

Citivism

News, features and updates about what's happening in the city

Summer 2023



A personal message from Cllr George Duggins, Leader, Coventry City Council.

A summer to make us all smile

Welcome to the summer edition of Citivism – and once more, there's plenty to smile about in the city.

Firstly, well done to the Council's Adult Education Service after it was rated 'good' by Ofsted. I know many of you will have taken part in the range of courses and activities on offer.

It's yet further success after the recent 'Good' rating for Children's Services and an 'Outstanding' one for our Youth Justice Service. An incredible achievement that reflects a lot of hard work and dedication.

In this issue, we also look ahead to the Godiva Festival and highlight attractions in the city including Charterhouse, St Mary's Guildhall and a new play area at Coombe Abbey Park.

Elsewhere, we see how the Council is tackling the number of abandoned vehicles on our roads, reveal a new location for the city's Job Shop, and highlight some of the vital support available to help with the Cost of Living crisis.

Also, I would like to say a massive congratulations, personally and on behalf of the city, to our Sky Blues.

They may have narrowly missed out on play-off success, but they made the thousands who travelled to Wembley and all at home so proud, and gave us a day – and a season - to remember.

City's Adult Education Service looking good

Staff and learners at Coventry City Council's Adult Education Service are celebrating following their recent successful Ofsted inspection.

A team of five inspectors visited numerous Adult Education classes during the inspection, spoke with learners and analysed survey results, leading to the service maintaining its overall "Good" classification.

Inspectors praised the service's broad selection of local classes. They also noted that learners benefit from having knowledgeable and experienced tutors who impart the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes necessary for them

to advance in their academic endeavours, apprenticeships, or personal skill-building.

Inspectors could tell that learners and apprentices enjoyed their classes and gained confidence throughout the four-day inspection.

Cllr Kindy Sandhu, Cabinet Member for Education, said:

"I am really pleased that Ofsted has recognised the positive impact that the Council's Adult Education Service is having on residents in Coventry."

For details of future courses, visit coventry.gov.uk/adulted



Do you have a room to spare?

The Council is recruiting carers to accommodate and share their home with someone to help develop their independence and to grow in confidence.

The scheme called 'Coventry Shared Lives' has been operating in the city for more than 40 years. It currently supports 52 households and 68 service users. Anyone who has a caring nature and can offer someone the opportunity to live with them as a family with support should get in touch and find out more.

The Council will offer training, and support applicants from diverse backgrounds. Experience in social work is not essential.

It could be a new opportunity for paid work from home, or give people the chance to make a difference in someone's life.

Visit coventry.gov.uk/sharedlives or call 024 7678 5339 for an informal chat.



Worried about the cost of living?

Don't suffer alone. We're here to help you.

Visit: www.coventry.gov.uk/costofliving

or call 08085 834 333 #OneCoventryTogether



Conservation Area status for city neighbourhoods



Coventry City Council has approved plans to designate Earlsdon and Brownhill Green as Conservation Areas.

A Conservation Area can be summarised as, "an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". It means the area's unique character, appearance and history are protected, and the local planning authority has additional controls on development proposals.

Both areas were proposed as Conservation Areas in Coventry's 2017 Local Plan, with Earlsdon being considered to be one of the best surviving examples of a Victorian and Edwardian period suburb in the city, and Brownhill Green as having an agricultural heritage and settlement pattern that offers a unique contribution to Coventry.

Cllr David Welsh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, said:

"Coventry has a rich heritage. That's why I'm delighted that we have secured plans to have Earlsdon and Brownhill Green designated as conservation areas."

"Local residents from both neighbourhoods have been one of the driving forces behind this decision."

You can find out more about Conservation Areas and planning permission at coventry.gov.uk/conservationareas



Have your say on a new political map for Coventry

The Local Government Boundary Commission is developing a new pattern of wards for Coventry City Council.

It is doing this to make sure councillors represent about the same number of electors, and that ward arrangements help the Council work effectively. As part of this work, it wants to hear what people think about their local area. The Commission will then use these views to help it draw up proposals for new ward boundaries.

The initial consultation runs until 31 July. Have your say by visiting lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/coventry, emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk, or sending submissions to **Review Officer (Coventry), LGBCE, PO Box 133, Blyth, NE24 9FE.**

New location for Job Shop

As part of the City Centre South development, the Job Shop will be relocating to a new unit in West Orchards.



Coventry City Council's Job Shop has recently marked its 10-year anniversary operating from Bull Yard in the city centre. The shop will relocate later this year. Over that time, hundreds of residents have registered for help from Job Shop staff. The team has supported over 12,500 people into employment, whilst

working with 200 businesses each year to support their recruitment.

This move is being funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) in agreement with the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Job Shop works with partners across the city and its Employer Hub actively works with employers to generate opportunities for local people. The team offers support in the search for employment, training, apprenticeships and work placements.

Customers can gain exclusive access to a wide range of local vacancies that are updated daily and access training opportunities.

For details, visit coventry.gov.uk/jobshop or call 024 7678 5740

Cllr Abdul Salam Khan, Deputy Council Leader, said:

"These powers are helping us reduce numbers of abandoned vehicles the Council has to deal with and help keep nuisance and potentially unsafe vehicles off the streets."

"Rapid removal of untaxed vehicles will also reduce the opportunities of vandalism, which in turn become a danger to others and unsightly in the community."

Untaxed vehicles are often also not insured, not roadworthy and sometimes involved in serious crimes.

Over a 12 month period, the Council deals with hundreds of abandoned vehicles, and for this particular scheme it followed up on 134 reports of untaxed or abandoned vehicles. Of those, 51 were destroyed.

The Council took on the powers in tackling untaxed or SORN vehicles parked on the public highway in Coventry in March 2022.

Reducing numbers of abandoned vehicles

The Council has taken on responsibilities from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) to tackle untaxed vehicles.



The Council has been delivering the work for more than a year. It has the authority to clamp and remove untaxed vehicles and charge a fee for the removal of the clamp or the return of the vehicle.

The enforcement teams travel around the city and any vehicle spotted on the road that isn't taxed, or is wrongly declared SORN, risks being clamped or impounded.

Godiva Festival 2023 is almost here!



Coventry's Godiva Festival returns to the beautiful War Memorial Park in just a few weeks and you're invited to join in the fun.

The three-day spectacular, which takes place from 30 June to 2 July, once again promises an unforgettable weekend of live music and family-friendly entertainment.

This year's line-up is full of big names such as The Enemy, Rudimental, Melanie C, The Selecter, Ella Eyre, Diversity, Trevor Nelson and The K's. These artists are just a small part of this year's awesome line-up. To see the full bill, visit www.godivafestival.com/artists.

The family entertainment at this year's festival is bigger and better than ever before. This year, families will be invited to 'Go Wild' in the family field and will be greeted by giant creatures roaming around the field such as dinosaurs, sloths and walking ancient trees. To see the full family offer, head to www.godivafestival.com/family Godiva Festival 2023 is shaping up to be a massive celebration of our city and the year's biggest party. Make sure you don't miss out!



Image by Kingsize Photography - iamkingsize.mypixieset.com

Get your tickets for Godiva Festival.

Godiva Festival organisers are encouraging people to save money by buying their tickets in advance of the festival weekend.

Weekend tickets are sold out, but day tickets are still available from just £8. Family day passes, which represent fantastic value, start at £23.

Subject to availability, tickets can be bought on the door but will be more expensive. So, secure your space and save money by booking now at www.godivafestival.com/tickets For those interested in making their festival experience as luxurious as possible, there's the option to purchase premium tickets at £55 per day. You'll get access to our exclusive Festival Garden alongside a range of other benefits. Visit www.godivafestival.com/premium for more.



Day tickets from £8

Family day tickets from £23

www.godivafestival.com



Bands in the Park return for 2023 this summer.

Visit coventry.gov.uk/bandsinparks for information.

FREE events

Sky Blues have made the city proud



A feel-good factor swept the city thanks to Coventry City Football Club's magnificent journey to the Championship Play-Off Final.

Although the Sky Blues were desperately unlucky to lose the final due to the lottery of a penalty shoot-out, the performances of the team this season have given the city plenty to cheer about.

Cllr George Duggins, Leader of Coventry City Council, said: "Although it was such a cruel way to lose the Championship Play-Off Final, the Coventry City team has been nothing short of magnificent all season."

"I know the city is incredibly proud of each and every one of you."

"I am also so proud of the incredible fans who travelled to Wembley and cheered the players on. They created a wonderful atmosphere and, as ever, were a credit to the team and the city. I am sure there will be more good times ahead next season."



New Saturday night dining treat



A restaurant in the grounds of St Mary's Guildhall is set to offer high-quality evening fine-dining for the first time.

No Ordinary Hospitality Management (NOHM), which operates Coombe Abbey Hotel, has launched a new evening menu at the 14th century venue.

The Guildhall reopened to the public in July 2022 following a £6 million restoration made possible through the Cultural Capital Investment Fund resourced by Coventry City Council, Arts Council

For more details, visit www.stmarysguildhall.co.uk

England, and the Government's Getting Britain Building Fund through Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership and with the support of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, thanks to National Lottery players.

Visitors to Tales of Tea, located in the Guildhall's Undercroft – the oldest part of the venue – can enjoy high-end à la carte dining, offering twists on classic British cuisine using quality ingredients every Saturday.

Tales of Tea at St Mary's Guildhall also offers acclaimed daytime afternoon tea inspired by Coventry's involvement in the textiles industry.

The tearoom, which can cater private dining for up to 70 people, has also expanded its popular brunch and lunch menus, offering a range of classic dishes.



Coronation weekend

Revellers braved the rain to join in the Coronation celebrations in Broadgate. The whole ceremony was streamed live onto a big screen. Children made crowns in the craft areas and picnics were enjoyed as the ceremony played out. Street entertainers were also on hand, making sure the party continued all day.

Restored Draper's Hall

Drapers' Hall is hosting Bhangra Rock band, Kissmet and one of the UK's top chamber orchestras, **Orchestra of the Swan** on **Thursday 13 July**. Doors open at 6.30pm. For details visit historicoventrytrust.org.uk

Gold award winner for access

The Guildhall has been named winner of the prestigious Gold award for Accessible and Inclusive Tourism at the West Midlands Tourism awards.

Coventry City Council led the full restoration and refurbishment of St Mary's Guildhall which included step-free access and lifts to key areas – including the Medieval Kitchen and Great Hall which houses the Coventry Tapestry.

Visitors can enjoy access to the interpretation of the historic attraction supported by a digital tour, which includes 360 degree photo tour and zoomable details to ensure that people unable to physically access the rooms can still engage with hundreds of years of Coventry history.

The venue also offers free access to carers, as well as a range of schemes and bursaries to help those from low-income households or with additional needs to make use of the venue.

More details can be found at www.stmarysguildhall.co.uk

New play area to open at Coombe Abbey Park



Coventry City Council has invested in a new attraction, called Hermit's Hollow, in Coombe Abbey Park. Close to the hugely successful Go Ape, the play area will offer a brand new fun and engaging area for kids to play in, which will be based on a period of Coombe's history.

The new play area will be managed by No Ordinary Hospitality Management (NOHM), which operates Coombe Abbey Hotel and The Avenue at Coombe.

The theme of the new play facility is based on a notable period of Coombe's nearly 900-year history when it was the

residence of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of King James I in the early 1600s.

During her time there, the princess was gifted an 'island' within the grounds where she ordered the creation of a cottage for a widow and her children, where fowls would be kept, and it was given the appearance of

a type of building known as a hermitage.

It is hoped that Hermit's Hollow will help to stir the imagination of children, as well as offering plenty of ways to slide, climb and run around!

It is being created by the team at Creating Adventurous Places (CAP.Co) and is inspired by the

natural setting, particularly Smite Brook, which sits adjacent to the play site.

The new play area is part of a wider investment of £650,000 by Coventry City Council into attractions at Coombe.

Cllr Abdul Salam Khan, Deputy Leader of Coventry City Council, said:

"Coombe Abbey Park is a fantastic outdoor venue and we are delighted to be investing in another attraction at Coombe Abbey."

"We have worked extremely hard with a range of partners to create Hermit's Hollow and it means there is even more to see and do for visitors to Coombe."

Tickets for the new attraction will be £3.95 and are available to be booked online or at

The Avenue. The new facility will complement the newly refurbished play area at the Visitor Centre, and the Climbing Forest which will remain open and free to play in.

Visit theavenueatcoombe.co.uk/hermits-hollow-play-park-for-details.

'The jewel in the crown' of historic Coventry is open for visitors



Coventry's Grade I listed Charterhouse has welcomed visitors for the first time in its 600-year history after £12 million of fundraising and restoration work by Historic Coventry Trust.

Described as 'incredible' and 'the jewel in the crown of historic Coventry', the venue is also home to Purnell's Café & Bistro at Charterhouse by Michelin Star Chef, Glynn Purnell. The indoor and outdoor venue operates during the day as well as bringing a special evening destination to Coventry, remaining open after Charterhouse itself has closed.

The beautiful new café and bistro offers a wide range of delicious food and beverages within a unique and historic setting, using locally sourced ingredients to produce mouth-watering combinations, with great wines and other drinks to match. The stunning views of the Charterhouse heritage park, with equally incredible food, offer something that not only Coventry can be proud of, but the whole country, placing the city firmly on the culinary map.

To find out more and book tickets, visit: historicoventrytrust.org.uk/charterhouse

City climate change strategy taking shape

Residents have been helping create a sustainable zero-carbon city by participating in Coventry's Climate Change Strategy engagement period.



The engagement period ran from February until May. Thousands of residents took part.

Drop-in and webinar sessions were held, giving businesses, organisations, and the community a chance to share their views and learn more about the strategy.

Cllr Jim O'Boyle, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change, said:

"The strategy aims to help the most vulnerable mitigate the impacts of climate change and help build resilience across the city."

"It's also about maximising the economic benefits of the

green industrial revolution through new employment opportunities and projects like Very Light Rail."

It will also support the One Coventry Plan, which lists 'tackling the causes and consequences of climate change' as one of its three priorities.

Cllr O'Boyle added:

"I'd like to thank everyone who took part. Their feedback is invaluable and will allow for a more community-centred strategy."

The Council hopes to have the final strategy confirmed in the summer. Find out more at coventry.gov.uk/climatechange

Contact us for urgent advice if you are at risk of homelessness

If you are at risk of becoming homeless, or have been asked to leave your home, you can tell us online by visiting coventry.gov.uk/housingadvice

For general enquiries, please email homelessness@coventry.gov.uk

Council Tax support

Residents on a low income are being advised that they can get help towards their Council Tax payments.

Coventry City Council wants to ensure that people are aware that there is support available if households on a low income are struggling to make council tax payments.

Council Tax Support, is a scheme where working age households can receive a reduction of up to 85 per cent. The scheme can also provide up to 100 per cent of the cost of council tax for pension age households.

People who are claiming Universal Credit or other benefits won't automatically receive council tax support, but they can make a claim to ensure they don't pay more than they need to.

Cllr Richard Brown, Cabinet Member for Finance, said:

"It's tough for people to make ends meet and I'd urge people to get in touch with us now. Don't put it off – it's worth checking if you can get help." Currently, around 26,000 people are helped by the scheme.

- To make a claim for council tax support people can visit coventry.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport
- Other help can be found at coventry.gov.uk/costofliving
- Money and benefits advice can be found at coventry.gov.uk/council-tax-benefits



Getting around on the city's new cycle lanes

As summer starts, it's the perfect time to walk, wheel and cycle in Coventry.

With the new segregated cycleways in Binley and Coundon, the Council is making it safer and easier to get across the city, and new crossings

for walkers and cyclists have been installed to improve these routes for all users.

The cycleways will help to address the impacts and effects of climate change by encouraging people out of their cars for short journeys and local trips, as well as connecting communities to the city centre.

It's fantastic to see local people already enjoying the cycleways.

We'd love to encourage anyone interested to try out the new routes, whether that's cycling, wheeling, or going for a walk. It's a safer, healthier and more enjoyable way to get around!

First turban wearing Coventry Lord Mayor

Cllr Jaswant Singh Birdi is the new Lord Mayor of the City of Coventry after being presented with the Chains of Office at Coventry Cathedral.



Cllr Mal Mutton was named as the Deputy Lord Mayor for the coming year.

Cllr Birdi has spent 17 years as a councillor in the city, representing Bablake Ward for the past nine years.

Cllr Birdi was born in a village in the Punjab in the north of India. In the mid-1950s he emigrated with his parents to Kenya in East Africa, and emigrated to the UK in the '60s.

He becomes the first Lord Mayor of Coventry to wear a turban.

He said:

"I am so proud to become Lord Mayor of my adopted home city. As a Sikh, and wearing

the Chains of Office and the turban it will help show what a happy multicultural city we have and maybe inspire others as well."

His chosen charities for the year are the **Muscular Dystrophy charity**, the **Coventry Resource Centre for the Blind**, and **University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire Charity**.

Donations can be made by sending a cheque payable to **'Lord Mayor's Charity Appeal'** to **The Lord Mayor's Office, Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR**, or donating online via coventry.gov.uk/donate

Major plan sets out city's priorities

Coventry City Council's new corporate plan, "The One Coventry Plan 2022-2030", has been approved by city councillors.

The plan reflects the emerging priorities for the Council and extensive engagement with residents, communities and partners.



For details visit coventry.gov.uk/onecoventryplan



The three delivery priorities are:

- Improving outcomes and tackling inequalities within our communities
- Improving the economic prosperity of the city and regions
- Tackling the causes and consequences of climate change

The two enabling priorities are:

- Continued financial sustainability of the Council

● Council's role as a partner, enabler and leader
The One Coventry Plan is a way of working together to improve the city and the lives of those who live, work and study here, and have a positive impact on people's lives.

Cllr George Duggins, Leader of Coventry City Council, said:

"We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of our Plan and engaged with us. It also has cross-party support."

Coventry Dementia Partnership Hub

Dementia Heroes remembered

Coventry will open a new Dementia Partnership Hub this summer, with community rooms named after local Dementia Heroes.

The Coventry Dementia Partnership Hub (CDPH) sought nominations from the public for their 'Recognising a Dementia Hero' scheme.

The chosen candidates have dedicated themselves to enhancing the lives of those affected by dementia.



The Dementia Heroes include Betty Hunter (pictured), a tireless advocate for quality dementia

care, Carol Jennings, who helped with vital research on the familial Alzheimer's gene, Dave Willetts, founder of a dementia foundation and facilitator of Singing for the Brain sessions, and Bill Wilson, a media collaborator who raised dementia awareness.

Cllr Linda Bigham, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, said:

"Well done to all of those nominated for the scheme and a special congratulations to those named 'Dementia Heroes'. Your commitment will be remembered."

For details, email CDPH@coventry.gov.uk

Foster carer inspired to write a book

A Coventry resident has been inspired by her journey as a foster carer to publish a book sharing her own personal and inspirational story.

Jacqui Hutchinson, who lives in the city, has been fostering with Coventry for five years and is passionate about how local people can make such a positive difference to children's lives.



Her book is titled 'Oh How Loved You Are – A Journey To Adoption', and was inspired by the 15-month-old girl she fostered who was put up for adoption. As Jacqui explained:

"The core of the book is to show how loved children in care are. It aims to empower children in foster care by helping them to talk about their feelings."

Jacqui is also highlighting the work of the Council's Foster with Coventry Team.

Cllr Pat Seaman, Cabinet Member, for Children and Young People, added:

"We are lucky in that we already have many dedicated and superb foster carers like Jacqui. If you feel you could help play a part in supporting local children we'd love to hear from you."

Jacqui's book is available on Amazon for £10.23.

Call the Fostering Team on 024 7683 2828 or visit coventry.gov.uk/fostering

'Kids' - a story that needed to be told

The councillor in charge of Children's Services for the city has praised the Channel 4 TV show 'Kids' and the "bravery and honesty" of all those involved in the filming.



Aired over three weeks in May it gave a close-up look at teenagers and their families in the care system in Coventry – and those working to help and support them. Programme makers worked closely with the Council.

Cllr Patricia Seaman, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People in the city, said:

"I found 'Kids' to be very honest, and a story that needed to be told – especially from the viewpoint of those young people and their families."

"I am really delighted with the show. We recognise the importance of telling this story and helping others to understand."

All episodes are available to watch on Channel 4 online. To see all the news about the show and more about the Council's work to protect children and young people, visit coventry.gov.uk/kids

700 species found in City Nature Challenge



Dozens of people took part in the recent City Nature Challenge which set out to record as much nature as possible in Coventry.



Over 700 different species were found in Coventry, with 2,650 individual observations made by nearly 80 participants.

The recordings collected will help shape plans by partners for improving the biodiversity of the city in the future.

Using a smart phone app called iNaturalist, nature recorders took photos or recordings of plants and animals to help contribute to the records of biodiversity in the city.

Anyone can keep up to date with @   **CoventryCityNatureChallenge** on Instagram and Facebook, where more nature-based events are planned.

New campaign helping young people quit smoking

Coventry City Council and Healthy Lifestyles are running a new campaign called **Connect to Quit**, to help young people stop smoking.

The campaign is highlighting the financial losses smoking causes, from being able to buy

products such as phones and smart watches to trainers or affording a holiday. Free stop smoking support is provided by Healthy Lifestyles Coventry. They have helped hundreds of people quit through their FREE stop smoking service.

For more information, call **freephone 0800 122 3780** or visit hlscoventry.org

Free holiday activities and food this summer

The Coventry Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) returns this school summer holidays for eligible families, with a fantastic range of free activities – all with free food provided.



Activities such as free entry to The Wave, day trips and outdoor activities, arts, sports, dance, DJ-ing and more are planned, so make sure you check to see if you are able to join the scheme.

Last summer, over 4,000 children and young people

took part and found it a great way to have new experiences and to do positive activities – as well as making sure they enjoyed a healthy meal.

Search “Coventry HAF” or visit coventry.gov.uk/haf to find out more.

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Sports Fest is back for 2023



Bring the family to Broadgate between **Tuesday 25 July – Sunday 30 July** to take part in FREE sports activities!



International Children's Games fundraiser

Fundraiser for Team Coventry to compete at International Children's Games 2023!

Following on from the success of Team Coventry at last year's International Children's Games, the team will be competing again this summer.

This year's Games are set to take place in Daegu, South Korea, from **Tuesday 4 July – Tuesday 11 July**.

The team is raising money to help with the cost of the tournament, and you can show your support by contributing to the support page, which can be accessed by scanning the QR code above.



Team sponsorship and partnership opportunities are also available. Contact covsport@coventry.gov.uk to find out more.

Coventry welcomes International Children's Games Coventry 2022
11-16 August
www.coventryicg2022.org