

thinkSandwell



Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies Index

Sandwell has grown from strength to strength, and the borough we see today is vastly different from what we witnessed just a decade ago. In order to continue showcasing Sandwell's business opportunity and talent, we have launched an annual *Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies Index*.

This index celebrates the success of Sandwell's fastest growing companies and clearly demonstrates Sandwell's strength in the manufacturing, construction and automotive sectors. These key sectors are the UK's engine for growth and Sandwell plays a vital, national role in growing these key, traditional sectors.

We are proud of the support we offer to all businesses within Sandwell as well as those looking to relocate to the borough.

To find out who is on the Top 50 index and what the campaign means for Sandwell and its business have a look on our [website](#) and download a copy and watch the accompanying video.

Combined Authority launched this month

THE newly founded West Midlands Combined Authority has launched a statement of intent.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) says it has plans to become an economic powerhouse and attract investment, increase productivity and create thousands of jobs for the region.

The WMCA will see Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, **Sandwell**, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton councils working together with neighbouring district and county councils and the three local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) covering the Black Country, Coventry and Warwickshire and Greater Birmingham and Solihull.

[Read more](#)





West Midlands Virtual Hospital wins Construction Industry Awards

After winning the 'Best BIM (Building Information Modelling) Initiative of the Year' category at this year's Construction News Awards, we are now the proud winners of two more major industry awards for the West Midlands Virtual Hospital (WMVH) at the *Celebrating Constructing Excellence Awards (West Midlands) 2015* on 10 July – we won the 'Innovation' category and 'Client of the Year'.

The *Celebrating Constructing Excellence Awards (West Midlands)* celebrate best practice in the built environment industry in the West Midlands and was held at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Birmingham.

Following this double award win, we now progress through to the *Constructing Excellence Awards* national finals. The annual ceremony is taking place on 23 October 2015 in London and is one of the most coveted awards in the construction profession.

It has been an excellent year for the WMVH and we will be officially launching the site after the summer but have a look at the [holding pages](#) while you wait.

You can read the full stories about our awards on [Think Sandwell](#).

Access To Research Support - University of Birmingham

Every year University of Birmingham runs a student placement programme for their top final year geography students. The placements are organised around geography research topics. The idea being that the organisation hosting a placement can specify a bespoke piece of research they would like undertaken and, in return for conducting the research, the student receives a work experience opportunity they can put on their CV. The students have a total of 20 days they can commit to their placement over a 10-week period that will run from early January 2016 to late March 2016.

In general the type of research the students are well placed to undertake includes:

- Neighbourhood or resource mapping.
- Community or user consultation.
- Project/impact evaluation.
- Project needs analysis/feasibility studies.
- Finding and evaluating good practice case studies.

If you are interested in finding out more please get in [touch](#).



Is your business part of the food industry?

The Walter Smith Employer Leadership Project (WS-ELP) enables SME businesses to access food industry training that is designed and led by employers, for employers with up to 70% Government co-investment.

The project is supported by a team of highly qualified food industry training and development specialist advisors and providers across the UK.

From now until March 2017 businesses can receive; personalised training, accredited and non-accredited training, augmentation of existing apprenticeships, traineeships and support in recruitment of apprentices and trainees.

To find out how you can access this training log on to the [Walter Smith site](#).

Six Sandwell Projects Win at 2015 West Midlands 'Built in Quality' Awards

Having provided developers with Building Regulations support our Building Consultancy team nominated local projects for various awards at this year's 'Built in Quality' Awards.

The successful Sandwell projects were judged on a range of criteria and won in 6 categories, giving an excellent example of the diverse range of developments within Sandwell and the types of projects that the Building Consultancy team can support with our vast range of skills, technical expertise and experience:

The winning projects were:

- Sandwell Central Sixth, West Bromwich – Education, Refurbishment
- West Bromwich Leisure Centre - Leisure
- United Living Group, West Bromwich – Mixed Residential
- The Lighthouse Project, West Bromwich – Healthcare, Refurbishment
- Victoria Works, Tipton – Domestic, Renovation and Restoration
- Shireland Collegiate Academy, Smethwick – Education, Academy

These exemplar projects will now go forward to be judged against Shropshire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire's winning projects for the *Local Authority Building Control's* regional awards.

Read the full story about the awards on the council [website](#).

Events

Would you like to learn more about finance, sales, social media or business start-ups? Or how about doing networking with likeminded business people.

Have a look at the [events](#) that are going on around the Black Country. We advertise on behalf of our partners, The Black Country Chamber of Commerce, The Black Country Growth Hub, Manufacturing Advisory Service amongst others and hope that these may be of interest to you and your business.



Sandwell Business Mentors

Will you lend a hand to individuals setting up new social ventures in Sandwell?

Sandwell Council, UnLtd and SWEDA have come together to offer financial and mentoring support to local social entrepreneurs in **the Sandwell Social Entrepreneur award** programme.

These entrepreneurs have uncovered issues and problems affecting residents in Sandwell wishing to start-up a business or social enterprise and have proposed innovative ways of providing solutions.

These committed, passionate people have won cash awards to start these enterprises and now need further support from the local business community.

If you or your colleagues/employees are interested in becoming a mentor in the programme we want to hear from you.

We will provide some training and match you to an award winner. You decide what level of support and expertise you can offer and for how long.

Please [get in touch](#) for further information.



Facing the Future together

You may have already contributed to, or heard about Sandwell Council's Facing the Future (FtF) programme which is attempting to tackle the current, ongoing period of austerity in Local Government and the Public Sector as a whole.

On Thursday 1 October Sandwell Council's Chief Executive, Jan Britton, is hosting an external stakeholders event to highlight some of the key progress made over the past 12 months, further challenges that lie ahead and seek the views of partner organisations, businesses and individuals who have an interest in the council and the way it delivers its services. We need your input as this could mean a very different landscape for the council of the future.

If you would like further details about this event please [get in touch](#)

About the newsletter

Think Sandwell and our teams offer a range of support and advice. We also work with a wide range of partners to ensure that we are able to provide you with the information that you need to be able to do business in Sandwell.

We will continue to send out a newsletter to keep you up-to-date with what is happening throughout the business community within the borough.

For more details visit the [website](#) or call the team on our new number 0121 569 2121



www.thinksandwell.com