

**Big Local Birchfield**

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# Birchfield Big Local News

*Bringing together the passions, talents, aspirations, skills & energy of local people to make Birchfield an even better place to live and work*



Lee Martin (Centre) explains to Dorrette Hanson (Secretary) and Andrew Simons (Community Development Worker) how to update the website

## Birchfield Big Local Website Launched

**Birchfield Big Local have employed Lee Martin to help them develop a new website . Here Lee explains his role with the Partnership.**

Hello, I'm Lee Martin, a multi media specialist from Birmingham. I've had the pleasure of working with the Birchfield Big Local Partnership over the past few months to produce the new website.

Please take a look at - [www.birchfieldbiglocal.org](http://www.birchfieldbiglocal.org)

You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

The website is full of information, events and latest news about Birchfield Big Local - as well as promoting lots of local opportunities and enabling members of the Birchfield community to be fully informed, involved and kept up to date with all aspects of the project. I am particularly excited about the newly created 'Birchfield Local Services Directory' where community groups, social enterprises

## Volunteer Co-ordinator Starts

I am excited to have been appointed Volunteer Co-ordinator at Birchfield Big Local and very keen to help local people who want to volunteer. I have previously worked with volunteers in London and have experience in recruiting, training and supporting volunteers and have also been a volunteer myself many times.

I will be based at Grosvenor Road Studios working on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. I will be setting up regular drop-in sessions for anyone who wants to come along and find out more about local volunteering opportunities. The first drop-in session will be at Birchfield Library, 10am—12noon on Tuesday 28th October with further sessions on Monday 24th November and 8th December.

In the future I am planning on running 'Introduction to Volunteering' workshops for anyone who wants to find out more about volunteering and how volunteering can help you achieve your goals. Dates will be added to the website when they have been confirmed. We will have a 'Volunteer Opportunity of the Month'. This opportunity may be part of the Birchfield Big Local Projects or another local opportunity as I will be working with local organisations and groups to identify new volunteer opportunities in the Birchfield area.

and community organisations can advertise their services. We hope this can become an invaluable community resource. Members of the community can also submit local events and interact via Twitter and Facebook.

Dorrette (Partnership Secretary) and Andrew (CDW) have recently attended training to enable them to update the website and over the coming weeks I look forward to training other partnership members and ultimately seeing the website filled with exciting and interactive content for all of Birchfield to enjoy.

### How to contact Birchfield Big Local

Tel: 0121 448 5594 or Mobile: 07429838699

Email (General enquiries) : [info@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:info@birchfieldbiglocal.org)

Community Development Worker:

[andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org)

Volunteer Co-ordinator: [suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)

Website: [www.birchfieldbiglocal.org](http://www.birchfieldbiglocal.org)

Twitter: @BirchfieldBigL

**Suki at the BRAG Allotment Fete, Saturday 11th October**

Email:  
[Suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:Suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)  
Tel: 0121 448 5594



## Birchfield Big Local Open Day

**Please come and join us  
10.00am—3.00pm, Monday 10th November  
Grosvenor Road Studios,  
16 Grosvenor Road B20 3NP**

**See back page for details**



**Dorrette Hanson**  
**Newsletter Editor and Secretary**

This newsletter has got to be the best yet. We have so many things to update you on. First, a warm welcome to Suki Sohi, the new volunteer co-ordinator and to Lee Martin who is working with the partnership to help develop the new website.

What have I got up to lately .... Annette McConnell and I both sat on the short listing and interview panels for the volunteer co-ordinators post. This was the first time we had done these particular tasks. It gave both of us an insight into the other side of the interview process. We learnt about the marking process, were able to ask questions and used team working, communications and listening skills. It was such a privilege for us to have taken part in the recruitment process.

We have also attended a course on training and supporting volunteers delivered for Big Local by Katiya Nunes, Employment Skills Coach for Midland Heart.

Exciting times lay ahead as the new staff begin their journey with us. I wish them all the best in their time with us. I encourage you to take full advantage of the training on offer through Birchfield Big Local.

Email: dorrette@birchfieldbiglocal.org



**Dr Rhonda Lee, Chair**

I am delighted to take up the role of Chair and look forward to working with colleagues to continue to progress the Birchfield Big Local in the coming year. Having worked for over twenty years in the Health, Social care and the Third Sector, I hope that with my experience I will be able to make a noteworthy contribution to the BBL and ultimately the greater benefit of its residents and communities.

Whilst we must congratulate ourselves on all of our achievements over the last fourteen months we must take a pause to thank our outgoing Chair Michael Tye, and Vice Chair Dorrette Hanson for their commitment and hard work. Additionally, we must not forget the residents, members of the partnership, local schools, churches and organisations who have helped us to get this far, but also the dedication of our project coordinator Andrew Simons and Big Local rep Chris Church who despite the challenges have been integral in keeping the BBL moving forward.

As a Birchfield resident I am fully committed to our vision to make Birchfield a friendly, supportive, healthy, safe and beautiful place to live in, where aspirations of the young and old are realised.

## Claudette Dawson, Vice-Chair

We also welcome Claudette Dawson as the new Vice-Chair of Birchfield Big Local. Claudette has lived in Birchfield for most of her life and was one of the first people to join the BBL Partnership. Claudette is a Soft Skills Training Consultant and has been assisting Big Local in providing training in personal and social development. Claudette says: "*I have always been keen in giving back to the community I came from, having attended Holy Trinity School and volunteered in a local youth club—finding the opportunity to give back personally and professionally is really important to me. Birchfield Big Local is a fantastic opportunity for individuals to embrace and identify their own abilities, increase personal growth and enhance their own personal lives as well as making Birchfield an even better place to live.*"

## Tina Brown-Love, Treasurer

Tina joined the Birchfield Big Local Partnership as Treasurer in May 2014. Tina is a qualified accountant and a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. Tina has over 30 years experience of working at a senior management level and as a board member in both public and voluntary sector Housing Finance.

## Thank you!

A very big thank you to the following local shops for providing soft drinks and food for the young people's event in May.

- Church Vale News
- Convenience Store, Wilton Road
- Donaz Pizza, Wellington Road
- Jazz's Off Licence

## Volunteer Opportunity of the Month

**Give your time on a Wednesday and help make a real difference to people's lives by helping an exciting Birchfield community project.**

Birchfield Residents Action Group (BRAG) needs people for their **Volunteer Allotment Gardener and Community Engager** role. BRAG are looking for volunteers who can make a regular commitment and have skills in: Propagation, growing and harvesting allotment crops, helping manage the allotment and engaging the local community to participate.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to try new things and to develop the role based on their strengths. There will be opportunities to learn new skills, attend training sessions and gain real experience in community development within an innovative inner-city environmental project. The role would include supporting a core client group of vulnerable adults on regular Wednesday allotment sessions.

BRAG are looking for someone to join their small team, who is sensitive to the needs of vulnerable adults and is willing to roll their sleeves up and have a go at whatever tasks need to be done each week. If you are interested in this challenging and rewarding role please contact: **Rob Hewitt on 07528 575344 (Wednesday only)** or **Jan on 07714 347889** or email **bragallotment@gmail.com**



## Award for Bloom in Birchfield!

Birchfield Residents Action Group (BRAG) put Birchfield on the map at this year's 'It's Your Neighbourhood Awards', organised by the Royal Horticultural Society as part of Britain in Bloom. BRAG achieved a Level 2: Improving Award, which for a first-time entry is an excellent achievement. BRAG Chair, Barbara Petris, received the award from Heart of England In Bloom President Les Goodman. BRAG Allotment Project Officer Rob Hewitt and BRAG member Lurlyn Salmon also attended the award ceremony which was held at Henley in Arden Golf and Country Club.

Bloom in Birchfield was one of 50 entries from Birmingham to this year's 'It's Your Neighbourhood Awards' – helping the city achieve its target of 50 entries in this the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of Britain In Bloom. To achieve the award Bloom in Birchfield was assessed in three areas: community participation; gardening achievement; and environmental responsibility.

As part of the campaign BRAG organised four workshops to plant hanging baskets and containers and over 60 containers and baskets were planted up. BRAG also organised a front garden competition and 14 winners on streets surrounding the allotments were presented with rosettes. BRAG members also reclaimed and planted up neglected planters in front of the shops at the corner of Birchfield and Wellington Roads.



BRAG Chair, Barbara Petris receives the award from Les Goodman, President of Heart of England in Bloom.

Well done BRAG! If you would like to get involved in the 2014/15 Bloom in Birchfield campaign, please contact **Rob Hewitt, Project Worker on 07528 575344 or email: [bragalotment@gmail.com](mailto:bragalotment@gmail.com)**

## Birchfield Children's Centre



Birchfield Children's Centre runs weekly services on the following days:

- Monday – Physical Stay & Play (1.30pm- 3.00pm).
- Thursday – Read & Play (1.30pm – 3.00pm).
- Friday – Imaginative Families Stay & Play (9.15am- 11.00am).

All of our Stay and Plays focus on different areas of learning and development. We provide activities such as large soft play, Bookstart, arts and craft for the children to explore as well as activities in the community (play areas, parks).

- Tuesday – Terrific Twos (9.15am-11.00am)  
Terrific Twos is a session for two year olds and their families which include workshops such as toilet training, behaviour management, healthy eating, learning and development and speech and language.
- Tuesday – Baby Group: Under 1's (1.00pm-2.00pm), which includes baby massage.

We also run services in the community as follows:

- Tuesday – Birchfield Library 10.15am -11.15am
- Wednesday – Holy Trinity School 9.15am – 10.45am
- Thursday – Westminster School 9.15am – 11.00am

Why not pop into one of our services or for more information **contact Birchfield Children's Centre on 0121 675 0967.**

### Help Others Get wwwise

Are you passionate about the internet and looking for an opportunity to undertake some training or voluntary work?

Then, why not become a Digital Champion for Midland Heart?

We are currently recruiting passionate people to support the Birchfield Community to improve their basic internet skills. We'll give you all the training and support you need and pay your travel expenses - we'll even give you a T-Shirt!

To find out more please email: [digitalchampions@midlandheart.org.uk](mailto:digitalchampions@midlandheart.org.uk)

## Action on Waste and Litter



Waste and litter are key issues for many inner-city areas, including Birchfield. Litter and fly tipping can impact on local areas in many ways. It can give the impression that nobody cares; make an area feel unsafe; creates pollution and attracts rats, mice and other vermin; is a significant health hazard and may put people off visiting an area. However, tackling these issues is not simple and is likely to be a long term commitment.

At a recent Big Local event, representatives from Birchfield Big Local joined with residents from other areas to explore possible solutions. An important starting point is to develop a plan or strategy that is based on an assessment of the specific causes of the problem. A litter assessment can help with this, perhaps targeting areas where the situation is worse. The assessment should help work out what the main local problems are, for example, is it litter from fast food outlets, cans and bottles from street drinking, or fly tipping of mattresses, and other household items etc. Next is engaging with those people most important in solving the problem. Some will be keen to be involved e.g. some local residents, the local council, social landlords - but others may be less inclined to get involved e.g. local fast food outlets, private landlords.

Any successful campaign is likely to involve addressing personal, social, material issues and people's habits. It is also important to measure or evaluate the impact of any action – is it working? Any successful solution is likely to be long term and involve residents working together with the local authorities, businesses, schools, faith organisations, housing associations and others. If this is an issue that you would like to contribute to, then please do **contact us by phone: 448 5594 or email: [info@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:info@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**

# Events Calendar

## BRAG Allotment Project

Meets every Wednesday (by prior arrangement) at Livingstone Community Allotments, Livingstone Road. **Please Contact Rob Hewitt for further details on 07528575344 or email: [bragallotment@gmail.com](mailto:bragallotment@gmail.com)**

## Activities for families with disabled children and young people

- Monthly Family Activity Session at Birchfield Children's Centre and Family Trips
- Weekly family support and home visits to families of disabled children
- Children and young people art enterprise workshops—every Friday, 5.00—7.00pm for children 8 and upwards (mainly siblings and young people with a disability)

**For more information contact Carol Reid on 07977880132**

## ATHAC Parents' Creative Sensory Resources Workshops

**Do you have a child with a disability or sensory need? Please join us as we share practical ideas on creating sensory resources for use at home with your child.**

Workshop 1—14th November 9-1pm Trip to Worcester Resource Centre to collect recycled resources (meet Grosvenor Road Studios)

Workshop 2—20th November 10-12pm Sensory resource making session at Grosvenor Road Studios

Workshop 3—27th November 10-12pm Sensory resource making session at Grosvenor Road Studios

**To book a place please contact Carol Reid on 07977880132**

## Workshop for parents of disabled children or those with an SEN statement

**Do you have a child with a disability or additional needs? Would you like to hear more about the new Education, Health and Care plans and the changes will affect your child?**

Speaker from Contact a Family—Thursday 13 November, 10—12pm

Venue: Birchfield Children's Centre

**To book a place please contact Carol Reid on 07977880132**

## Hope Community Acupuncture Health Centre

A low-cost, multi-bed clinic set up with the aim of supporting local residents living with chronic illness.

Every Thursday 9.30am till 1.30pm at the United Reform Church, 13 Wilton Road, B20 3RX.

**Contact Dr Rhonda Lee on 07810024687**

## Stress Reduction Course

A 6-week stress reduction course using a variety of techniques including Yoga and breathing techniques delivered by Dr Sukhdev Singh (Consultant Gastroenterologist).

Every Tuesday 4.00 till 5.30pm starting 4th November at Hope Community Acupuncture Centre, United Reform Church, 13 Wilton Road, B20 3RX. Cost £18 per course. **Contact Dr Rhonda Lee on 07810024687 for more information.**

## Enterprise/Venture Hub

The Enterprise or Venture Hub meets every two weeks and provides the opportunity for local residents interested in setting up their own ventures to meet together, share experiences and access training, business support and mentoring. Dates for meetings will be posted on the Birchfield Big Local website: [www.birchfieldbiglocal.org](http://www.birchfieldbiglocal.org) or **contact Andrew—email: [andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org) or mobile: 07429838699 for further details.**

## Birchfield Big Local Open Day

Monday 10th November, 10am—3pm, at Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road B20 3NP

Local residents are welcome to drop in any time between 10.00am-3.00pm for information on local volunteering opportunities, welfare and benefits advice, information about Big Local projects and the enterprise hub and much more. Refreshments available.

## Volunteer Drop-in Sessions

- Volunteer Drop-in Session on Tuesday 28th October, 10am—12pm, at Birchfield Library
- Volunteer Drop-in Session on Monday 24th November, 10am—12pm, at Grosvenor Road Studios
- Volunteer Drop-in Session on Monday 8th December, 10am—12pm, at Grosvenor Road Studios

**Contact Suki Sohi, Volunteer Coordinator for further details: 0121 448 5594 or email: [suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**

<p><b>Birchfield Big Local Open Day Monday 10th November 10am—3pm</b></p> <p>Grosvenor Road Studios 16 Grosvenor Road Birchfield B20 3NP</p> <p><b>Activities on the day include:</b></p> <p><b>Volunteer Opportunities/Registration Welfare &amp; Benefits Advice Enterprise/Venture Hub Big Local Projects Information Children's Centres Lots more on the day</b></p> <p><b>Please come along to find out more about what's happening in Birchfield Refreshments available—we look forward to seeing you there</b></p>	<p><b>ATHAC</b></p>  <p><b>Parents of disabled children or those with an SEN statement</b></p> <p><b>Do you have a child with a disability or additional needs? Would you like to hear more about the new Education Health and Care plans and how the changes will affect your child? 13th November 10-12pm: Speaker from Contact a Family</b></p> <p><b>Contact Carol to book a place: 07977880132 Venue: Birchfield Children's Centre, Haughton Road, Birchfield B20 3LE</b></p>	<p><b>Big Local Birchfield</b></p>  <p><b>Would you like to volunteer? Do you want to give your time to help others? Want to gain skills/ experience? Find out about local volunteering opportunities!</b></p> <p><b>Volunteer Drop-in Session Monday 24th Nov &amp; 8th Dec 10am—12pm</b></p> <p><b>Grosvenor Road Studios 16 Grosvenor Road, Birchfield, B20 3NP Or contact Suki on 0121 448 5594</b></p> <p><b>Celebrate volunteering</b></p>
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