



SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL: A BIRMINGHAM 2022 COMMONWEALTH GAMES LEGACY PLAN



June 2023



CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	4
IMPROVE HEALTH, WELLBING, AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	11
INSPIRE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION.....	17
SUPPORT GROWTH IN BUSINESS, TOURISM AND REPUTATION	22
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	28
CONCLUSION	30

FOREWORD

"As a proud host venue for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, Sandwell Council is committed to ensuring that the Games leave a lasting legacy for our community. This Legacy Plan outlines the steps we will take to maximise the benefits of the Games for our residents and ensure that the positive impacts are felt for years to come.

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games provided an unparalleled opportunity to showcase Sandwell to the world and to inspire our residents to get involved in sport and physical activity. We will work closely with local stakeholders, community groups, and schools to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from the Games.

We are also committed to using the Games as a catalyst for economic development and regeneration in Sandwell. The construction of new facilities and the influx of visitors will provide a boost to our local economy, and we will work to ensure that local businesses and residents are able to capitalise on these opportunities and capture the benefits this brings.

Through the implementation of this Legacy Plan, we hope to create a lasting legacy for Sandwell that will improve the lives of our residents and contribute to the long-term prosperity of our communities. We are confident that the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games will leave a positive, enduring legacy for all of Sandwell."



Councillor Kerrie Carmichael - Leader of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council



EXECUTIVE

SUMMARY

The following document outlines Sandwell Council's Commonwealth Games Legacy Plan. By implementing this plan, we aim to capitalise on the benefits created by being a host venue at the 2022 Commonwealth Games. The Sandwell Aquatics Centre was a record-breaking venue during the Games, and the new world-class community facility opening July 2023 will ensure a lasting legacy for the borough, ultimately improving the lives of all residents and being a catalyst for economic development and regeneration.

We appreciate that establishing a strong, sustainable legacy doesn't just start after the event itself, but is a culmination of the years of planning and activities that start in the run up to the event, maximising the engagement during, and solidifying post. We have therefore established three key legacy themes that aim to inspire a healthier, happier, and more prosperous Sandwell: **Improve Health, Wellbeing and Physical Activity; Inspire Community Engagement and Collaboration; and Support Growth in Business, Tourism and Reputation.** The work, schemes, activities, and partnerships we establish in delivering against these themes will create a tangible legacy for Sandwell for many years to come.

Indeed, a key component to our legacy plan is how we monitor and evaluate the success of each of our outlined objectives. Doing this will guarantee we achieve the ambitions we set out in this plan and ensure lessons can be learned for the future legacies of major sporting and cultural events being hosted in the borough.



Volunteers from Sandwell Aquatics Club at the Games¹

INTRODUCTION

The borough of Sandwell

Sandwell is a metropolitan borough that forms part of the West Midlands conurbation and is made up of six amalgamated towns (Oldbury, Rowley, Smethwick, Tipton, Wednesbury, and West Bromwich). With a population exceeding 340,000, our borough is one of the most racially, ethnically and culturally diverse boroughs in England. 25.8% of Sandwell residents identified their ethnic group within the "Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh" category in the 2021 national Census², with Smethwick town having the highest proportion of residents from Black, Asian and ethnic minority (BAME) groups, representing 62.1% of their population³. However, Sandwell is also one of the most deprived local authorities, ranking 8th in England⁴.



Our location within the West Midlands, offers residents and visitors a range of amenities and attractions – from bustling town centres with vibrant shopping districts to cultural landmarks, such as the historic West Bromwich Town Hall and the Galton Valley Canal Heritage Centre, there is something for everyone. Sandwell is not just a location; it is a testament to the power of unity and the strength of our people. It was during Birmingham’s hosting of the 2022 Commonwealth Games that provided us with a platform to showcase and propel its hard work and community spirit.

¹ Swim England West Midlands, <https://westmidlandswimming.org.uk/saccwg/>

² Office For National Statistics, 'How life has changed in Sandwell: Census 2021', 19 January 2023, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/Eo8000028/>

³ As above.

⁴ The English Indices of Deprivation, 2019,

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835115/loD2019_Statistical_Release.pdf



"Sandwell is a clear example of why the UK bids for major events and why we are so good at hosting them. Events like Birmingham 2022 can be a catalyst for levelling up access to sport and culture".

Nadine Dorries, Former Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport⁵

The 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games

In December 2017, Birmingham was announced as the Host City for the 2022 Commonwealth Games (Games). Team England sent the most diverse and inclusive English sporting team in history to compete at the Games who were rewarded with 176 medals, the most won by Team England in Commonwealth Games history.

Delivery of the Games in a record breaking 4.5 years due to the COVID-19 pandemic



1.5 million ticketed fans, more than any previous UK based Games



The biggest integrated para sport programme in history



More women's than men's medal events – a first in major, multi-sport event history



Birmingham City Council signed a legal framework to deliver the record-breaking Games in partnership with several organisations who were crucial in delivery, one being Sandwell Council. Central to Sandwell's involvement in delivery of the Games was the newly built Sandwell Aquatics Centre in Smethwick. The facility hosted more events than any other venue during the Games, with 12 medal events in diving and 52 for swimming.

There was no shortage of medals for England in the pool. Amongst Team England's list of the 10 best moments from the Games was 17-year-old diver Andrea Spendolini-Sirieix, who won silver in the women's synchronised platform, gold in the individual event and gold in the mixed synchronised event⁶.

Indeed, the 15 medals won by the diving team represented a record-breaking high medal haul for Team England at a Commonwealth Games. This success, alongside the 32 medals achieved by Team England's

⁵ Nadine Dorries, DCMS, 'Aquatics Centre of Birmingham Commonwealth Games will leave 'a legacy for generations'', 20 January 2022, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/culture-secretary-aquatics-centre-of-birmingham-commonwealth-games-will-leave-a-legacy-for-generations>

⁶ Team England News, 18.08.22, <https://teamengland.org/news/ten-of-the-best-moments-from-birmingham-2022>



swimmers was a phenomenal achievement, all occurring during 11 days of swimming and diving at Sandwell's Aquatics Centre.



Sandwell Aquatics Centre

When the construction of Phase 1 of the £73 million facility in Smethwick was completed in May 2022, it became the 13th Olympic sized pool in the United Kingdom, and established a brand new, world-class facility for elite and community swimming and diving in Sandwell. It was the only new, purpose-built venue for the Games.

£38.5 million was put towards the development by the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games budget, £27 million came from Sandwell Council. £7.6 million was given by Sport England, the Black Country LEP, Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) and the University of Wolverhampton.



"People shouldn't underestimate how much a facility investment can help the local area, but it's also a national investment. Competitions after the Games will be coming [to Sandwell] from left, right and centre. Never underestimate how much that brings, especially to local teams, local athletes and how much it inspires them. Hopefully we can secure that next generation of athletes."

Adam Peaty, OBE and Team England Gold Medallist⁷

Following the success of the Games, a period of legacy construction work began to convert the Aquatics Centre from a competition venue into a world-class aquatics and leisure centre that serves the local

⁷ Adam Peaty, 'I love Birmingham', Birmingham 2022, 13 November 2020, <https://www.birmingham2022.com/news/2500118/adam-peaty-i-love-birmingham>



community, opening to the public in July 2023. The state-of-the-art facility will create a lasting legacy for health and wellbeing in Sandwell and provide a community venue that improves access to aquatics sports for our local residents for years to come.

The centre will have an Olympic size 50m swimming pool featuring a boom and moveable floor (allowing the length and depth of the pool to be varied for groups of all ages and abilities to use), a 25m diving pool with up to 10m diving boards, and a studio swimming pool.

"If I'm honest, while competing at the Sandwell Aquatic Centre during the Commonwealth Games, it didn't feel like I was in England. I've always had to travel to Europe and beyond to experience competition venues of that quality. It's amazing to have a facility like it in England, as a training venue it has everything you could ever need to serve divers from the lowest to the highest level, and as a competition venue it feels world class. Young athletes in Birmingham are lucky to have access to Sandwell, and I hope Commonwealths wasn't the last time I have the opportunity to dive there."

Yona Knight - Wisdom, Jamaican Diver⁸

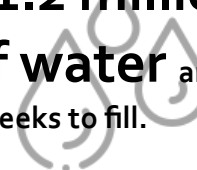
Other facilities at the aquatics centre will include:

- Seats for up to 1,000 spectators
- Three activity studios
- Two 4-court sports halls
- 108-station gym
- 25-station ladies-only gym
- Indoor cycling studio
- Dry driving centre with mini floor trampolines
- Sauna/steam room
- Changing village for up to 600
- New grass football pitch and changing facilities
- New urban park and children's play area
- Up to 450 on-site car parking spaces
- and a Café



More than **190,000 tiles** were installed at the venue.

The pools contain **1.2 million gallons of water** and took two weeks to fill.



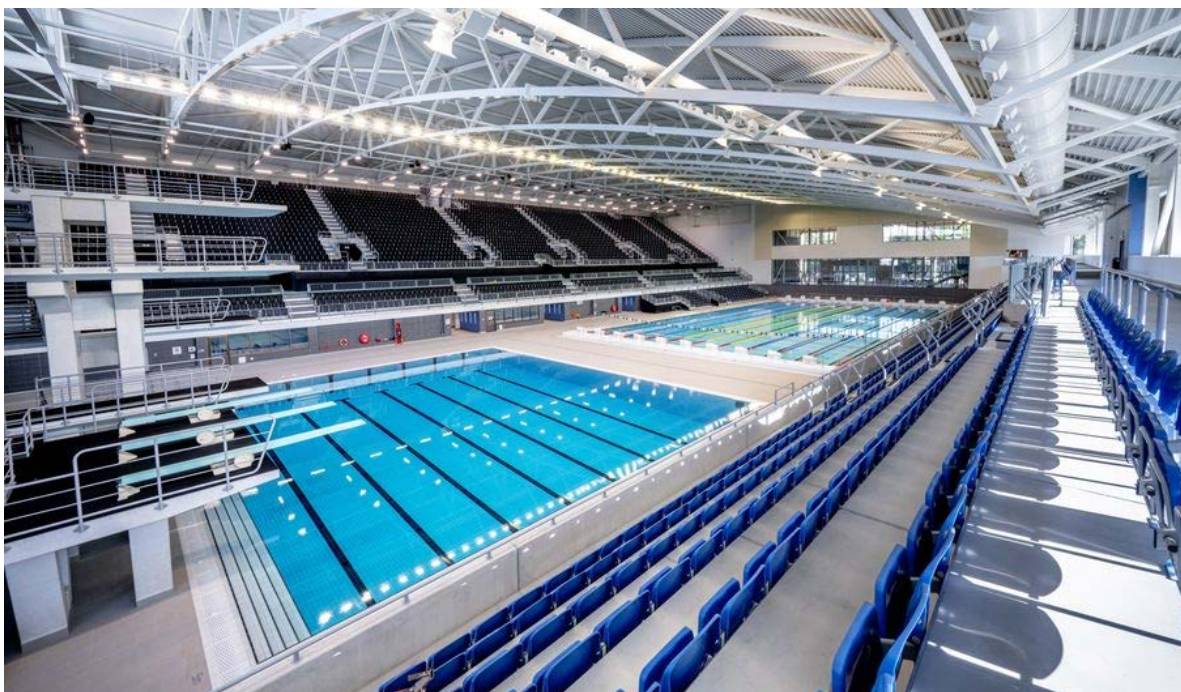
"The pool is a well needed addition to the tally of 50m pools in the UK and a really important addition to the region where uptake of swimming is particularly low."

Swimming should be an inclusive sport where everybody feels they have a place to get involved and I hope that having such a fantastic facility in the region will encourage more people across all levels to get involved in the sport."

⁸Yona Knight-Wisdom, 13th May 2023.



Anna Hopkin, MBE and Olympic Gold Medallist, who picked up three swimming medals for Team England at the 2022 Commonwealth Games⁹



Context to the Legacy Plan

The sporting programme at the Aquatics Centre during the Games was just the beginning – the Games will leave a legacy for Sandwell to last for years to come. The Games’ purpose was never purely two weeks of sport, it was designed as a Games which would provide opportunities, benefits and a lasting legacy to all those involved. Director of Legacy for Birmingham 2022, Nicola Turner, noted: ‘for this particular Games, the fact it was planned by the community, lent to the Games for two weeks and then handed back, that says everything about what the Games was about’¹⁰.

“I think swimming in the same pool where Adam Peaty did his fantastic celebration will inspire lots of children and also adults who have never learned to swim to come here to Sandwell. At the moment in Sandwell and the Black Country alone, 10,000 children left primary school not knowing how to swim.”

Nicola Turner, Director of Legacy, Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games¹¹

In 2018, Chris Jones, Sandwell Council’s Project Director for the Aquatics Centre, and his team, were able to finalise the new build strategy for the site, culminating multiple years of facility planning, strategic and local community engagement work. Since the beginning, our priority was to put Sandwell’s community

⁹ Anna Hopkin, 12th May 2023.

¹⁰ Birmingham Mail 14th November 2023, <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/birmingham-2022-hope-sandwell-aquatics-25490125>

¹¹ As above.



and the Centre’s legacy first, providing a top-level and financially sustainable facility to local residents. Indeed, the facilities included in the development directly facilitate participation for all ages and abilities, championing inclusion and the development of future athletes.

While the announcement of Birmingham as the host city of the 2022 Games enabled the go-ahead to build the centre; delivery of the Games and wider venue construction was complicated by Britain’s uncertain relationship with the EU, a global pandemic which led to enormous shortages material and labour, the ‘wettest winter in 100 years once construction started on site’, and having four fewer years to deliver the project. Despite this, Sandwell Council, worked effortlessly with Wates (lead contractor) to create a world-record breaking facility.

Chris Jones has recently been recognised for services to sport and to the community in the West Midlands and been awarded an MBE in the 2022 New Year’s Honours List, for his instrumental role in delivering the project for the Commonwealth Games.

Placeholder for quote from Chris Jones (once received)

During the Commonwealth Games, Sandwell Council played a pivotal role in supporting and facilitating the successful hosting of the event. As the local government authority responsible for the Sandwell area, we worked closely with various stakeholders, and local residents in the run up to and during the Games to ensure a seamless experience for athletes, visitors, and residents alike. As part of our responsibilities as a key delivery partner, we also have a commitment to deliver a lasting legacy.

After an accumulation of hard work within the Council, this Legacy Plan provides a strategy and detailed plan to capture the key objectives and work going on across the borough in order to establish a strong legacy from hosting the event, whilst also supporting the acceleration of our wider vision and ambitions.

Methodology: ‘A coordinated effort’

To create a lasting legacy for Sandwell, we have collaborated with a wide range of internal teams within the council, external stakeholders and delivery partners, coordinating efforts in order to maximise the success of this plan. We appreciate the sooner you start planning for legacy, the greater the benefits you can reap and the more sustainable the benefits are because habits have formed and culture has changed. While this plan has been drafted ahead of the opening of the new Sandwell Aquatics Centre in July 2023, with the support of 4GLOBAL, it is the product of years of internal planning, developments and forecasting that have been formulating since the announcement to make Birmingham and the West Midlands the host region for the Games.



Sandwell faces the same challenge as previous host cities of similar major events, namely, how to ensure the Games are effectively utilised to achieve a sustained long-term positive legacy for the borough and its residents. COVID-19 and Brexit provided us with challenges which impacted the finalisation of the strategy, however, by working collaboratively, we have built across our Council to create a legacy for our borough.

Sandwell's Three Legacy Pillars

We have established three critical legacy pillars as part of this plan, to ensure the benefits and opportunities for Sandwell are much wider than the £73 million investment alone:

- **Improve Health, Wellbeing and Physical Activity**
- **Inspire Community Engagement and Collaboration**
- **Support Growth in Business, Tourism, and Reputation**



IMPROVE HEALTH, WELLBEING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

*Promoting the development
of a healthy and active
society across Sandwell*



INSPIRE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

*Creating an inspired,
engaged, inclusive and
connected community
across Sandwell*



SUPPORT GROWTH IN BUSINESS, TOURISM AND REPUTATION

*Provide opportunities for
local residents and
businesses to thrive and
succeed, and promote the
borough as a place to visit,
live and invest*

Through addressing these three pillars, we will not only provide a tangible legacy for Sandwell, but also well and truly 'put us on the map'.

Throughout the rest of the document, we will address each of our key legacy pillars in turn: and provide information on the rational and overarching objectives for the pillar, key delivery partner organisations, and supporting ongoing activities of work.



Our legacy pillars and objectives that have been established, directly align with, and contribute towards the ambitions and vision of the Black Country and West Midlands as a whole, and also the five Commonwealth Games-wide legacy pillars¹²:

- Help the region to grow and succeed
- Bring people together
- Improve health and wellbeing
- Putting Birmingham on the map
- Be a catalyst for change

See the full Commonwealth Games legacy programme of work and promises [here](#).

IMPROVE HEALTH, WELLBING, AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Promoting the development of a healthy and active society across Sandwell

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Our driving pillar in creating a legacy for Sandwell focuses on the development physical activity, and subsequent health and wellbeing across the borough.

Sandwell is a borough that has a rich diversity, but also high levels of deprivation that varies across our wards. The resulting series of health inequalities has direct implications on our residents’ opportunities and abilities to lead healthy lives, their overall health status, and health behaviours.

77%

of adults in Sandwell are overweight or obese

33%

of adults in Sandwell are physically inactive

22%

of adults in Sandwell (and the West Birmingham CCG) area have a common mental health disorder

These indicators¹³, alongside prevalence rates of smoking, smoking attributable deaths, and alcohol-related liver disease are all higher in Sandwell than the wider regional (West Midlands) and national (England) averages; and more likely to occur to those living in the most socio-economically deprived areas of the borough. For example, life expectancy is 8.6 years lower for men and 8.0 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Sandwell than in the least deprived area¹⁴. Furthermore, it’s well

¹² Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games: Our Legacy, https://resources.cwg-qbr.pulselive.com/qbr-commonwealth-games/document/2022/07/12/a37f0633-361d-49b1-9cca-d25043dcccff8/Birmingham-2022_Our_Legacy.pdf

¹³ Sandwell MBC, 2022 Commonwealth Games and Their Legacy in Sandwell: Rapid Health Impact Assessment Report and Sandwell Trends website <https://www.sandwelltrends.info>

¹⁴ Public Health England, Local Authority Health Profile 2019, <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/e08000028.html?area-name=sandwell>



known that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a far reaching and knock-on negative impact on physical activity and sport participation across all ages and abilities.

One of the council's key priorities is to find ways to tackle these health inequalities, which therefore forms an opportunity for our legacy as we look to build on the success from the Games. We will strive to use the Games as a catalyst for removing the aforementioned barriers to participation and provide Sandwell residents with opportunities to get involved in physical activity, lead healthy lifestyles and remain active. This will ultimately lead to wider benefits that contribute to the Games' strategic objectives in tackling inactivity and improving health and wellbeing.

Legacy activities and objectives

WHAT ARE OUR OBJECTIVES?

Our teams within Public Health, Sport and Leisure, have developed a set of **10 key objectives** and activities that aim to "*promote the development of a healthy and active society across Sandwell*". A driving force in achieving these objectives is the opening of the Aquatics Centre, offering world-class facilities and programmes which are inclusive of the local community and contribute to the wider leisure offering.

- 1) **Open the Sandwell Aquatics Centre to the community as a new leisure centre for Sandwell**
- 2) **Improve the swimming attainment across Sandwell**
- 3) **Develop a sustainable dive programme for the West Midlands**
- 4) **Develop a sustainable aquatics pathway for the West Midlands**
- 5) **Work with the University of Wolverhampton to develop a Higher Education Offer at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre**
- 6) **Develop inactive communities to have a pathway to active travel and activity in green spaces**
- 7) **Ensure that the Sandwell Aquatics Centre becomes a Health Hub for the local community**
- 8) **Develop a robust social prescribing pathway for Sandwell's inactive and at-risk communities to help reduce physical activity inequalities**
- 9) **Work with facility operators to ensure they have the skills to deal with inactive communities**
- 10) **Ensure that the Commonwealth Games and Sandwell Aquatics Centre support sport development pathways for Sandwell's communities**

It is clear the Games, and opening of the new Aquatics Centre provides us with a unique opportunity to drive a change in this sector – by developing our sport, physical activity and health offering we will support our residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles. Achieving this will increase the return on investment and social value being generated, including through the resulting saving health savings to the NHS as a consequence of increased physical activity.

A full description of the 10 objectives, and an update as of April 2023, has been provided in an appendix to this plan. However, a summary of some of the key pieces of ongoing and/or completed work, alongside information on the key partners supporting us in delivery against the objectives, is provided over the next few pages.

Partnership working

Over the last few years, we have been working to develop relations with a series of key partner organisations that will be central to building on the success of the Games and deliver against our objectives in providing a successful health and wellbeing legacy for Sandwell. These include:

WHO ARE WE WORKING WITH?



- **Swim England and Swim England West Midlands**
- **Sandwell Aquatics Club**
- **Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT)**

We have formed a strategic group with these organisations and will work in partnership to oversee not only the aquatics offering in the Sandwell Aquatics Centre, but also the wider development, growth, and recognition of aquatics sport across the region. In particular, the group's work focuses around supporting the establishment of the programme, club, and delivery pathway offering at the centre across all aquatic disciplines, including:

- The merger and creation of the Sandwell Aquatics Club
- Launch of the West Midlands Diving Programme
- Establish how clubs and programmes coordinate and integrate with each other and the venue operator (SLT)
- Plans for membership and workforce development, ensuring local, and relevant, staff and volunteers

As part of our legacy development, we have signed a 10-year agreement with **University of Wolverhampton**, who contributed £100k of funding to support the capital build of the new Aquatics Centre. We will work in partnership and closely with the university and SLT to develop and introduce a long-term Higher Education offer and usage plan for the university at the Aquatics Centre to maximise opportunities for staff and students. As part of this agreement, sports students at the University will study and train within the centre as part of their curriculum, commencing in 2023.

"This partnership between the University and Sandwell Council will transform our provision in swimming and diving. Our students will now benefit from a world-class sporting venue in the heart of the Black Country; we will teach aspects of our Physical Education and School Sport degree from the pool spaces, and the centre will become the home venue for anyone representing the University through WLV Sport.

We look forward to working with the Council and other venue stakeholders to bring to life the exciting plans which they have for sport in the region."

Dr Richard Medcalf, Director of Wolverhampton University's Institute for Human Sciences¹⁵

We will strive to continually work in collaboration with the partners and wider community groups to support projects and activities across the borough that target levels of physical and mental health and wellbeing, with a shared aim of making sport accessible for all and establishing a lasting legacy from the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Inspire 2022 – A Swim England Legacy for Birmingham 2022

"Use Birmingham 2022 as a catalyst for sustainable change, improving pathways and opportunities for people to participate in aquatics".

¹⁵ University of Wolverhampton, https://www.wlv.ac.uk/staff/news/2020/june-2020/uni-dives-into-new-partnership-with-sandwell-council.php?fbclid=IwAR3o8SGmnucQnbTAXqGYY8hgKWDNbEIXwb7X_zDYbOVqUBxWqZk_ckLe68



Swim England is one of 21 national governing bodies to receive investment to create a long-lasting national impact following the success of Birmingham 2022, and one of our key strategic partners for establishing a legacy for the Games. Their aim is to work with partners in Birmingham, Sandwell, and the wider Black Country to not just increase the opportunity for participation in aquatics and raise levels of activity, but also address challenges such as unemployment, skills and training deficits, and ageing leisure facilities. There are 6 strategic objectives underpinning Swim England’s work.



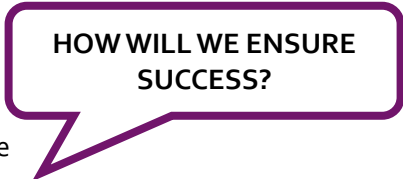
- Maintain the amount of accessible water space at both a regional and national level
- Be more inclusive, increasing diversity of the workforce and those participating
- Increase the number of pupils leaving primary school able to achieve the KS2 requirements for swimming and water safety
- Create a well-defined, optimal athlete pathway, that supports athletes to progress and achieve their full potential
- Be the most successful England Swimming and Diving Team in history at the Commonwealth Games
- Utilise the power of the Games to inspire our members and the next generation of athletes

West Midlands Diving Programme

The new Sandwell Aquatic Centre will provide a platform for diving to be developed across the West Midlands. As one of our key legacy objectives, we are working with Swim England to develop an inclusive and sustainable diving programme that encompasses the use of the facilities at the new centre.

The programme aims to create a diving community that will inspire people across the region to get involved in the sport as a result of the Games, and develop individuals through the programme from grassroots to elite performance (and future international medal potential) level.

The Aquatics Centre will form a central hub (and eventual Sandwell Diving Club) for other functioning diving centres across the region (including Walsall, Solihull, Sutton Coldfield) to feed into, but also open a space for people of all ages, along with community groups, schools and universities to enjoy a new activity.



Swim England have committed to delivering their four-year diving strategy (2021-2025) within the West Midlands region, which has four key strategic themes.

- 1) **Workforce** – Develop train and engage a workforce ensuring an opportunity for diverse backgrounds.
- 2) **Widening Participation** – Produce a pathway which is inclusive, accessible to all, and meets the needs of the community it serves.
- 3) **Diving Pathway** – Develop an inclusive diving pathway from community to performance, maximising the facilities that are available.
- 4) **Partnership Delivery** – Work in partnership through the programme, with both the sport and non-sport sector.



The full West Midlands Diving Strategy 2021-25 can be found [here](#)¹⁶.



Whilst a key objective is to launch a Dive Programme at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre when the facility is open for use, we have started early engagement with gymnastic clubs and other facilities with a diving provision in the West Midlands in the run up to the centre opening. Our sustainable diving programme will create excitement and enthusiasm about diving across the West Midlands, with the hope of developing and supporting future elite athletes, whilst also introducing new residents to the sport.

Post SAC opening, our focus will be on marketing the diving programme, pushing sign ups and engagement whilst also solidifying our partnership with SMBC and SLT. Our talent search programme will involve targeting local schools for talent identification (target 5,000 pupils). This allows youths to develop up the pathway, with a specific grassroots focus (indeed, it takes around 10-15 years to build Olympic divers). We will use SAC open days to get sign ups, encouraging people to try taster sessions. We will look to run coaching courses at the centre with the swimming institute.

A key aim of ours is to host ticketed diving events at the centre in the future, such as the Olympic trials and training camps with British diving. We are also developing a network of volunteers to feed into the Sandwell Diving Club.

Sandwell Aquatics Club

The Sandwell Aquatics Club is going to be the resident club operating out of the centre once it opens in 2023, and has a primary role in advancing, and making aquatic sport in Sandwell accessible to all. The club offers 3 key disciplines in water polo, lane swimming, and triathlon; as well as a full staff and volunteer development programme.

The club is a merger based on 3 existing local clubs across Sandwell – Warley Wasps, Oldbury and Haden Hill. All clubs have a rich and varied history and have seen success in their individual ways, with their members achieving success at international levels, from Olympics and Commonwealth Games, through to British Championships and World Student Games.



"Our vision at Sandwell Aquatics Club is to provide a safe, positive and welcoming environment for residents of Sandwell and beyond to take part in aquatic sport. Members will embark on an aquatic journey encouraging them to achieve their full potential, culminating for some, in international success. Sandwell

¹⁶ Swim England Diving, <https://www.swimming.org/diving/west-midlands-diving-strategy-launched/>



Aquatics Club will proudly produce Black Country athletes in the Black Country.” Liz Wilkins, Club President, Sandwell Aquatics Club

Key priorities and strategic objectives for the club include to enhance club performance and talent development offerings, and have representation at all levels including the top divisions in leagues. They also plan to engage with the local community to offer more opportunities to local residents to swim and become more representative of the diverse ethnic demographic that Sandwell, and Smethwick in particular, has to offer.

Sandwell Council and Swim England are strategic partners for the club, working closely to align strategies and develop effective aquatic pathways across all levels of swimming attainment, to deliver the best possible aquatic experience for the Sandwell community. Pivotal to the club’s success will come from establishing effective links and relationships with SLT, the operator of the Aquatics Centre. SLT will be running in-house Learn to Swim programmes at the centre, and the club aims to work with SLT to ensure effective pathways are in place for swimmers to transition into later stages of the Learn to Swim programme and performance pathways that they offer. In addition, the club will work in partnership with the new Sandwell Diving Club to ensure the clubs operating out of the centre complement each other; and Orion Swimming Club who work with swimmers with disabilities, visual impairments, and learning needs.

As of May 2023, the club has over 700 members across all disciplines (including over 400 that train and over 200 that compete) which they are looking to develop once the Aquatic Centre opens later this year.

“The idea of the three Sandwell swimming clubs joining together has been around for a long time. The dream of having a 50-metre pool in Smethwick has existed for a similar time. As long ago as the 1970s people who were involved in aquatic sport in the borough were talking about these two things. Now, thanks to the decision to build the aquatics centre for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Smethwick, both have become a reality.

As someone who has been involved in this wonderful sport for many years it really is a dream come true and it’s difficult to put into words just what this will mean for our sport and the people of Sandwell. From those who just like to go along to the pool, meet friends and have some fun whilst keeping fit to the most dedicated and talented athletes who are aiming to be at the top of their sport, Sandwell Aquatics Centre and Sandwell Aquatics Club will have something to offer to everyone.”

Liz Wilkins, President, Sandwell Aquatics Club

Other key programmes of work

In an ambition to reduce physical activity inequalities across the borough and improve the health of our residents, we will work closely with SLT, the Aquatics Centre operator, GP surgeries and the local Public Health Network to promote the centre as a **‘health hub’** and facility that can act as a catalyst for good health in the region. We will ensure the services available at the centre that are accessible to all communities and can support people to live healthier and active lifestyles.



Key initiatives we will incorporate at the centre once opened include:

- Developing a **social prescribing referral pathway** to physical activity programmes and weight management services on site at the centre.
- Working with the facility operator to provide **training and education to staff** to ensure there is a requirement and willingness to learn about inactive communities, and how best to support behaviour change in health and wellbeing.

Our teams will guarantee that outreach of the health and wellbeing programmes and activities available are maximised via local partners and our local service directories, such as the [Stronger Sandwell website](#)¹⁷. This includes programmes set out in the Partners Legacy Plan, such as **Commonwealth Active Communities**¹⁸, where the Black Country is one of four areas who received funding from Sport England towards the creation of a wide range of opportunities that encourage local communities to get active, and support programmes of prescribing physical activity, in order to and reduce health inequalities. Active Black Country is leading the programme across Sandwell, Wolverhampton, Walsall and Dudley.

INSPIRE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

Creating an inspired, engaged, inclusive and connected community across Sandwell.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Sandwell has a thriving and growing community, where the diversity of residents is our greatest asset¹⁹. Furthermore, the West Midlands and Sandwell has a proud heritage of, and reputation for, welcoming newcomers across the Commonwealth.



of Sandwell residents identify as being disabled and limited



of residents identify their ethnic group as Asian (25.8%), Black (8.7%), Mixed (4.3%) or Other ethnic group (4.0%)

The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games was a 'Games for Everyone', and as per one of the Games-wide mission pillars, offered a unique opportunity to bring people across the Commonwealth, UK and individual communities together.

A legacy ambition for us, the Council, is to use the Games to create and provide lasting opportunities that empower local residents to come together to celebrate each other, their community, and what they have

¹⁷ Healty Sandwell, Stronger Sandwell Activity Finder, <https://www.healthysandwell.co.uk/strongersandwelldirectory/>

¹⁸ Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games: Our Legacy, page 33, https://resources.cwg-qbr.pulselive.com/qbr-commonwealth-games/document/2022/07/12/a37f0633-361d-49b1-9cca-d25043dcccff8/Birmingham-2022_Our_Legacy.pdf

¹⁹ ONS Census 2021, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/Eo8000028/>



in common. This will help accelerate, amplify, and strengthen community cohesion, inclusion, and pride, but also raise our residents' aspirations beyond just where they live.

Legacy activities and objectives

Our teams have developed and committed to **3 key objectives** to help “create an inspired, engaged, inclusive and connected community across Sandwell” as part as their Commonwealth Games legacy, aligning closely with Games-wide the 'bring people together' mission pillar.

WHAT ARE OUR OBJECTIVES?

- 1) **Create and promote sustainable volunteering opportunities**
- 2) **Support Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) to raise the profile of “Let’s Go” website as the place where volunteering opportunities are made available to residents**
- 3) **Creating opportunities to get local community and residents involved at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre**

A full description of the three objectives, and an update as of April 2023, is provided in the plan’s appendix; with a summary of the key supporting partner and activities that have happened and are ongoing to date provided in the pages to follow.

HOW WILL WE ENSURE SUCCESS?

Key to our work in the run up to, and during the Games was an endeavour to get as many Sandwell residents as possible engaged and involved in the series of activities we had going on across the borough.

- Games Cultural Programme
- Live Festival Sites, including Sandwell Festival Site at Sandwell Valley
- Queens Baton Relay
- Black Country Ambassador Programme
- Games-related volunteering opportunities
- Wider consultation work and community programmes
- General spectatorship and viewership of the Games and sporting events
- Celebrate Sandwell website

Queen’s Baton Relay

The Queen’s Baton Relay is the long-standing traditional ‘curtain raiser’ to the Commonwealth Games. In the run up to the Games it travelled approximately 87k miles, visits 72 national territories over 294 days. In England alone, it visited 180 cities, towns and villages, involving 2,022 baton bearers.

The baton came to Sandwell on Monday 25th July 2022, and provided an opportunity for Sandwell residents across all ages and backgrounds to come together to celebrate our rich, diverse culture and showcase the best of the borough. Sandwell had around 120 baton bearers, which included many of our residents, each with their own backgrounds and stories. Celebratory events for the community held in Oldbury, Wednesbury, Tipton, Cradley Heath, Bearwood and West Bromwich.²⁰

²⁰ <https://celebratesandwell.com/the-queens-baton-comes-to-sandwell-what-an-incredible-day/>



Shine a Light Festival

Sandwell was a proud host of one of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games festivals with the Sandwell Shine a Light Festival. The festival provided a full programme of cultural events and activities in the build-up to and during the Games, and aimed to 'Shine a Light' on Sandwell's rich and diverse culture and showcase the best of arts, sports, culture and heritage, from all ages, backgrounds, and parts of the community.



Events started in April 2022 and took place in each of Sandwell's six towns with activities that aimed to engage local groups and residents including, live performances, daily entertainment activities, a food festival, live streaming of the action at the Commonwealth Games. The festival ended with a two week Shine a Light Festival at Sandwell Valley in July and August.

"The Games gave us a huge opportunity to showcase the borough and the Aquatic Centre to visitors. It also gave an opportunity for residents to feel part of something much bigger across the whole region, particularly if they visited the activities in central Birmingham."

Heather Chinner, Neighbourhoods, Sandwell Council

Our focus for establishing a post-Games legacy has been, and will continue to be, revolved around creating a continued and sustained community engagement in the programmes and initiatives across the borough, but in particular to those that come with the new Aquatics Centre. It's important for local community groups and residents to feel that they have a world class centre and surrounding area that they can not only be proud of, but confident and comfortable using for physical activity, recreation, and social activities.

- **Planning and design of the centre** - Members of our community were involved in consultations in the planning and design phase to understand their local requirements for the Aquatics Centre legacy mode. This led to the understanding of the need to incorporate women's only swimming



sessions and a women’s only gym in the centre design and scheduling, and also to tackle lower levels of swimming attainment across the borough as a key legacy objective.

- **Community activity and event scheduling** - Internal teams within the council are working collaboratively to integrate community activities and events into the centre’s scheduling and day-to-day operations. The aim is to achieve a ‘centre for all of Sandwell’ and provide opportunities for people who would not otherwise use the centre to get involved, such as certain community groups and local schools.
- **Re-igniting the volunteer pool** - We are also working to ensure the opportunity to volunteer in the local community is sustained post-Games. The opening of the new Aquatics Centre offers a unique opportunity to re-ignite and re-engage the local community’s energy and enthusiasm for volunteering that can often plateau following a major event.

Going forward, we will ensure that training and learning opportunities are provided to our communities as part of the wider support provided to upskill and improve confidence in individuals, and to encourage participation in community activities. We will also work closely with our partners to ensure we do not lose the numerous volunteers gained across Sandwell over Games-time, and increase the available sustainable volunteering opportunities for residents and advertise and measure these opportunities. For example, we have teamed up with **One Million Mentors**²¹, a community-based mentoring system, who will work to connect young people across Sandwell with local volunteers who will act as mentors working to get them engaged in opportunities across the local community, but also into curriculum at Sandwell College, jobs and careers.

We will use the Aquatics Centre opening as an opportunity to re-ignite engagement with, and continuing to promote our websites that aim to create a central space that both advertises volunteering opportunities across the borough, such as the “Let’s Go” website, and celebrates the successes of our residents, such as ‘Celebrating Sandwell’.

Celebrate Sandwell Website

We set up the ‘[Celebrate Sandwell](#) – a Bostin Place with Bostin People’ website, to celebrate the people of Sandwell, their achievements, and the work going on across the borough in the run up to the 2022 Commonwealth Games; but also to highlight how our staff and residents have supported each other through difficult times over the past couple of years and COVID-19 pandemic.



Partnership Working

One of our primary partners in delivery of a lasting legacy and impact for the local community from the Games is the **SCVO**.

SCVO is a charitable organisation who lead engagement with local partners and stakeholders to supporting Sandwell’s Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), how they respond to local needs, and promote voluntary and community participation, so Sandwell becomes a better place for all.



Their key aims include to:

- Bring together local voluntary and community groups to promote and develop the effectiveness of local voluntary action.

²¹ One Million Mentors, <https://onemillionmentors.org.uk/>



- Raise the quality of and provide a wide range of services, information, advice and support to the voluntary and community sector.
- Act as a channel for local groups to voice their opinions on issues and policy.
- Identify real needs across Sandwell and develop services/initiatives to meet these needs.

Their roles in the run up to the Games included to:

- Support us, Sandwell Council, with the development and monitoring of the 'Let's Go' website, aiming to advertise, encourage and communicate Games-related volunteering opportunities.
- Run Commonwealth briefing events to provide information for people from local VCS organisations around Games-related events and the Aquatics Centre. The events in May 2019 and September 2021 had over 80 attendees, and were well received by attendees, who found sessions 'informative, inspiring, and highlighted exciting opportunities'.

As part of their Vision 2030 Grants Programme, SCVO also awarded a series of funding in 2022 to local groups and projects aiming to support Commonwealth Games-related activities, and make Sandwell a thriving, optimistic and resilient community. Projects included:

- a boxing club that linked with the local football and rugby club to provide community days for local sports people;
- a cricket project with a focus on increasing access for women;
- and a project focusing on disability sports.

Since the Games in summer 2022, SCVO has supported the promotion of the new Aquatics Centre, stimulating conversations with members of the community to use and engage with the centre, aiming to ensure the impact of the facilities are felt across the entire population of Sandwell, not just in higher socio-economic groups.

Another key focus area for SCVO is to address health inequalities and get people active across the borough. Their [Route2Wellbeing](#) community health portal aims to help connect the VCS with members of the public and local health professionals and services, and will be used to help establish a health and wellbeing legacy for the Aquatics Centre in delivering against the local health and social prescribing objectives.

"SCVO are very keen to ensure that Sandwell residents fully utilise the opportunities around the Sandwell Aquatic Centre, and in particular that all members of the community are able to equally access, utilise and benefit from the facilities within the Centre. We know that there was, prior to the Commonwealth Games, a good deal of interest from a wide range of Sandwell charities and voluntary groups to support engagement with the Aquatic Centre, and we believe that interest and appetite to support wide community usage of the Centre still remains.

SCVO are keen to work with Sandwell Council to convene discussions with our local Sector on how we engage our local communities fully and inclusively to ensure the legacy aims are achieved for our residents. SCVO remain committed to working with Sandwell Council and our local voluntary and community organisations to ensure we make the greatest impact we can from the Commonwealth Games and to develop a strong legacy of improved activity, health and wellbeing for Sandwell residents."



Mark Davis, CEO, SCVO

SUPPORT GROWTH IN BUSINESS, TOURISM AND REPUTATION

Provide opportunities for local residents and businesses to thrive and succeed, and promote the borough as a place to visit, live and invest.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Games provides us with a unique and important opportunity to develop the borough and wider area, bringing significant investment, driving long-term economic benefit, providing employment and business, and promoting trade and tourism.

Sandwell has a reasonably thriving economy; however, this doesn't always transfer into people's wages and employment. Our borough has pockets of high deprivation, worklessness and poverty, which is driven by low wages and qualification attainment at all levels. According to the latest 2021 Census data, a high percentage of our residents are economically inactive²²; and our town's also have long term patterns of 'NEET hot-spots', where youths are neither in employment nor education or training.

²² ONS Census 2021, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/Eo8000028/>



of residents are economically inactive

Joint largest percentage rise of



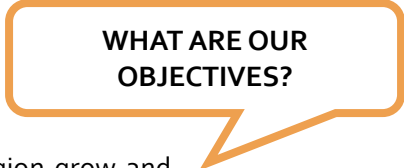
in the proportion of people who were economically inactive because they were looking after their family or home (5.3% in 2011 to 7.6% in 2021)

Our legacy ambitions as part of the Games are therefore to work with facility operators, construction companies and educational establishments to create a unique plan for Sandwell that aims to ensure more sustainable employment opportunities are available across the borough and increase skill attainment in our local residents. This will help them compete for, retain, and have access to, better jobs; but also ensure we support and provide opportunities to local businesses. This will help close the gap regionally, improve our employment rates, support local businesses; and importantly, ensure our value from the Games is retained within the Sandwell community.

Equally, one of our key aims is to raise the profile of Sandwell and the recognition we receive as a borough on a wider stage – the Games presents a significant opportunity to do this. This is not only to grow tourism in the borough, and the associated impact on local business, visitor spend and trade; but to strengthen Sandwell’s identity and promote our capabilities of hosting major events on the national and international scale, for example future Olympic trials and national training camps at the Aquatics Centre. We live in a small borough that falls in the shadow of Birmingham. The Games and opening of the new Aquatics Centre in legacy mode will be used establish our Sandwell brand, put us in the spotlight, and showcase and market the borough.

Legacy activities and objectives

We have a clear ambition to deliver a lasting legacy relating to the promotion of business and tourism in Sandwell, and inspire our future generation of businesses and residents to succeed. This directly aligns with three out of the five pillars of the Games-wide legacy mission in ‘being a catalyst for change’, ‘helping the region grow and succeed’, and ‘putting us on the global stage’. Our service area leads within the council have developed the following **6 key objectives** and promises to ensure sustainable progress is made:



- 1) Ensure the construction of the Aquatics facility creates more jobs, apprenticeships, and training opportunities
- 2) Link contractors, supply chain and job/training opportunities to educational establishments and young people
- 3) Ensure supply chain opportunities go to local Sandwell businesses
- 4) In legacy mode work with the facility operator to employ a workforce to support the operation of the Aquatics Centre
- 5) Improve the local infrastructure and transport networks, ensuring there is investment in the local area to improve paths and roads, making the Sandwell Aquatics Centre more accessible
- 6) Launch a new “Visit Sandwell” website



As with above sections, a full description of the six objectives, and an update as of April 2023 is provided in the plan’s appendix; with a summary of some of the main pieces of work that have taken/ are taking place, and the key delivery partner provided in the pages below.

Partnership working

We have worked on a range of programmes and initiatives to ensure our local residents and businesses are connected to the right opportunities and gain equal success out of the Games. Key to facilitating this was by creating a close working relationship and partnership with the contractors working on the build of the Aquatics Centre, **Wates**, and the wider supply chain. The fact that Wates completed the initial Phase 1 of the world-class facility two weeks early and to budget, is testament to the relationships built, including with us at Sandwell Council, with their expertise and proactive approach being crucial throughout.



The development has had, and is having, massive regenerative effects on the Sandwell area and development of social value. For example:

- Local labour and spend was prioritised – £41m of orders were within 10 miles
- £571k was spent on social enterprises
- 152, 19+ year old adults were employed, including 62 from BAME groups
- 4 volunteer weeks were held, alongside numerous projects and over 100 workshops for the local community
- £20k+ was raised for local charities

As part of Wates’ contractual requirements, a series of KPIs relating to social value and local impact were monitored throughout construction. Findings from their end of 2022 report highlighted many KPIs exceeded the proposed targets set – with some examples provided overleaf.

KPI	Proposed	Actual
Local spend (within 10 miles)	20%	58%
Local spend (within 20 miles)	40%	67%
Local labour (within 10 miles)	20%	28%
Local labour (within 20 miles)	40%	52%
Number of educational support activities	20	28
Number of apprentices	18	36
Number of hours dedicated to supporting students with T Levels	16	44



An example of local impact on SME businesses was Wates' work with APiCUK – a commercial glazing business supplying curtain walling and doors for the construction. Established in 2006, it's based 1.5 miles from the project with over 90% of employees based in Sandwell. Because of this project, they expanded their workforce (originally 80 employees), including two new Sandwell apprentices.

In addition, Wates delivered the project using a range of sustainable and environmentally friendly methods, with a biodiversity net gain of 12%, and saved significant carbon through a range of pre-manufacturing. In the middle of a residential area, the scheme also ensured minimal noise pollution and traffic impact during construction and was developed through a structured and collaborative process engaging the entire design team, Sandwell Council and local residents.

Ultimately, despite being faced with scrutiny and significant challenges, Wates not only rose to the challenge but have delivered a new world-class centre for Sandwell that is above and beyond expectations.



The following links share videos of the [refurbished centre for the 2022 Games²³](#), and scheme's [impact on the community and social value²⁴](#).

"Throughout my career with Sport England I have delivered a large number of leisure projects across the country, and I am proud to say that the design and construction of Sandwell Aquatic Centre is of the highest quality and sets a new standard, which we will seek to achieve on other projects where Sport England are a stakeholder throughout the country."

... It is clear that they took a lot of pride in the delivery of this project and this will go on to benefit Sandwell Borough Council and the local community in the coming years, not only as we approach the Commonwealth Games 2022 but well into the future, with the centre leaving a lasting legacy for participation in sport and exercise at a local level, training local talent and further major events in what will be seen as a world-class facility."

Charles Johnson, Production Director, Sport England

²³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHxyyfrKnE4>

²⁴ <https://vimeo.com/826267974?share=copy>



Case Study: A local success story – From student to employee

Plunkett's (a local sub-contractor who were responsible for tiling the Aquatics Centre pools) offered to do a virtual presentation with Sandwell College Tiling students, arranged by Wates and Think Sandwell. The students attended virtually on Microsoft Teams and had an extensive virtual tour of the project and the tiling work that would be carried out on site at the Aquatics Centre. The students were then offered the opportunity to apply for paid work experience placements with Wates, and were put through CSCS training by Sandwell College. Howard and Kye, two local residents and Sandwell College students passed their CSCS and were invited to do the site experience, where they gained valuable experience, skills and knowledge. As a result of their hard work and efforts they were included in the first tile ceremony for the main pool. Howard then continued on with Plunkett's to complete paid work experience until the end of the project. Following this, Think Sandwell worked with Howard to contact local tiling employers, and was offered a paid full-time role at a construction company he has now been working at for over 5 months.



In order to extend this initial success, we will continue to work with Wates and future contractors to access supply chain (first and second tier) employment, work experience, placement and skill development opportunities. Our Employment and Skills team will also ensure schools, educational establishments and young people are aware of the job/training opportunities that they can apply for, and are supported in their applications, for example with interview techniques and skills. Aiming to upskill Sandwell residents, and get more residents in employment as a consequence.

**HOW WILL WE
ENSURE SUCCESS?**

Transport and infrastructure improvements

It's important the development of the Aquatics Centre is complemented by wider regeneration improvements to infrastructure in the area. Our teams have been working to ensure local networks and transport is made accessible and inclusive to support not only operations of the Centre over Games-time,

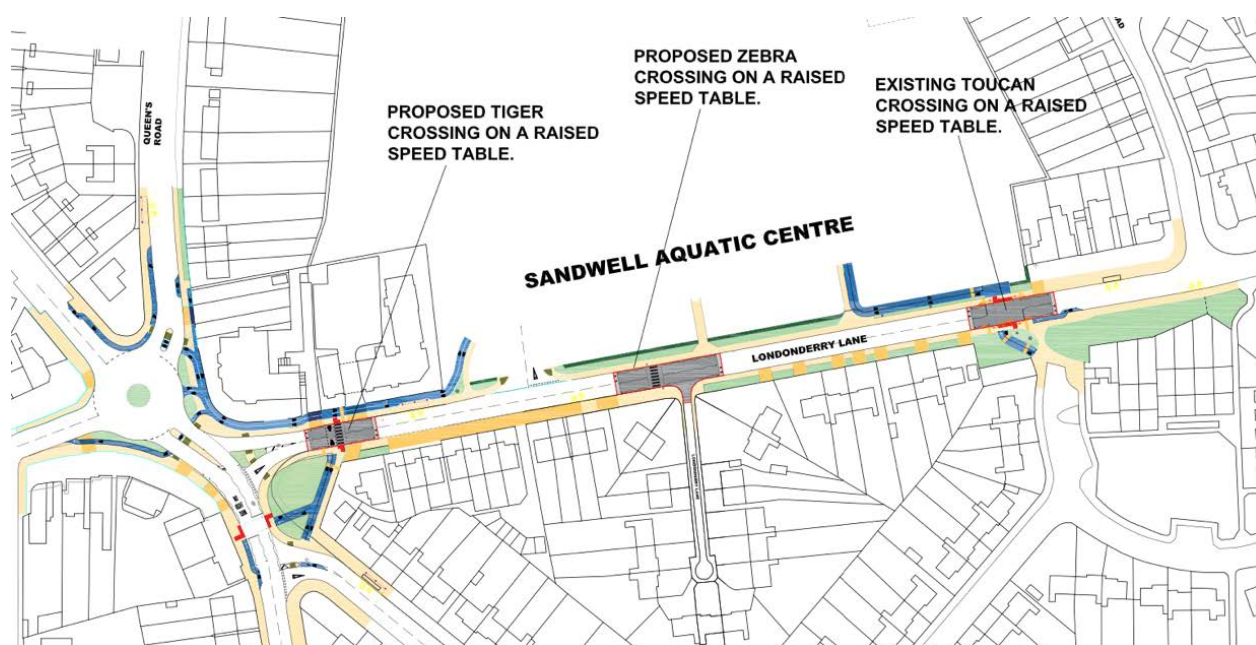


but for hosting of other major events in the future. Improvements also looked to minimise disruption to the area, improve the local impact on the environment, and promote and encourage active travel by residents.

Infrastructure development projects in the run up to the Games, and in addition to the Sandwell Aquatics Centre included:

- A segregated cycle route linking two key railway stations with Smethwick High Street.
- Upgrades and traffic signal improvements to the principal pedestrian routes, including those linking the Aquatics Centre and the station.
- Replacement of a mini roundabout with traffic signals and dedicated pedestrian facilities.
- Toucan crossing (pedestrian and cycle) immediately outside the Aquatics Centre.

Additional works are planned to follow the opening of the Aquatics Centre in July 2023 which include highway alterations that enable dedicated pedestrian and cycle facilities which link directly to the SAC.



Going forward, we aim to:

- Increase our engagement with the local community about upcoming works and traffic delays which could cause inconvenience
- Communicate the benefits of active travel, encouraging a culture shift towards behavioural changes which increase active travel
- Successfully deliver the planned highway infrastructure improvements

Furthermore, we will continue to enhance the “[Visit Sandwell](https://www.visitsandwell.com/)” website²⁵, adding an accommodation and event booking facility. This will ensure visitors are able to easily book accommodation and events, ensuring they are making use of local accommodation and hospitality businesses, therefore increasing their income and leading to more local inclusive growth. Funding has already been identified to make this a reality. We will set up a working group who will populate this website, opening opportunities up to external stakeholders and partners.



²⁵ <https://www.visitsandwell.com/>



Other key programmes of work

While there were no Commonwealth-Games specific projects, we worked with our wider partners across the Black Country and utilised available funding from other ongoing projects to provide jobs and skills support to local residents in the run up to the Games and deliver against their legacy objectives. These included:

- **Black Country Impact Programme** - a £51million scheme part funded by the National Lottery Community Fund that provides bespoke training opportunities to break down barriers for and support young adults (aged 16-19 years) in Sandwell (and the wider West Midlands area) develop the skills, gain qualifications, and self-confidence they need to get into work.
- **Kickstart Scheme** – A programme funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, providing funding to employers to create new 6-month job placements for young professionals aged 16-24 years on Universal Credit, who are otherwise at risk of long-term unemployment.

Following the announcement of the £70m **Commonwealth Games Legacy Enhancement Fund (CWGLEF)**, we are currently working to secure around £800k in funding to enhance our current offer and ensure the legacy of providing jobs and skill support to our local residents is sustained in the years post Games. Our work will aim to specifically target the high proportion of economically inactive people in Sandwell and those most in need, including:

- People aged 16-24 years old;
- those being made redundant;
- those living in the most deprived wards;
- people living with disabilities,
- mental and long-term health conditions;
- care providers;
- and people aged 50+.

Our proposed involvement is to deliver three face to face and online delivery projects including:

- 1) Providing local targeted jobs support (youth, older unemployment)
- 2) A Regional Careers Programme for 14–19-year-olds
- 3) A Paid Work Placement Programme (particularly for harder to help individuals, carers or youth justice).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Key to the success of any long-term investment and establishing a strong legacy is the monitoring of impact over time. This will not only enable us to make sure we achieve the actions we set out in this plan but also ensure lessons can be learned for the hosting of future major sporting and cultural events and regeneration projects in the borough.



For each of our legacy pillars, an initial set of quantifiable indicators have been developed which will support us in monitoring and measuring impact and change before, during, and after the Games can. We will work to continually develop these indicators for our own internal monitoring and assessment of the legacy the Games has had within the borough.



IMPROVE HEALTH, WELLBEING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- *Membership numbers at Sandwell Aquatic Centre*
- *Participant numbers on swimming, diving and health-led programmes, including by priority groups*
- *Percentage rise in physical activity of local residents*
 - *Number of referrals/ signposting to social prescribing link workers*
- *Delivery of material and number of staff accessing training*
- *Number with of local staff and residents formal sport and/or health qualifications*
- *Number of improved facilities to support health, wellbeing and physical activity*



INSPIRE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

- *Engagement with community websites*
 - *Number of community projects, including percentage in deprived wards*
- *Attendance at community sessions and programmes, including at those run at the Aquatics Centre, and by local residents and schools*
 - *Number of volunteers supporting with community programmes and events, including those at the Aquatics Centre, and of local residents*



SUPPORT GROWTH IN BUSINESS, TOURISM AND REPUTATION

- *Change in national statistics (including employment rate, deprivation rankings, local cultural index score, local spend)*
 - *Change in social value indicators*
- *Number of local residents with formal qualifications*
- *Attendance at community jobs and skills projects, including by youth NEET*
- *Number of competitions and events hosted, both at the Aquatics Centre and within the wider borough*
- *Number of new partnerships and relationships established*

Beyond our own evaluation, DCMS have commissioned an independent evaluation of the full breadth of activity and associated legacy programmes that are being delivered as part of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, of which we are contributing data towards. The evaluation aims to answer the overall research question of: *To what extent has the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games delivered the 'Games for Everyone' and created a positive impact and legacy for Birmingham, the West Midlands and the UK?*



In addition, there are a series of research questions that specially focus on evaluating the impact of the Games against each of the five Games-wide legacy mission pillars:

- *To what extent has the Games brought local people together, strengthening community cohesion, inclusion, and creative and cultural participation, including for priority groups?*
- *To what extent has the Games supported a reduction in physical inactivity and improved mental wellbeing, particularly within targeted communities?*
- *To what extent has the Games created social and economic impacts for Birmingham, the West Midlands and the UK particularly in terms of employment, skills, gross value added, trade, investment, and tourism?*
- *To what extent has the Games regenerated the region, with particular focus on Perry Barr, and created the systems to support long-term sustainability and accessibility improvements?*
- *To what extent has the Games contributed to a stronger global brand and positive image of Birmingham, the West Midlands, and the UK?*

An initial pre-Games report, and interim post-Games report has already been published, however the full breadth of short-term legacy impacts of delivering the Games events and wider legacy programme activity, will be evaluated as part of the one-year post Games phase report²⁶.

CONCLUSION

This plan has provided a summary of the activities we have had, and currently have ongoing across the borough throughout 2022 and beyond the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. It establishes our legacy which will consolidate the positive economic, social, health and reputational benefits that being involved in the Games generates. Since the start, our focus and driving force for a Games legacy has

²⁶ UK Government, DCMS, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-birmingham-2022-commonwealth-games-interim-evaluation-report>



always been on our local residents – what our residents want, need, and inspiring residents to further themselves. That’s why all our work was approached with a legacy and resident first mindset. The legacy objectives were established in the run up to the Games by individual service area leads and teams within the council, and all link closely to the overall Games-wide ambitions and mission pillars.

In order to maximise opportunities across the borough, secure benefits for Sandwell residents, and capitalise on not only the success of the Games but the opportunities the new Aquatics Centre brings, it is imperative we continuously review the progress against our legacy objectives and services provided. Indeed, evaluating and monitoring against our objectives is critical to this plan’s success, with it being fundamental to have quantifiable measuring mechanism in place for the future. Our outlined assessment indicators will be monitored and developed going forward, with this plan setting out a clear framework to track progression and success in the future. We are determined to ensure the legacy does not stop with the end of the Games. Our ongoing work and engagement will ensure a positive impact from the Games and set the expectations for hosting other major events in their borough in the future. However, this impact will be reliant on strong relationships and collaboration between us and our partnership organisations. Close working will establish an environment for continued success in future collaborations, engagement and activity in Sandwell.

The success of our team, alongside the wider Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games delivery team and organising committee, in completing construction and preparation of the Games on time, to budget and with endless success stories must be celebrated. With numerous factors becoming potential barriers to delivery and legacy, we have been resilient and flexible in overcoming these, ultimately enabling us to secure a healthy, active, inspired and prosperous Sandwell for many years to come, well and truly putting us on the map. Reflecting on the lasting legacy the Aquatics centre will bring for Sandwell, Kerrie Carmichael stated: *'it has well and truly put Sandwell on the map'*²⁷.



²⁷ Kerrie Carmichael, 11th February 2023, BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-birmingham-64608936>