



### ...And Another Happy Customer For Valescapes

Valescapes have successfully completed yet another transformation of a garden with a very happy customer.

Castle Vale resident Sheila Arthurs first saw an advert for Valescapes in the Vale Mail.

"I noticed the advert and saw that Valescapes were local and supported by Merlin Venture, a well known and established company on Castle Vale. I felt safer with this option as there are so many cowboys about now!" Sheila Arthurs.

Sheila had several large jobs done by Valescapes as she wanted a low maintenance garden including the front garden being gravelled, a large flower bed grassed over in the back garden and an overgrown area being tidied up.

"Ian (Valescapes Manager) listened to my needs and understood what I wanted. He made several suggestions which ending up working really well. I am extremely pleased with the service I received from Valescapes. The lads were pleasant and on time and **nothing was too much trouble for them.** I have recommended them already. The service was well worth it!" Sheila Arthurs.

**If you would like a free quote on how Valescapes can transform your garden, call Joanne between 9am and 1pm Monday to Friday on 0121 776 8880**

### Local Events Update

#### Party In The Park

Heavy showers kept some residents away but hundreds of people went to Castle Vale's Centre 8 Park to enjoy the entertainment at 'Party in the Park'.

Castle Vale's 14th carnival welcomed everybody with live music, food stalls, donkey rides and dance shows from the cheerleaders, the Astral Youth Dancers, Goldstars and Dream Supreme.

Merlins Jobs Bus had a few visitors jump on board to find out about the latest vacancies, training courses and places to job search.

If you would like help looking for work, training or even setting up your own business, **call the JETS team on 0121 747 2200.**

#### Childcare Roadshow



Between heavy downfalls, Erdington residents and shoppers couldn't help but stop and look at what was going on outside the Co-Op on Erdington High Street! On Friday 11th July Merlin Venture teamed up with Birmingham City Council for the 'Childcare Roadshow.' With Merlin's brightly coloured Jobs Bus welcoming people on board to register for help with job searching and information on Tiggy Winkles and the Council's orange, cuddly friend Jaffa, children and adults alike were flocking around to see what was going on!

For information on how Merlin can help you with jobs and/or childcare, call the JETS team today on 0121 747 2200.

### Contact Information

If you would like any more information about Merlin Venture and any of the services we have to offer please contact us via:

Email: [gemma@merlinventure.co.uk](mailto:gemma@merlinventure.co.uk)  
Tel: 0121 776 8880  
Fax: 0121 776 6141  
Website: [www.merlinventure.co.uk](http://www.merlinventure.co.uk)

### Merlin Says Goodbye

Now that Merlin's Landlords have decided to carry out all site management duties themselves, they have terminated our contract to provide reception and other admin services to the other tenants. This has unfortunately resulted in the redundancy of Hazel Hall who leaves us after 8 years loyal service to Merlin and the other tenants at the Enterprise Park. Management and Staff at Merlin Venture wish Hazel well in whatever she chooses to do.

**Good Luck and Thank You**



### Tiggy Winkles Offers!

With many new parents starting their children at Tiggy Winkles in September, the nursery has lots of offers as a way of saying *welcome* including:

- Welcome pack including a Tiggy Winkles bag
- £100 worth of gift vouchers

Call Gemma for more information on 0121 776 8880



### JOB OF THE MONTH

**\*\*Immediate Start\*\*** A telemarketer is required to work for a global vehicle management company based in Birmingham. Duties include: generating new business through telemarketing activities (no cold calling), calling businesses from the database, identifying sales opportunities, direct mail campaigns, booking appointments and working to individual points targets.

Working a 37 hour week; Mon - Thur 8.30am - 4.45pm and until 4.15pm on a Friday. Salary will be £15,000 OTE £20,000. This position will initially be temporary with a view to being made permanent for the right candidate.

**Call Nicol on 0121 747 2200**

If you have any queries or issues regarding this newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact Gemma Donnelly on 0121 776 8880 or email [gemma@merlinventure.co.uk](mailto:gemma@merlinventure.co.uk)

Terms and conditions apply to all offers.



# MERLIN NEWS

## The Merlin Venture Ltd. Newsletter

September 2008 Issue 19

The Merlin Venture hope you enjoy our newsletter, bringing you all of the latest news and information on Merlin Venture and our businesses.

### New Employment and Training Service To Launch

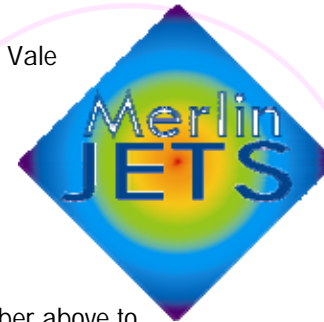
Following the successful Tyburn JETS service that helped hundreds of people into work during the last two years, Merlin JETS (Jobs, Employment and Training Support) are now launching a brand new employment and training service to help you find the right job!

Merlin JETS can help you find local employment opportunities as well as identifying your individual training needs. Working with local business, Merlin JETS will be able to help you find the right job.

The JETS service is available from their main offices at Castle Vale Campus and outreach venues across Birmingham including Chelmsley Wood & Erdington Job Centres and Erdington Community Fire Station. The JETS team also have their very own Jobs Bus enabling people in hard to reach areas to access the employment and training service.

So, if you live in Birmingham and are looking to find work or training, call the JETS team on 0121 747 2200.

Alternatively, if you are a local business, call Paul on the number above to see how the JETS can assist with your recruitment needs.



### Castle Vale Business Group



The latest Castle Vale Business Group (CVBG) meeting was held at the SappHIRE Meeting and Training Facilities in the new and luxurious grounds of Coleshill Manor.



The rain couldn't keep members from attending the event named 'State Of The Nation' on the 9th July with speakers including the Directors from SappHIRE; Jas Purewal and Deborah Sowry.



There was also a guest presentation by Pauline Finlay, West Midlands Deputy Agent for the Bank of England on topics such as the recession and increasing interest rates which got the question and answer session going.

Each breakfast meeting is held at a different location with different speakers and topics. CVBG welcome businesses large and small to come and join the group. Membership is free and breakfast is served at all meetings.

For more information, please call John Lewis on 0121 747 2200

### Merlin Stars

Congratulations to both Paul Clarke and Nicol Wagstaff who have won this month's Star Team Awards.



Paul and Nicol

Nominated by Chief Executive Robert Brown, Paul and Nicol won the Star Team Award for the impressive way they have launched our new vacancy co-ordination service which is a vital part of the new Merlin

JETS service, linking our funded and commercial activities together.

Well done to Lisa Allen who has won this month's Star Employee Award. Also nominated by Robert Brown, Lisa has effectively worked across a variety of functions during her time with the JETS and has operated from outreach facilities at Swannies in Erdington, the Jobs Bus, Erdington Fire Station and of course, our base at Castle Vale Campus.



Lisa

If you would like to nominate a member of the Merlin workforce who have provided you with excellent service call Ian Gilbert on 0121 776 8880 or email [ian@merlinventure.co.uk](mailto:ian@merlinventure.co.uk)

See inside for

## Community News

If you would like to enquire about a FREE article in the next edition of Community News, please call Gemma Donnelly on 0121 776 8880.





# Community News

The latest news about your local area



## Community Advisory Group

Established in 2002, CAG gives residents and local organisations a chance to meet and discuss issues they may have, as well as discussing issues of community concern.

### Community and Neighbourhood Partnership Issues

**Graffiti** Following discussions with Birmingham City Council, Castle Vale should see some positive action being taken to tackle graffiti with protective coatings being applied to lampposts etc.

### Neighbourhood Tasking Meetings

Neighbourhood Tasking Meetings continue to be a great success contributing towards crime on the estate being kept low.

PC Colin Evans reported that there are 6 owners of mini motorbikes who have been told that their bikes will be destroyed if they are seen on them again.

### Employment and Training

Merlin JETS were targeted with registering 604 clients on the Tyburn Co Financing Projects but actually worked with 668 people as well as achieving 198 job outcome which is higher than the targeted 162.

Despite the co financing projects coming to an end in June, the JETS team are continuing to work with clients until they achieve a successful outcome.

They celebrated the success of the JETS programme in July with a staff lunch attended by Merlin staff, Board Member Nick Pitt, Councillor Lynda Clinton and Paul Tse (Contracts Manager from Birmingham City Council).

### Out and About In The Jobs Bus

Merlin's very own Jobs Bus was taken out to Trelleborg recently by the recruitment team where they registered 15 employees who are facing redundancy. The employment and training team have compiled their CV's and sent them out to 20 companies who have shown interest.

### Keeping Castle Vale Streets Safer

PC Colin Evans reported that a police operation has been set up in conjunction with Erdington Police Station to stop and search youths to prevent further problems with youths from Erdington coming onto Castle Vale and fighting.

There have so far been four separate confrontations with footage supplied for the Police by Merlin Security. This has resulted in 22 arrests and 13 convictions.

One of the most recent confrontations that resulted in one youth being stabbed and beaten is being investigated with footage supplied to the Police and one youth being held on remand.

The brilliant work being done by Merlin's CCTV team is not going unnoticed as they were yet again successful in achieving accreditation for the British Standards for CCTV Operations (BS7958) in June 08.

June saw a drop in incidents from 273 in May to 232. Incidents of anti social behaviour dropped from 65 in May to 51 in June.

### Buster Werkenbak Update

Buster Werkenbak continue to achieve their targets in North Warwickshire. By the end of the first quarter, they had helped 25 people into work who otherwise wouldn't have been able to access their employment sites!

## Community Mike

Bringing local residents the latest news with changes affecting you from groups such as Erdington's Over 50's Forum, Community Interest Group, Tyburn Ward Committees and Caste Vale Neighbourhood Partnership.



Community News  
Mike Overton

### Erdington In Bloom held on the 25th June 2008

Planting of blooms took place on the 25th June and a litter pick with plenty of volunteers was undertaken prior to the judging of the displays on the 4th July at Erdington High Street, Osborne Road School and St Barnabas School. Three wooden planters were put in on the High Street outside the Job Centre - sadly thieves had pulled out the tree and made off with it.

### 2005 Group Meeting held on the 1st July 2008

Following PC Dave Roberts' retirement, his successor PC Colin Evans was present at the meeting held at CVCHA.

Mike gave a presentation on Community Empowerment. The focus was placed upon the barriers to engagement as research has shown that too many people feel they have little or no influence over the public bodies that affect their everyday lives. Only around one third of the population vote in local elections and most of those who don't vote claim it is because they feel it won't make a difference.

The Government believes this disillusionment can be addressed by driving forward community engagement across all parts of the public sector. This, in turn, will spur on improvements in public service delivery. Merlin helps to address any such disillusionment in Castle Vale by having a range of services in and around the estate helping with jobs, transport, security, nursery provision, and other services aimed at improving the standard of life for local community members.

### Party In The Park held on the 6th July 2008

Please see the back cover for an overview. Merlin took the jobs bus to Castle Vale's 14th carnival, Party in the Park and helped provide a visible presence within the heart of the community.

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress made an official visit, and local Councillors Mike Sharpe and Lynda Clinton were also giving their support.

### The John Taylor Hospice

The Hospice held its Strawberry Tea on the 29th June at the United Reform Church in Holly Lane. The League of Friends raised £600 on the day with a national bank promising to match the funds raised.

On the 19th June, the Reverend Freda Evans was instituted as the new Rector of Erdington's St Barnabas Church by the Bishop of Birmingham in front of 200 people.

### Contact Details.

Contact Community Mike today on:

Office: 0121 776 8880

Mobile: 07930 735556

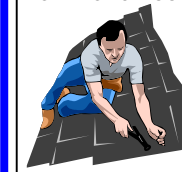
## Community Business

Join Castle Vale Business Group today with FREE membership and a chance to network with other local businesses. Call John on 0121 747 2200.

### Park Lane Roofing

## Slating Tiling Guttering Lead Work Slate

Park Lane Roofing based in Castle Vale are able to look at all of your roofing needs. For a free quote, call Park Lane Roofing today on



0121 749 5890  
07931978150

### Spence Catering

Spence Catering is an independent catering company, drawing on over 20 years' experience in corporate and private event catering.

Manager and Castle Vale resident Sonia Spence sought advice from Merlin Enterprise back in 2002 and got help with her business plan, cash flows and funding. Starting off selling cakes to shops, Sonia built up her contacts and now supplies food for Merlin's Castle Vale Business Group, Sutton College, CVCHA, The Sanctuary and private parties etc.



Food is freshly prepared by professional chefs on the day of delivery and is beautifully presented. They specialise in providing the perfect food for your occasion, presenting menus that combine a range of cultural tastes at the right price.

Spence Catering assist with all types of events and provide catering for:

\* Breakfast \* Lunch \* Business Events \* Celebrations \* Corporate

Contact Sonia on 07980 087750 between 9am and 8pm Monday - Friday, or until 4pm on Saturdays.

Email [info@spencecatering.co.uk](mailto:info@spencecatering.co.uk)

Out of office hours: 0121 523 7878



If you are a local business and would like to advertise your business here for FREE, call Gemma today on 0121 776 8880.

For help with starting up your own business or for help with your Small to Medium Enterprise, call John on 0121 747 2200.

### Make A Difference To Your Community, Join The CAG!

Join Merlin's Community Advisory Group and you can help make a difference to your community. You can help develop local opportunities and speak to people who can make a difference. Call Gemma today on:

0121 776 8880