



Volunteer Awards Celebration

Birchfield Big Local held a Volunteer Awards Celebration on Friday 5th June at Lea Hall Institute to celebrate Volunteers Week 2015. The event was in the first floor hall and began at 12pm with a buffet lunch for all those attending. Volunteers were nominated by Birchfield Big Local, BRAG, Westminster Primary School, ASDA (Perry Hall Park) and the local community.

All volunteers nominated were given a certificate which was presented by the new Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Councillor Ray Hassall, who kindly accepted our invitation to recognise the contribution made by local volunteers. We had the honour of having Justice Williams MBE as our guest speaker and she spoke passionately about the positive impact that volunteering has on communities.

After the certificates were presented there were opportunities for photographs and entertainment from the celebrated local musician Milton Godfrey. The event ended with spectacular home-made cakes which proved to be very popular with all the guests. Birchfield Big Local would like to thank everyone who came and took part in the event and made it such a great day.

It was really nice to see so many volunteers recognised for their hard work'

'There was good company, I met new people, had a marvellous spread set up and I met the Lord Mayor of Birmingham'

'It was brilliant and great fun; it's a good way to hear about all the good things that are being done by the local communities and brilliant volunteers'

Many thanks to BBL Vice Chair Claudette Dawson, Secretary Dorrette Hanson, Vince and staff at Lea Hall, Shaana – ASDA Community Life Champion, Mikey Godfrey for PA, Masarit Khan – Westminster School and Shazia for the Cakes. A big thank you to Birchfield Big Local volunteers for all their help and support. All photographs were taken by Handsworth based photographer Claudette Holmes, who did a great job.

**Birchfield Big Local
invites you to a
Family Fun Day
2 – 6 pm
Sunday 26th July
at the
Boat House Cafe,
Handsworth Park**

How to contact Birchfield Big Local

Tel: 0121 448 5594 or Mobile: 07429 838 699

Email (General enquiries) : info@birchfieldbiglocal.org

Community Development Worker:

andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org

Volunteer Co-ordinator: suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org

Website: www.birchfieldbiglocal.org

Twitter: @BirchfieldBigL



Dr Rhonda Lee—BBL Chair

Birchfield Big Local is now well into the middle of its second year. We are stronger and in a much better position to persist in our challenge to build up our community and surroundings. Moving into the summer, BBL has much to celebrate. In the last 6 months we saw a huge surge of activity ranging from the spring event at the Boat House Café. In June our Volunteers week organised clean-up sessions, BBL stalls at One-Stop shopping centre, play training events, culminating in the volunteer awards ceremony with presentations from the Lord Mayor. Our first Play Streets pilot was also a resounding success and we hope to continue this in other parts of Birchfield. We are now also running regular, Benefits advice, Job Club and Women's group sessions at our Grosvenor road offices. What a great start we have made to tackling waste and litter in the area with support and in partnership with Birmingham City Council and Midland Heart. Already we are starting to see some changes in those pilot areas.

WE WANT YOU! We want BBL residents and partners to help shape our plans for 2016. Residents and partners are invited to join us and contribute their ideas as we start to develop them from next month. If you are not satisfied with local services and want to make a difference to your community then this is an ideal opportunity for you. To join the BBL partnership please visit our website, www.birchfieldbiglocal.org or contact Andrew on 448 5594 or 07429 838 699. We look forward to seeing you next on Sunday 26th July at our BBL Family Fun Day at the Boat House Café in Handsworth Park.



Dorrette Hanson—Editor

The summer has arrived and much lighter nights mean we are in a position to enjoy the glorious weather we have been having. Most of us now have had wheelie bins—let's hope it will mean less work on clearing up the mess of the aftermath of the cats, rats, foxes and people.

On 5 June to celebrate volunteer week we held an awards ceremony. It was good to see so many people being acknowledge for their individual contribution to help build and keep Birchfield active, engaged, and promoting the benefits of volunteering.

We had lunch with Councillor Raymond Hassall, Lord Mayor, and it was a privilege to be able to hear his experience and his gratitude for people who take up volunteering opportunities. His note on the benefits to the communities was so resounding and very encouraging.

As a volunteer myself it was so good to hear this appraisal. Justice Williams MBE also shared her experience of volunteering. In addition she shared how passionately she gives back to the community and how she spearheads work with the youth.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue and look forward to hearing your comments on the different items we have included in it. May you continue to enjoy the summer and live, work, play and be happy in Birchfield.

Dorrette

Andrew Simons—Community Development Worker

I began work with Birchfield Big Local in February 2013 on the **Getting started phase**. The priority, for what was then a part-time role, was to engage and meet with as many local residents as possible with the aim of forming the Birchfield Big Local Partnership, and to work with local people to create a shared vision and develop the Big Local community plan. The community plan was endorsed in February 2014 and the post became full-time.

My background is in community, youth and education work. I helped set up the UK's first purpose-built environmental education centre—Centre of the Earth—in Winson Green, where I worked for many years. I have a particular interest in ABCD—Asset Based Community Development. This approach starts with the belief that everyone in the community has something to contribute, and that building relationships and connecting people so that everyone's gifts and capacities can be shared is key to creating an abundant community.



It has been a great privilege working with residents over the past two years and I look forward to working together in the future to make the area an even better place to live and work for all.

If you would like to know more about Birchfield Big Local and how you can get involved please do give me a ring on 0121 448 5594, or call in at the office at Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road.

Environment Strategy Group

Birchfield Residents Action Group and Birchfield Big Local approached the Lead Officer for Perry Barr District to set up a group of key stakeholders in the area to look at resolving some of the ongoing environmental issues that some of the street-proud residents of Birchfield are fed-up with. The group is looking at improving the way local residents, BCC departments responsible for keeping a clean environment, Midland Heart, and other stakeholders work together to improve the local environment through joint-working, improvement projects, focussed clean-ups / clearances, street cleaning and enforcement if necessary.

So far parts of Birchfield have benefitted from street deep cleans, litter and fly-tipping removal, wheelie bins and garden planting for this year's Birchfield entry for the Heart of England In Bloom competition.

We have future plans for more clean-ups / clearances, projects to educate local residents, where necessary, in keeping their local environment clean, recruitment of local environmental volunteers for local environmental projects, Litter Charter projects with local schools, a Litter Summit and much more.

On a walk about of the local area with David Taylor, Director of Customers and Communities with Midland Heart.



Birchfield Big Local Women's Group

Birchfield Big Local have started a 'Women's Group' for local women in and around Birchfield to get together and discuss local issues. The group is open to anyone who wants to join and meets monthly at Grosvenor Road Studios for our 'Meet, greet and Eat' sessions run by the wonderfully enthusiastic and highly motivating Claudette Dawson. The sessions are run in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere where everyone is respected and able to discuss any concerns they have in a confidential setting. The group aims to give women opportunities to learn new skills and knowledge and share their talents with other women. For meeting dates email: suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org or call 0121 448 5594.

**Women's Group
Meet, Greet & Eat
On Tuesday 4th August 2015
11.30am to 2pm
At Grosvenor Road Studios,
16 Grosvenor Road B20 3NP**



Play Streets

Birchfield Big Local held its first Play Streets event on Saturday 13th June. The far end of Houghton Road was closed to traffic while families came out to play on the street. The weather wasn't promising at the start with thundery showers, but gradually improved. With the wet weather, some activities were moved inside the Children's Centre, including Messy play, Arts and Crafts, Face painting and Mehndi. On the street an event shelter was set up for free play supported by ATHAC CIC, and gazebos for the planting with BRAG Allotment project, and Midland Heart who had a Smoothie Bike. Despite the wet weather a fun time was had by all. We're planning another event for Play Day on 5th August - and hoping for better weather!

Thanks to Salema Bibi for coordinating the event and to all the volunteers who helped on the day and in the preparations. A special thanks to Annette McConnell and staff at Birchfield Children's Centre for both providing activities and much needed facilities on the day. Thanks also to Carol Reid and volunteers from ATHAC CIC, Ashok Patel and Zaheda Vaid at Midland Heart, Rob Hewitt and Lurlyn Salmon from BRAG Allotment Project, Shaana from Asda, and to Active Neighbourhoods for the Smoothie Bike. Thanks also to Birmingham City Council for granting the temporary road closure, to Amey PLC for providing the barriers and road signs, and to the Ward Councillors for supporting the venture.

Proposed Summer Playscheme

Birchfield Big Local are hoping to run a Summer Playscheme from Monday 10th to Friday 14th August, 10am—3pm. Children will be asked to bring their own packed lunch. We will have a limited number of places and are asking families to register their interest in the scheme. Children will need to be aged 8 to 12 years old to attend. The location will be confirmed later. Please note that, as yet, there is no guarantee that the Playscheme will take place.

To register your interest call 0121 448 5594 or email: info@birchfieldbiglocal.org quoting Summer Scheme Interest, and give us your name, address and telephone number.

Secret Garden

Hidden away behind Westminster Road, Hutton Road and Grosvenor Avenue is a once well used community garden and children's play area. Birchfield Big Local is planning to work with local residents to reclaim this hidden gem with its overgrown raised beds, children's art work and kick-about area. We would be interested to hear from anyone involved in this project in the past or would like to help restore this site. Please contact Andrew or Suki on 0121 448 5594 or email:

info@birchfieldbiglocal.org



Birchfield Children's Centre

The following services can be found at your local Children's Centre on Houghton Road, Birchfield:

- **Welcome group** every Monday 9.30 -11am at Birchfield Children's Centre - Introduction to Children's Centre services such as home safety, Book Start, Healthy eating and lots more.
- **Baby group** 1-2pm at Birchfield Children's Centre
- **Family support drop-in** is every Wednesday 9.30-12.30pm at Lime Tree where the team are able to help you with form filling – nursery places, school places, applying for benefits and grants
- Starting from the 27th July – 21st August
 - every Wednesday 10 -12 **Play in the Park** (meet at Birchfield Children's Centre)
 - every Friday 10 -11.30am **Stay and Play** family time

More exciting services are starting in September so please pop in and get the latest activity timetable. For further details please contact: 0121 675 0967.

Events Calendar



If you are planning an event in the Birchfield area and would like to publicise it in the Events Calendar please contact us on 0121 448 5594 or email details to: info@birchfieldbiglocal.org. The newsletter is produced four times a year. Events can also be submitted at any time to the Events page on the Birchfield Big Local website: www.birchfieldbiglocal.org.

Benefits Advice Sessions—Every Tuesday from 9.30am till 12.30pm at Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road
To book an appointment ring 0121 448 5594 or drop-in on the day. Next session on 28th July.

Job Club—Every Tuesday fortnight from 9.30am till 12.30pm at Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road
Next sessions on 14th and 28th July.

Women's Group—Meets every month at Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road
Next session on 4th August. For further details please contact Suki at suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org Tel: 0121 448 5594

Birchfield Big Local Family Fun Day—Sunday 26th July, 2—6pm, at Boat House Cafe, Handsworth Park. Family fun activities, information stalls, refreshments and much more. For more details contact: 0121 448 5594 or email: info@birchfieldbiglocal.org

Bloom in Birchfield—Visit by Heart of England 'In Bloom' assessors on Thursday 30th July. The assessors will be visiting Livingstone Road, Westminster Road and Havelock Road and would be delighted to meet with local residents.

Birchfield Enterprise Awards 2015— Second round launching soon with support from UnLtd. Do you have an idea for a business venture that will bring social benefits to local people? You can apply for a Try It award (£500) or a Do It award (up to £5000). For further details contact Andrew on 0121 448 5594 or email: andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org

Boat House Café, Handsworth Park— Open every Tuesday to Sunday from 9am onwards

Simmer Down—Sunday 19th July, 12.30—7.30pm, Handsworth Park

National Play Day 2015—Wednesday 5th August. Play event at Grosvenor Avenue (tbc) and the "Secret Garden"

Hope Community Acupuncture Health Clinic— A low cost, multi-bed clinic set up with the aim of supporting local residents with chronic illness. Every Thursday at the United Reform Church, 13 Wilton Road B20 3RX. Contact Rhonda Lee on 07810024687

BRAG Allotment Project— Meets every Wednesday morning at Livingstone Community Allotments, Livingstone Road. Please contact Rob Hewitt for further details on 07528575344

Heritage Week

Heritage Trail Around Birchfield—10.30am till 1.00pm on Thursday 10th September. Meet at the Boat House Café, Handsworth Park. Refreshments provided. Contact BBL on 0121 448 5594

Coffee Morning/Heritage Open Day— Saturday 12th September, Old Town Hall, corner of Slack Lane and College Road. Admission free. Contact Handsworth Historical Society on 0121 554 6762

Healthy Walks—Launching soon. To register an interest please call 0121 448 5594 or email: info@birchfieldbiglocal.org

Birchfield Children's Centre— see page 3 for details

World Music Youth Choir —Re-launching September 2015. Aged between 8-16 years old? Would you like to meet other young people like you, who love to sing? First rehearsal date: Thursday 24th September, 4—5.30pm, Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road B20 3NP For details contact Paul Douglas—paul.douglas@servicesforeducation.co.uk

Community Assets Survey— Invitation to apply

Birchfield Big Local is looking for someone to carry out a survey of land and buildings in the Birchfield Big Local area to identify potential assets that might be used for community benefit such as a community centre or hub or children's play area.

The purpose of the community assets survey is to locate possible buildings or land in the Birchfield Big Local area, establish who owns them, and to carry out an initial assessment of their potential as sites for future community use.

Birchfield Big Local have allocated £2000 towards this study and would be especially interested in hearing from local residents who might be interested in taking this project on. This is a re-advertisement. Previous applicants are welcome to reapply. The closing date for applications is Friday 24th July.

For further details please contact Andrew – 07429838699 or email: andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org.

Black History Month 2015

Black History Month takes place in October 2015 and Birchfield Big Local is looking for people who would like to tell their story in our Talking History Project. We want to hear from people from different communities who have made Birchfield their home. If you or your parents/ grandparents/ neighbours can remember what Birchfield was like before and would like to talk about life then and how it has changed, we would like to hear from you! Also do you have any old photos that you would like to share with us? All photos will be returned. Please call 0121 448 5594 and mention Black History Month and our Talking History Project or email: info@birchfieldbiglocal.org

