

Over the last 2 years a range of improvements have been implemented across Sandwell Valley.

- a. Conservation and grounds maintenance improvements, particularly in the local nature reserves within the estate (funded through Covid funds).
- b. Changed the name of Sandwell Park Farm to Sandwell Valley Visitor Centre, as the building is no longer suitable for the care of animals.
- c. Removal of the main greenhouse within the Victorian style gardens, replaced with appropriate paving for events and activities within the walled garden (funded through Covid funds).
- d. Refurbishment of the traditional green house at the back of the walled gardens, to allow for education and outreach to take place using these facilities in future (funded by a Covid grant).
- e. Additional interpretation and leaning resources for visitors to the Victorian Garden, including its history, Victorian Garden methods, and conservation (funded through UKSPF and Covid Funds).
- f. Introduction of a Rabbit Village to the Victorian Gardens, featuring houses representing Sandwell Towns and housing rescued rabbits (Funded through Invest to Save).
- g. The addition of a new Farm Trail, doubling the size of the farm and increasing dwell time (Funded through UKSPF).
- h. The addition of four new catering facilities: The Wagon, Farm Snack Shack, Adventure Cabin, and Dartmouth Park Café (funded through Invest to Save).
- i. Improvements to the catering offer, with a new catering and retail manager, improved menu options, and barista style coffee.
- j. Two new dedicated websites: www.sandwellvalley.com and www.forgemillfarm.com.
- k. New premium event offers, including Bedtime at the Farm, Evening Events at the Farm, events for dog lovers, and the securing of Digbeth Dining Club at Sandwell Valley.
- l. The addition of a new events field at Forge Mill Farm, for peak days and summer (funded through UKSPF).
- m. The development of a weddings business plan, with the support of consultants. This has resulted in an improved wedding offer which now includes Sandwell Valley as a wedding destination (funded through Invest to Save).
- n. The introduction of digital systems, including an Electronic Point of Sale system to improve stock controls and sales, and a digital rota system.
- o. The introduction of a bank staff model to increase the number of trained seasonal staff for peak days and evenings.
- p. The recruitment of a marketing officer, to focus on visitor services.
- q. The building of a new play and education barn and café at Forge Mill Farm, funded through UKSPF and Covid Grants (due to open in summer 2024).
- r. The introduction of a new education and outreach team, estimated to reach over 8,000 students in 23/24 and on track to achieve full cost recover in three years.