

# Birchfield Big Local News

SUMMER 2016 / NUMBER 8

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



## Birchfield Big Local Family Fun Day

Birchfield Big Local held its third annual family fun day on Sunday 29th May at the Boat House Cafe in Handsworth Park. For once the weather was kind to us and this was reflected in the excellent turn out.

Golden Events organised games including table football, wicked wickets, mini-table tennis and goals-'n'-glory which all proved very popular. Jacqueline James entertained the crowd with a demonstration of Dancercise for health and fitness. Eight mini-marquees were set up by Indalo Marquees to accommodate activities such as Mehndi, nail art, as well as children's arts and crafts provided by Claudette Holmes and Faith

Pearson for ATHAC CIC. Information displays included Nishkam Centre, Hope Acupuncture Centre, UnLtd, Birchfield Big Local and Forever Living. Phil Beardmore was on hand to talk to people about fuel bills for a study by Birchfield Big Local on tackling fuel poverty. Food and refreshments were provided by the Boat House Cafe and also local residents, Noreen and Aretha.

The event was organized by Birchfield Big Local in partnership with Andrea and Tony from the Boat House Café. Andrea and Tony recently received a Build It Award from UnLtd – the leading provider of support to social entrepreneurs in the UK. This has enabled them to purchase more boats—including pedalos, upgrade the facilities at the café, and host community activities such as the Family Fun Day.

## Celebrating Volunteers Week



Volunteers receiving certificates celebrating their contribution to Birchfield Big Local

Angus and Paul from the Our Bigger Story project also joined us to film volunteers, partnership members and projects for this national multi-media evaluation of Big Local. Birchfield is one of just fifteen Big Locals nationally to be included in the evaluation and has its own timeline on the Our Bigger Story website – see [http://ourbiggerstory.com/timeline.php?Area\\_ID=3](http://ourbiggerstory.com/timeline.php?Area_ID=3).

The website is an opportunity to follow what is changing in Birchfield as a result of Big Local over a ten year period and to share the learning from everything that is happening with a wider audience.



Paul Morgans filming Jimoh Folarin at the Secret Garden for Our Bigger Story

## Can you afford your fuel bills? – Questionnaire

Birchfield Big Local has commissioned Phil Beardmore to carry out a study about how best to help local people provide heat and power to their homes affordably. The reasons why people struggle to adequately heat their homes are complex and include the poor energy efficiency of buildings and appliances; payment method for fuel bills; health factors; fuel tariff and household income.

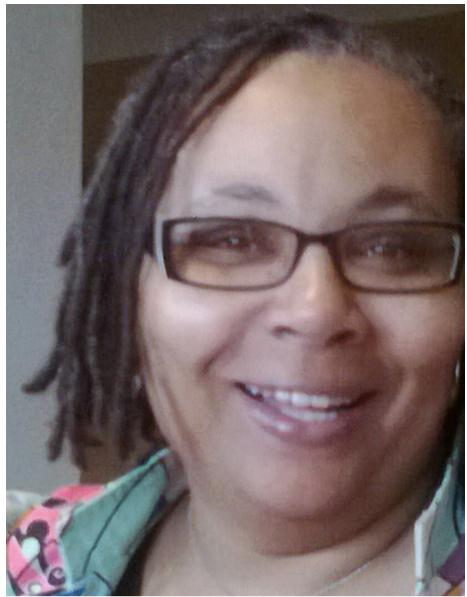
The most effective solution is to insulate homes. However, only limited progress can be made in insulating homes at present, mainly due to the lack of finance which has caused the insulation industry to collapse. However, there are actions that could be taken in the short term to help households struggling to heat their homes and improve health and finances.

To find out whether people can afford to heat their homes – and to see what can be done about it, we have included a questionnaire with this newsletter. Please complete and return this to Birchfield Big Local, 16 Grosvenor Road, Birchfield B20 3NP. Many thanks for your help.

**Big Local  
Birchfield**

## How to contact Birchfield Big Local

Tel: 0121 448 5594 or Mobile: 07421 994752 (Andrew) - 07421 994753 (Suki)  
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  
Address: Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road B20 3NP



## Baljeet Ghataora—Vice Chair

Vice Chair Baljeet Ghataora has been busy representing Birchfield Big Local at local and national events. Andrew (Community Development Worker) and Baljeet both attended the Big Local Spring Event in Sheffield in April where Andrew hosted a workshop on *Working with Diverse Groups on Volunteering and Social Enterprise*. Baljeet also attended the Big Local Spring Event in London and the Chairs and Vice Chairs Meeting, also in London.

Baljeet and Andrew attended an event on 10th June in Cheltenham on *Establishing an organization to achieve your Big Local vision*. The workshop looked at some inspiring examples of how communities had entered into partnerships to create local jobs and provide a sustainable income to help local communities thrive.

Following a study of the community assets in the local area by Santosh Rai and Gavin Orton, the BBL partnership is now thinking about the longer term legacy of Big Local such as creating a community hub and what will be needed to achieve this.



Baljeet and Andrew at the Family Fun Day, Boat House Café, Handsworth Park

## Volunteering opportunities

### Basic English Conversation Classes

Birchfield Big Local will be re-starting the Basic English Conversation classes in September 2016. The classes are very informal and aimed at helping people improve their spoken English and become more confident talking with people in the wider community. The sessions will restart on **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 10am** at Birchfield Big Local, 16 Grosvenor Road, Birchfield, B20 3NP. To book your place call Suki on 0121 448 5594 or 07421 994753, please note there are limited places available.

**Do something rewarding and worthwhile by volunteering to help learners at our Basic English Conversation Classes and in return get references, experience and build your skills/ confidence.**

Volunteers who have or are studying for ESOL/TEFL are particularly welcome to apply, also volunteers with experience of teaching adults. You will work with a small group of other volunteers to prepare lesson plans and deliver sessions to a group. The lessons take place in a relaxed informal setting and volunteers should be confident and organised. You will be expected to attend some preparation sessions in August and September. We ask that you are able to commit regularly on a Tuesday 10am to 12pm and Wednesday 1.30pm to 2.30pm for 12 weeks starting from 20<sup>th</sup> September 2016. For more information call Suki on 0121 448 5594 or 07421 994753 or email suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org

## 'Your Future Starts Here' Open Day for Young People

Are you 16 to 24 years old? Not sure about what to do next and want to explore your options?

Come along 10am—4pm on Wednesday  
17th August 2016

at Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road,  
B20 3NP

One to one information, advice and guidance  
Appointments available via booking.

To book call 0121 448 5594 or text 07421 994753 or email: suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org

## Dorrette Hanson—Editor

I would especially like to strongly encourage everyone to give their full support to completing and taking part in the home energy survey included with this newsletter. Hopefully once the survey is complete the information will become a useful tool to help us all better manage our fuel bills and get the best deal.

It was such a pleasure to see so many take part in the family fun day. Well done to everyone and hopefully you will join us again in supporting the play events later in the summer (*Please see page 4 for details*).

It has been good to see the further development and use of the secret garden. I'm especially pleased that although we do not have a full playscheme during the 6 weeks holidays that we have been able to put on some events. We now have a small grants scheme and would like to encourage applications from local groups to run activities for children and young people.

The new volunteers receiving their awards was especially joyful as it's always good to see individual's getting involved in something new. Once again a sign of growth and that the partnership's aim of engaging people is a valued feature to the community. Wishing everyone a happy summer.

Dorrette

## Health, Wellbeing and Big Local

Wellbeing is about being healthy, secure and happy. The term can be used about both people and communities. Many health agencies now see improving wellbeing as a key part of their work and many Big Local partnerships, including Birchfield, are focussing on creating places where people are healthy and happy.

Birchfield Big Local was invited to give a brief presentation at a recent Big Local Learning event on *Wellbeing, Health and Big Local* at Birmingham Voluntary Service Council. Many of the activities supported by Birchfield Big Local contribute towards this objective. The presentation focussed in particular on three projects:

—ATHAC CIC who support families with disabled children and young people living in the local area;

—Dr Rhonda Lee who has been using complementary therapy such as acupuncture to help people with long term chronic health conditions

—BRAG Allotment Project that works with vulnerable adults and other local residents to connect people to the natural environment and food growing.

Priorities in the Birchfield Big Local plan include: encouraging the development of locally based services; support for new and innovative solutions delivered by local people—as well as the development of local support groups and activities to promote healthy living.

Birchfield Big Local is keen to support projects to improve the health and wellbeing of local residents through the small grants scheme and also UnLtd Star People Awards. For more information or to discuss your project idea please contact us.

## Dancercise for Health and Fitness

Local resident and Star People Award winner Jacqueline James recently launched Dancercise for Health and Fitness at The Lighthouse. Jacqueline has been awarded a Do It Award from UnLtd to help support the setting up of the Dancercise programme.

*"The benefits of dance to a person's health and wellbeing have been recognised for many years, says Jacqueline. "Throughout each 12 week cycle we'll use a variety of music genres and activities such as Hula Hoops, skipping, aerobics and dance exercises. The sessions are designed to be challenging, mood and fitness enhancing – and most of all fun!"*

**For more information or to reserve a space, please contact—Tel: 07969 556427; Email: unikalegacy@outlook.com; or visit the website: [www.unikalegacy.com](http://www.unikalegacy.com)**



Jacqueline performing at the Family Fun Day, Handsworth Park

## **Big Local Birchfield Residents get the 'Point' with Acupuncture**

Residents of Birchfield Big Local, Birmingham are enjoying improved health by signing up for treatments at Hope Community Acupuncture Centre.

The Centre is a good low-cost option for those requiring ongoing medical care particularly for chronic pain, fatigue, depression and other long-term health conditions. Young and old visit the Centre seeking an alternative to potentially life-long medical treatments, which are coupled by worries about side effects of prolonged drug use. Worldwide, acupuncture is well respected. However the provision of acupuncture in the NHS is still limited. For many people the financial burden of private acupuncture treatments usually makes it inaccessible and they are left with very few choices. The Centre is the answer to this problem where treatment costs are reduced by up to 75%.

Chronic pain constitutes around 85% of the complaints at the Centre. Often for those new to acupuncture, there is an uncomfortable fear of needles, but inevitably they are always surprised to experience a comfortable, relaxing and pain free session. Patients find treatments are invaluable not just to manage their health problems but also to promote their overall well-being. Amongst the many physical benefits they have experienced improvements in their mobility, pain reduction and less need for medication.

One retired patient said, "It cured my pain when NHS was ineffective. My overall sense of wellbeing improved". Whilst another regular stated: "Given me hope and a positive way forward, rather than not doing anything about my health problem".

The Centre is supported by Birchfield Big Local (BBL), in partnership with the Integrated Health Clinic (a local health provider). BBL is one of three Big Local areas in Birmingham that received £1 million from the Big

Lottery Fund to make a lasting positive difference in their communities. Poor health has a huge impact on a community's welfare and economic prospects. Birchfield has one of the highest proportions of incapacity benefit claimants which greatly add to the problems faced by its residents. This has been a strong motivator for the BBL to make health a key priority issue.

Holistic Physician Dr Rhonda Lee from the Centre says "*Hope Community Acupuncture Centre is playing a significant part in adding to Birmingham's community health & wellbeing. We are particularly delighted to receive such positive responses from our patients and how the treatments have enabled them to regain their quality of life*".

The Centre is open to the public every Thursday at 13 Wilton Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B20 3RX. Further information can be seen online at: [www.inthehealthclinic.com/services-2/multibed-community-acupuncture](http://www.inthehealthclinic.com/services-2/multibed-community-acupuncture). Contact Dr Rhonda Lee on Telephone: 07810024687 Email: [info@inthehealthclinic.com](mailto:info@inthehealthclinic.com)



## **Access to Heritage, Arts and Culture (Athac CIC)**

One of the priorities in the Birchfield Big Local plan is enhancing services for families with disabled children living in the Birchfield area. As a locally based organisation Athac is in an ideal position to respond to local families who face daily challenges in raising a child or young person with a disability.

The group was founded in 2004 with the aim of breaking down barriers to disabled children and their families especially with regards to access to leisure, heritage, arts and other cultural activities. Athac is now a Community Interest Company – a form of social enterprise. It works directly with children and young people with disabilities and their siblings, increasing opportunities for leisure, arts and cultural activities, and also works with parents and carers helping to reduce stress and improve their well being.

Activities include after school sessions for children and young

### **Athac's overall aims**

- To provide every family the opportunity to access and participate in a rich range of leisure, arts, cultural and heritage activities
- To enable disabled and non disabled children and young people to build confidence and self esteem
- To develop young people's social and life skills whilst supporting access to volunteering, training and work opportunities
- To provide training and development opportunities for parents and carers

people, weekend family trips and activities, and family engagement and outreach support. Athac has also set up a youth enterprise project – Team Victorious – to help young people develop their entrepreneurial

Athac recently employed an independent researcher to obtain feedback from parents about the services offered. The responses were very positive.

*"I would never have thought to take my child to the countryside, never. But it was beautiful, and they absolutely loved it"*

*"Diversity is respected—families talk about their cultures because the group has an open attitude. We're all willing to listen and share our culture."*

## **BRAG Allotment Project and Bloom in Birchfield**

Birchfield Residents Action Group Bloom in Birchfield is part of a wider set up the Livingstone Road environment action plan that involves Birmingham City Council, 2010. The allotment project aims to involve and connect people of all ages and backgrounds to the natural environment and food growing in particular. It also works with socially isolated people who live in the locality. The project currently receives funding from Birchfield Big Local for work with vulnerable adults at the allotment site and also for work with the wider community on Bloom in Birchfield – part of a national initiative to encourage local residents to take greater pride in their neighbourhoods.

Bloom in Birchfield achieved a Level 4 – Thriving Award in 2015 – and is hoping to match this in 2016. As in previous years, local residents were invited to take part in a front garden competition the winners receiving a rosette and plaque.

The IYN assessors will be visiting the area shortly to assess the overall performance of the campaign, which is based on efforts made throughout the year.

BRAG will be advertising in September the part-time post of Project Manager at Livingstone Road Community Allotment which also involves coordinating the Bloom in Birchfield campaign. Details of the post will be advertised on the BVSC website and also the Birchfield Big Local website. **If you would like to receive further details please contact the BBL office: Tel: 0121 448 5594; Email: [andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**



Some of the winners of the Bloom in Birchfield Front Garden Competition. More than 40 gardens were awarded either rosettes or plaques, and each year more residents take part.





# 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: [info@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto: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](http://www.birchfieldbiglocal.org).

## MONDAY

**Grosvenor and Westminster Community Garden Volunteer Sessions**—Would you like to get involved and help create a community garden for all to enjoy. Meet at Hutton Road entrance every Monday 12noon—3pm. **For further details contact either The Conservation Volunteers on 0121 771 4339 or Birchfield Big Local on 0121 448 5594**

**Basic Computer Class**— Every Monday 10am-12noon at Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road. **To book your place call Suki on 0121 448 5594 or 07421 994753, email: [suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**

## TUESDAY

**Stepping Forward**— Every Tuesday 12noon– 3pm at 16 Grosvenor Road, Birchfield B20 3NP. **To book your place call Suki on 0121 448 5594 or 07421 994753, email: [suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**

## WEDNESDAY

**Basic Computer Class**— Every Wednesday 10am– 12noon at 16 Grosvenor Road, Birchfield B20 3NP. **To book your place call Suki on 0121 448 5594 or 07421 994753, email: [suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**

**'Your Future Starts Here' Open Day for Young People**— Are you 16—24 years old? Not sure about what to do next and want to explore your options? Come along 10am—4pm on Wednesday, 17th August, at Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road B20 3NP. **For details call 0121 448 5594 or text 07421994753 or email: [suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**

## THURSDAY

**Hope Community Acupuncture Project**—A low cost, multi-bed clinic set up with the aim of supporting local residents with chronic illness. Every Thursday at the United Reformed Church, 13 Wilton Road B20 3RX. **Contact Dr Rhonda Lee on 07810 024687**

**Senior Citizen Club Launch**— 12noon—2pm, Thursday 15th September (Light lunch provided—Halal) at 16 Grosvenor Road, Birchfield B20 3NP. This is for all senior citizens in the area who want to meet others and take part in different activities. Please come along and tell us what you want from your club! **To book your place call Suki on 0121 448 5594 or 07421 994753, email: [suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**

## SATURDAY

**Youth sessions for 13—25 year olds with Seven Up.** Seven Up is a community group set up by local parents to provide fully accessible play and leisure opportunities for local disabled children and young people. 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month, 2—4pm. Booking essential. **For more information please contact: 0121 441 2207 Email—[info@sevenup.org.uk](mailto:info@sevenup.org.uk)**

**Children and young people sensory sessions**—creative sessions for children 4—18years with disabilities and their siblings. Sessions can be tailored to the individual needs of children and young people. Venue: St Peters Nursery, 34 St Peters Road B20 3RR. Sessions must be booked—**Contact Carol Reid to book a place: 07977 880132**

**Creative sessions for children age 4—12years**—Creative sessions for children with disabilities or those interested in art. Opportunities for youth volunteering. Saturday 1 –3pm at St Peters Nursery, 34 St Peters Road B20 3RR. Next sessions: 23rd July, 6th & 20th August & 3rd September . **Contact Carol Reid to book a place: 07977 880132**

**Free outdoor play sessions for children 5+ at the Secret Garden.** Every other Saturday with Birmingham Play Care Network and Birchfield Big Local, 12—3.30pm. Next session on 23rd July. **See below for details of Summer Holiday sessions, 1—4.30pm on 9th—12th August.**

## Summer play opportunities

### Free outdoor play sessions at the Secret Garden

There will be a series of FREE outdoor play sessions at the secret garden for children aged 5+. The sessions will be from 1 – 4.30pm on 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> August.

The main entrance to the secret garden is on Hutton Road near the junction with Westminster Road. There are also gated entrances on Westminster Road and Grosvenor Avenue. The play sessions are being run by Birmingham Play Care Network with funding from Active Neighbourhoods – part of Groundwork West Midlands. There is no need to book, but sessions are on a first come, first served basis so get there on time to avoid disappointment.

BPCN will be delivering a range of playful activities and games for local

children and their families. Sessions will give children the opportunity to make dens, play team games and engage in messy play. We look forward to seeing you all, please come and join us!

### Family Activity Sessions at Birchfield Library

Volunteers from Birchfield Big Local will be running 'Family Activity Sessions' 2 – 4pm on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August and Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> August at Birchfield Library, Trinity Way. There will be lots of fun activities such as arts, crafts, competitions and games. FREE for local families – just turn up on the day!



## Are you a senior citizen or do you know any senior citizens in Birchfield?

Birchfield Big Local would like to invite local seniors to our:

### Senior Citizens Club Launch

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September, 12—2pm, at 16 Grosvenor Road, Birchfield, B20 3NP**

**Lunch provided with refreshments (Halal)**

**To book a place please call Suki on 0121 448 5594 or 07421 994753  
Email: [suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**

Please come along and tell us what you want from the Senior Citizen Club, we want to hear from you. What types of activities and information would you like us to provide?

We want the Senior Citizen Club to be for all local seniors regardless of their backgrounds and provide a friendly welcoming atmosphere where people can socialise together.

**We also need volunteers to help run the Senior Citizens Club – so if you have a few hours a week to spare and enjoy socialising with seniors please get in touch! You will gain valuable skills and take part in a range of activities to enhance the lives of local seniors. For more information call Suki on 07421 994753 or email: [suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**