

Sandwell Levelling up Partnership

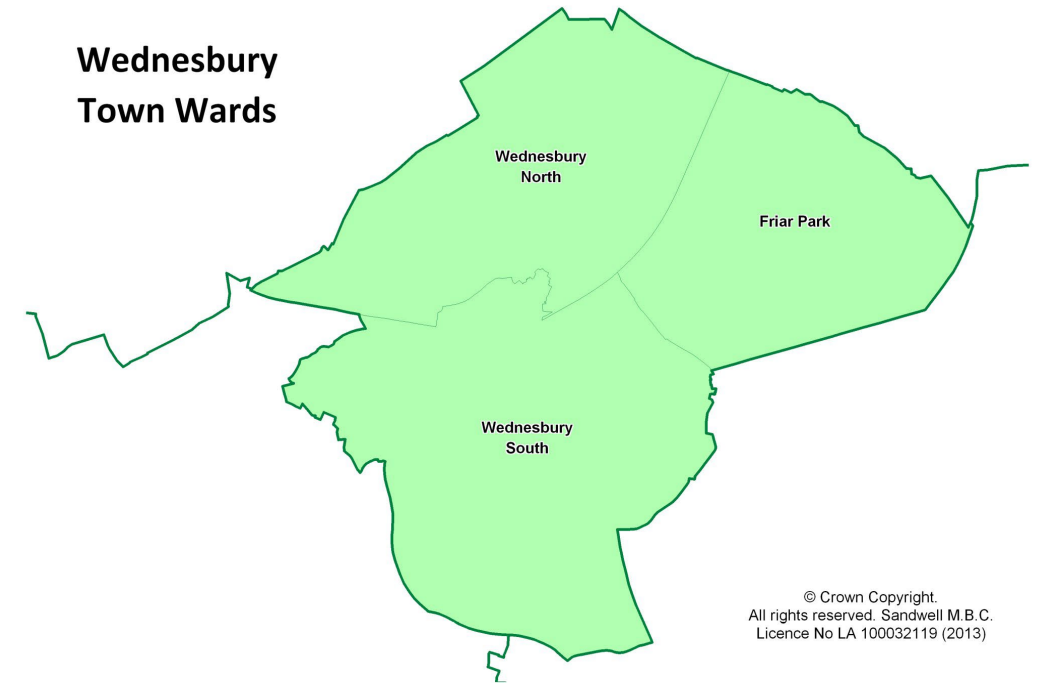
Wednesbury with a focus on Friar Park





Levelling up Challenges - Wednesbury with a focus on Friar Park

- Wednesbury suffers from high levels of **deprivation** and Friar Park is one of the most deprived wards in Sandwell
- Residents of Friar Park ward have **low healthy life expectancy** and **high levels of residents with no qualifications** (33% in Friar Park)
- Wednesbury has the highest proportion of residents who are **economically inactive** across Sandwell's Towns
- **Safety and perceptions of safety** are an issue for residents and young people
- **Large unmet housing need** across Sandwell – **land viability**. Largescale opportunity to deliver Friar Park Urban Village



Sandwell's exciting future





The LUP Opportunity: A unique partnership between Government and local stakeholders in Sandwell

In 2 years time, with the active support of stakeholders, the LUP will facilitate:

- Good quality housing in Friar Park and be en-route to delivering more
- Improvement to long-standing derelict land in Friar Park and create new green spaces
- Improved residents' perceptions of crime and safety through reducing crime, and strengthening partnerships to address ASB and crime issues into the future
- Improvements in residents' skills and attainment through increasing the skills offer to Wednesbury residents
- Better health outcomes through revitalised green spaces in Wednesbury linked to existing plans for a range of health interventions
- More capacity for community facilities to support a growing population





How we will measure our success - LUP Programme Outcome Measures

1. Number of new homes enabled
2. Resident satisfaction with their local area as a place to live
3. ha new open space enabled
4. Business vacancy rate in Wednesbury Town Centre/ Business Growth Measure / equiv.
5. Residents Perception of Crime and Antisocial behaviour
6. Recorded crime and ASB in Wednesbury
7. Number of nuisance bike reports in areas with new inhibitors installed
8. Quality score for green spaces
9. Skills/qualifications gained / equivalent measure
10. Numbers of participants in community activities / equivalent measure





Summary of LUP Interventions

	Summary	Output Measures
1. Friar Park Urban Village	Fund land remediation viability gap to deliver Friar Park Urban Village Scheme enabling c.630 new homes.	1. ha land remediated
2. Community Safety Scheme	Build on partnership work to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour by increasing the deterrents to crime and anti-social behaviour in Wednesbury. This will include installing new and upgrading CCTV infrastructure in Wednesbury Town Centre and Friar Park, providing deployable cameras to tackle fly-tipping across Wednesbury, implementing a radio link scheme, and installing nuisance bike inhibitors.	1. Number of new /upgraded cameras delivered 2. Business Radio Link Scheme Implemented 3. Number of locations with new inhibitors installed
3. Friar Park Millennium Centre Expansion	Extend the existing community centre in Friar Park to meet the demands from extended community (as a result of proposed development of Friar Park Urban Village) and enhance the skills delivery offer.	1. Sqm extension to Friar Park Millennium Centre 2. Amount of Library space created





Summary of LUP Interventions

	Summary	Output Measures
4. Wednesbury Town Centre Improvements	<p>Building on HAZ improvements to further enhance the public realm in Wednesbury Town Centre</p> <p>Following a masterplanning process, the project will enable long standing derelict sites to be improved.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Completion of Masterplan for Wednesbury Town Centre2. No. of problem sites-improved.3. Amount of public realm improvement
5. Greenspaces Improvements	<p>Enhancing 4 existing green spaces in Wednesbury to improve safety measures, quality scores, accessibility and provide additional activities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. m2 of footway lit with street lighting2. m2 footpath improvement works3. m2 planting / re-wilding4. number of organised sports pitch bookings (annually)





Intervention 1 – Friar Park Urban Village

This project will fund land remediation viability gap to deliver Friar Park Urban Village Scheme enabling c.360 new homes.



Friar Park Urban Village site is the most challenging brownfield site in the West Midlands.

With an agreed masterplan in place, the [Friar Park Urban Village scheme](#) is currently the largest Council-led residential development opportunity in the borough and the indicative proposals suggest that c.630 homes could be achieved on the site as well as significant areas of landscaping and open space.

The site is highly constrained and suffers not only from the low land values shared across other areas of Sandwell, but also acutely suffers from high levels of land remediation required to bring forward development. Primarily this is a result of the former uses of the site which included a former sewage works. Costs to remediate these works are significant.

The LUP presents an opportunity to bridge these viability issues through LUP funding and enable the Council and its partners to bring forward this major development.





Intervention 2 – Community Safety Scheme

This project will Build on partnership work to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour by increasing the deterrents to crime and anti-social behaviour in Wednesbury.

Perceptions of safety are an issue in Wednesbury with the lowest proportion of residents across all Sandwell Towns feeling unsafe at daytime, and more than 1/3 of Wednesbury residents feeling unsafe at night-time (Sandwell Residents Survey 2022). Assaults and thefts from shops and stores have been consistently the highest recorded offences in Wednesbury.

Resident feedback identified common themes of concerns around ASB and crime, including drug use and dealing, off-road bikes, more police presence/visibility, improved safety at the bus station, groups hanging around the streets. In the Young People's Corporate Plan a commitment has been made to have more CCTV cameras and to have detached youth workers in key public spaces to help young people feel safe. (Residents' Survey, SHAPE young people's survey, and specific engagement around crime and safety issues.

The project will include installing new and upgrading CCTV infrastructure in Wednesbury Town Centre and Friar Park, providing deployable cameras to tackle fly-tipping across Wednesbury, implementing a radio link scheme, and installing nuisance bike inhibitors.





Intervention 3 – Friar Park Millennium Centre Expansion

This project will extend the existing community centre in Friar Park to meet the demands from extended community (as a result of proposed development of Friar Park Urban Village) and enhance the skills delivery offer.

The Friar Park Millennium Centre currently provides a range of activities and facilities for local community use.

The proposed development of the Friar Park Urban Village means that the future capacity of the centre is likely to restrict its ability to meet extended community needs. This has been raised as a key concern amongst existing residents through the public consultation exercises undertaken in relation to the proposed development. In addition, key service providers have identified the potential to extend the existing services to meet existing and new demands from the community.

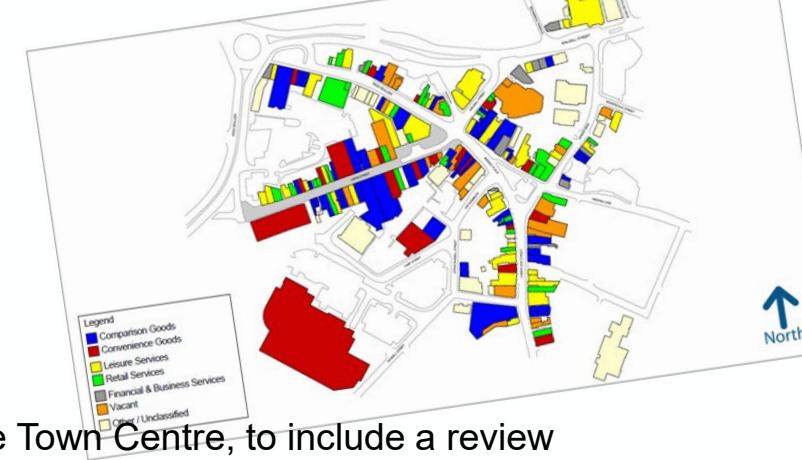
The aim would be to extend the Centre to accommodate a range of new facilities for community use, as well as the provision of a permanent library.





Intervention 4 – Wednesbury Town Centre Improvements

This project will build on the Heritage Action Zone improvements in the Town Centre to further enhance Wednesbury Town Centre.



Wednesbury Town Centre does not currently have a Masterplan in place. A strategic review of the Town Centre, to include a review of its current uses and future opportunities would provide a solid base for future intervention.

Wednesbury Town Centre is structured similar to a traditional market town centre, with a Market Place and Clock. A large Morrison's supermarket anchors the centre with traditional shops aligning the Town Centre pedestrian and highway networks.

The Town Centre has recently benefitted from public realm improvements and the relocation of an outdoor market to the traditional Market Place. However, this investment (Heritage Lottery Fund) was geographically constrained to the Conservation Area, which is a small area around the Clock Tower on Market Place. The appearance of Wednesbury Town Centre is also impacted by a number of long term derelict sites and some poor-quality buildings which are unoccupied.

One of the key strategic benefits of Wednesbury Town Centre is its connectivity; with a Bus Station in the centre, and a Metro Station a few minutes' walk away. Some improvements have already been implemented to improve the quality of the access arrangements from the Town to the Metro, including a new cycle way. However, the main route remains isolated and somewhat unwelcoming.

Intervention to improve this route via urban greening and other measures will be explored further (via a Masterplan). The Masterplan would also provide an urban realm strategy identifying the best locations for urban greening initiatives and pocket parks. Funding from the LUP would be used to implement the proposals in the masterplan.





Intervention 5 – Wednesbury Greenspaces Improvements

This project will enhance 4 existing green spaces in Wednesbury to improve safety measures, quality scores, accessibility and provide additional activities.

Much of the investment into Green Spaces within Sandwell has been focussed on the Main Town Parks. All of these Town-level sites have achieved the Green Flag award to highlight their quality and success.

Other green spaces in Sandwell have not seen similar investment and are lagging behind. Neighbourhood and local level green spaces, such as the ones identified for funding within this proposal serve the more deprived residents without daily access to travel to borough level parks.

This project will see a host of improvements across four Green Spaces with the lowest quality scores in Wednesbury (Hydes Road Playing Fields, Balls Hill Open Space, Wytnor Lane Open Space, Lakeside and Norbury Road Open Space).

This will bring physical and mental health benefits for residents by providing a better quality and improved access to green spaces. The green spaces will benefit from improved safety measures to improve safety and perceptions of ASB and safety in Wednesbury.

