

We will:

- Ensure that Digital Inclusion matters when designing services and making key council decisions
- Work with West Midlands 5G to ensure Sandwell maximises opportunities for 5G infrastructure
- Provide digital devices and data sticks for pupils from low income families
- Map out all places/ warm spaces in the Borough that provide free access to the internet
- Invest in digital platforms to enable better access for our residents and other service users, and to build on the benefits of increased digitalisation of our services
- Promote the [Digital Den project](#) (West Bromwich). This project invests in digital infrastructure to create pathways into education, training and employment through accredited online training courses, careers guidance, and provides children with online educational resources
- Work with our partners in the voluntary sector to improve and develop digital skills in the community to minimise digital exclusion and maximise employment and training opportunities
- The anti-bullying training programme and online safety training is being rolled out to schools, professionals working with children and young people and parents
- The Digital Citizenship community offer training is being rolled out to professionals working with children and young people

Performance measures/ milestones

- Sandwell Resident and Wellbeing Survey
- Do you access the internet? If Yes, How?
- How would you rate your digital skills?
- % of care experienced young people accessing the internet and equipment.
- Development of the Councils digital offer for young people
- Investment in digital infrastructure



HOUSING

Issues that concern young people in Sandwell

All new builds should be designed to meet Decent Homes Standard and be futureproofed to offer maximum energy efficiency. They should come with electric vehicle chargers and solar panels wherever feasible

Some private landlords are exploiting individuals, charging above market rate rents while not maintaining properties to required standards

Care leavers and young people in housing need should not only be supported into finding a house, but also supported to ensure the house has sufficient items/facilities for them to live in

There should be various types and sizes of housing available so that we can cater for all needs and keep individuals in Sandwell

Cost of buying a house is growing year on year

We need to tackle homelessness and start prevention work early so that we can stop people from becoming homeless

Housing advice and support targeted for young people should be provided, so they can get a true picture of all costs and the process you must undertake to buy or rent houses

Building and safety standards should be kept high priority to prevent poor living conditions and further tragedies such as Grenfell reoccurring

What can we do to improve this?

We will:

Deliver new affordable homes across the Borough, on our own land and other viable sites to help meet the growing demand. Work with developers through the Planning process to delivery affordable housing that meets design standards

Work with private landlords to secure more good quality properties for young people in housing need, at affordable rents

Take enforcement action where standards in private rented housing are not met and where education and awareness raising have not delivered improvement

Encourage young tenants to tell us about disrepair and poor standards in private rented housing so that we can take action while protecting the tenant

Focus more of our ambitious house building programme on the needs of our children and young people who have complex needs or experience of care. We will design and deliver training and support for care leavers managing their own tenancies

Incorporate more renewable energy measures into the design of new-build Council homes, including modern methods of construction and energy efficient heating

Work to prevent and end rough sleeping by implementing the Homelessness Strategy 2022-25 focussed on increasing prevention, early intervention and rapid rehousing

Raise the standard of homes in the private rented sector and bring more empty homes back into use

Take a proactive approach to accessing national funding for Sandwell that benefits our tenants and people who are homeless or in housing need

Invest in training and induction for new young tenants to ensure understanding of rights and responsibilities and to promote tenancy sustainment. Enable young tenants to have a voice in the council's tenant engagement structures

Support people in the private rented sector to ensure their landlords comply with safety standards

Ensure that council homes are safe places to live by fully complying with fire and building safety requirements and regularly reviewing compliance. This includes taking a proactive approach to tackling damp and mould

Performance measures/ milestones

Number of care leavers accommodated by housing under their own tenancy

% of homes that meet energy efficient target

Percentage of homelessness cases successfully prevented

Number of private sector properties reported to be in state of disrepair with a positive resolution

Number of long term empty homes brought into use

Number of new homes built each year (New Council homes, affordable homes, total)

