

Birchfield Big Local News

Summer 2017 / Number 11

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

Introducing Russell Green—Detached Youth Worker

Birchfield Big local has recently appointed Russell Green as youth worker. Russell's role will include reaching out to engage with young people and enable them to have a voice in the future development of the local area, including opportunities to participate in decision making and volunteering. Russell Green started on the 1st June and has previous experience of youth work in the Handsworth area having worked for several years at Oaklands Young People's Centre.

Dorrette Hanson interviewed Russell about his hopes for the role and future work with young people in the area.

Russell likes to be called by his nick name – Motto – as he always has a proverb, or some insight to share. What he is most looking forward to in the job is meeting the community, hearing the background stories and unearthing the depth of heritage that is here. "As I will be working from



Russell outside Grosvenor Road Studios

Grosvenor Road Studios, where the theme for Thunderbirds was made or "Thunder Birds Are Go" - I'd like to adapt it to "Young People Are Go"

The message of encouragement for the youth is: "Get up, stand up and lift up others"; "When I climb up I will pull up"; "Each one teach one";

"Never stop being an empowering vessel for the youth around you"; "Always be looking after each other and be wise, caring, loving and supportive".

Russell has put together a workplan for the first three months which includes outreach work with young people in the area; making links with schools and any existing youth groups; and exploring the potential for a project around young people's voice, heritage and identity.

"I'm most looking forward to being part of BBL Partnership as I will be testing new ground for the development of the community to stand up as one and improve the sense of neighbourliness. I've met some people previously but my job will give me the opportunity to meet new people and build lasting relationships."

Speaking of the legacy he would like to leave, Russell says: "Even a rose can grow in concrete to rise up and make a change in a changing world."

Russell can be contacted on: 07419 213430
Email: russell@birchfieldbiglocal.org

Launch of Bloom in Birchfield

On Saturday 6th May, Birchfield Residents Action Group held their annual Spring Event at the Allotment Pavilion, Livingstone Road Allotments to launch this year's Bloom in Birchfield campaign – part of It's Your Neighbourhood. Residents were able to plant pots and hanging baskets with edible flowers, vegetables and herbs for their front gardens. Artist Lizzie Bean ran a children's workshop to design signs for the allotment.

The event was well attended by local families who enjoyed food and refreshments including vegetable samosas, pakora and pumpkin soup prepared by Lurlyn Salmon. The event was also an opportunity to meet the new BRAG Project Manager, Andrew Walton, and sign up for the front garden competition.

This is the fourth year that BRAG and Livingstone Road Community Allotment has entered the It's Your Neighbourhood scheme and the hope is to better the previous Level 4: Thriving Awards achieved in 2015 and 2016. BRAG also received a Special Merit Award in 2016. The assessors will be visiting the area on Friday 21st July, and the results will be announced in September. For more information about Bloom in Birchfield and how to get involved, **please contact Andrew Walton on 07966 397856 or email: acwalton@hotmail.co.uk**



**Family
Fun Day
2—6pm
Sunday 30th July
at Boat House
Cafe,
Handsworth Park**

**In partnership
with
Birchfield Jazz
Festival
(See page 3 for
further details)**

**Big Local
Birchfield**

How to contact Birchfield Big Local

Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road B20 3NP Tel: 0121 448 5594
Email (General enquiries): info@birchfieldbiglocal.org
Community Development Worker: Andrew Simons—andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org (07421 994752)
Volunteer Co-ordinator: Suki Sohi—suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org (07421 994753)
Youth Worker: Russell Green—russell@birchfieldbiglocal.org (07419 213430)
Website: www.birchfieldbiglocal.org
Twitter: @BirchfieldBigL



Dorrette Hanson—Editor

In April I attended a Big Local Spring Event at the Foresight Centre in the heart of Liverpool, which was an opportunity to find out what other Big Local's are doing.

I attended three workshops. The first was **Winning hearts and minds**. This was a taster session about how to use story as a means to engage the community—telling the stories that matter in our Big Local. We learnt about 3 different ways story could be told: knee-to-knee, one-to-one and circle—everyone's' important, you're speaking and everyone listens. Also, where, how and when to use these methods.

Connecting communities: a grassroots response to loneliness. This workshop looked at who was vulnerable and discussed how through initiatives such as the Big Lunch it was possible to get everyone together to eat and share. People from all walks of life have attended such events, encouraging neighbours to speak to one another so that their area was no longer such a lonely

place to live. It was interesting to find out which groups in the community can be isolated and yet are often overlooked. New mums featured high on this list as one mum had set up a group to overcome post-natal depression. The elderly and people with long term health issues were also discussed.

The third and final workshop was **Community asset—or liability: deciding whether your community building will earn its keep**. In this workshop we produced a timeline of the decisions needed to set up a community hub. Andrew and I were pleased to discover that Birchfield Big Local is on track and doing things in a timely manner. It highlighted other things we could be doing, for example, more community consultation at different stages; regularly updating the community.

I was involved in the recruitment of the BBL Youth Worker. The interview panel of four reviewed each application to see they met the required criteria. Each candidate had to give a 10 minute presentation on Youth Work Principles and were then interviewed. At the end there was the opportunity for candidates to ask the panel questions.

I also had the great opportunity to sit on the 4th round of the BBL Small Grants Award Scheme. I am excited to tell you we have some fantastic projects that will be rolling out in the upcoming months. Please do your best to support them. See the article about them on page 3.

We also have the Family Fun Day coming up in July rather than May this year. The date for your diary is 30th July. Look forward to seeing you there.

Dorrette

Volunteer Opportunities at Birchfield Big Local

Why Volunteer? Gain experience and skills, get references, training, give something back to your local community, work as part of a team, build your confidence and help others!

Senior Citizens Club Volunteers

We run a Senior Citizens Club every Wednesday 12.30pm to 2.30pm here at Birchfield Big Local. We need friendly enthusiastic volunteers to help run the sessions and engage with the senior citizens that attend. You can be any age, any background – just enjoy socialising with senior citizens and be patient and caring. We start with a light lunch and then play games such as Dominoes, Bridge, cards etc. If you have any ideas and skills that you can share with us that's great, you will be working as part of a team with other volunteers. This is a great opportunity to build experience, skills and knowledge of senior citizens' needs.



Stepping Forward Support Volunteers

We need volunteers to help run the **Stepping Forward Project** on Tuesday 12pm to 3pm. The session is aimed at people looking for employment, training, education and enterprise opportunities or people who want to build their confidence. Volunteers will provide one-to-one support for each person throughout the sessions and help them to work through a short program to complete an up-to-date CV and gain a certificate upon completion. Volunteers would gain hands on experience and knowledge of how to support people from different community backgrounds. Volunteers should like talking to people and building positive relationships to help people develop their skills and knowledge.

Film Maker Volunteer

We need a volunteer who has experience of filming and can help us to make a short film about volunteering. The film will be based around the activities of volunteers at Birchfield Big Local and the type of roles they have in the organisation. We want to highlight the contribution that volunteers make and how they make a real difference to the community. Ideally you should have your own equipment and be able to work with minimum supervision with experience of editing.

Black History Month Volunteers

We are looking for volunteers who can help us to promote Black History Month—October 2017—to local people by helping to organise events. The events should celebrate local heritage and culture and the contribution and experiences of the black community in Birchfield. We need volunteers who are organised and interested in events management, promotion and marketing as well as culture.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities please contact Suki on 07421 994753 or email: suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org

Suki Sohi, Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteer at Livingstone Road Community Allotment
Every Wednesday 10am-midday

- No experience needed
- Help grow healthy food
- Meet new people
- Learn new skills
- Get closer to nature

Contact Project Manager Andrew Walton on 07966 397856 or email acwalton@hotmail.co.uk

BRAG

Volunteers needed at Livingstone Road Community Allotment

BRAG runs free food growing sessions every Wednesday between 10am—midday at Livingstone Road Community Allotment. We grow lots of healthy food, and the best part about volunteering is you get to share the spoils. No experience is necessary. Get closer to nature, meet new people and learn new skills. **For more information please contact Andrew Walton on 07966 397856 or email acwalton@hotmail.co.uk.**

Do you want to learn French?

Learning a new language is beneficial to everyone no matter what age you are – it helps boost your brain power, be confident abroad in French speaking countries or restaurants and improve your job prospects.

France is our nearest neighbour in mainland Europe and a beautiful vibrant country with diverse landscapes and people. We want to give people the chance to learn French in a relaxed and friendly environment where they can learn from a native French speaker – Sherezade, who is volunteering with Birchfield Big Local.

Come along to our French Language Club on Monday 1pm to 3pm at 16 Grosvenor Road, B20 3NP. For future dates of French Language Club please call Suki on 07421 994753



Birchfield Big Local Small Grants Scheme

In the latest round of the Birchfield Big Local Small Grants Scheme, the panel awarded five grants, two of which were to support projects on health and wellbeing and three that involve promoting opportunities for residents—especially young people—to develop their musical abilities.

Spring to Life – Well Being in Birchfield

Starting in September 2017 Spring to Life will be offering residents suffering from stress, depression and anxiety a range of health interventions including talking therapies, creative therapies, body-based therapies and eco-therapies. The aim is also to help people become more connected with their community as many people suffering from mental health issues also experience social isolation. Getting people out of the house to do something enjoyable and therapeutic can be of immense value to their well-being and a valuable step towards improving mental health.

To promote this and other health interventions, Birchfield Big Local is organising a Health and Well Being event on Thursday 13th July when residents will be able to find out more about the opportunities to enhance health and wellbeing available in the local area.

Patricia Melhado – Complementary therapy

Patricia is trained in a range of complementary therapies including a variety of massage techniques, aromatherapy and reflexology. She is able to provide these in people's homes or community and health settings. With help from the small grant scheme Patricia aims to take such treatments to residents who otherwise would not be able to access them, including the elderly, isolated individuals and residents who are housebound.

Kate Luxmoore – After school music club

A Birchfield resident and accomplished clarinettist, Kate is running an after school music club at St Clare's Catholic Primary School for children in Years 2 and 3. The club aims to provide children with a foundation of musical skills in a fun and involving way. The children will explore a wide variety of music through musical games, singing, listening games, and

using the children's ideas for making up songs and composing pieces.

Jazba Entertainment – Fusion Musicians Academy

The aim of the academy is to provide an opportunity for younger and older musicians in the community to express their talents and find help and guidance with their careers. Through the academy they will be able to meet other musicians; share ideas, information and learn more about how the music industry works. They will be able to collaborate with other musicians, learn about a variety of ethnic instruments and folk traditions and practise and enhance their own talents.

Lekan Babalola – Cajon Club

Birchfield resident and Grammy Award winning percussionist Lekan Babalola will be running regular Cajon workshops for young people at Grosvenor Road Studios. In Lekan's words: "The Cajon is fast becoming the most popular drum because it is portable and accessible and it is possible to play many things that you would learn on a drum kit, but as a group, which makes it the perfect instrument to play together". As a new resident in Birchfield, Lekan is keen to bring his experience as an international performer to young people in the area.

Birchfield Health and Wellbeing Day

Looking for ways to be healthier and happier? Join us for our Health and Wellbeing Day on Thursday 13th July at Grosvenor Road Studios. This will be an opportunity to find out more about ways to enhance health and wellbeing for you and your family in the local area. There will be three sessions during the day: 10 – 12noon; 1 – 3pm; and 4 – 6pm – when residents will be able to attend and find out more about the different therapies and opportunities available.

Individuals and groups represented will include:

- Spring to Life—promotes personal and community well-being and offers a range of group activities and therapies to help with stress, anxiety and depression.

- Dr Rhonda Lee/Hope Acupuncture Clinic—Dr Rhonda Lee is a well respected clinician experienced in using Acupuncture, Nutrition and Massage to treat a variety of health problems including; pain, headache, stress, PMT and other conditions.
- ATHAC CIC—provides supported access to parents, children and young people with a disability and non-disabled children from disadvantaged backgrounds to a rich range of heritage, arts and cultural activities.
- Patricia Melhado/Selective Massage Therapies—a mobile complementary therapy business offering a range of treatments.

There will be presentations, displays, taster activities, and the chance to talk with the providers represented. Find out more about a 12-week programme from Spring to Life, starting this September.

Birchfield Jazz Festival

Birchfield Jazz Festival is a celebratory weekend of **FREE** live music in North Birmingham, based at St Mary's Church, Handsworth from July 28th – 30th.

Set up by musicians Lekan Babalola and Kate Luxmoore through The Ifa Yoruba Contemporary Arts Trust, in partnership with **Jazzlines** and Birchfield Big Local, the weekend aims to showcase Birmingham based musicians who reflect the diversity and far reaching roots and influences of Jazz Music.

The Friday evening includes performances by Milton Godfrey, West Indian Jazz singer, Kate Luxmoore with her English Reel Book and David A Grey with Hansu-Tori. Saturday involves an Emerging Artist and Young Artists Platform supported by Jazzlines as well as local performers Handsworth Community Choir and African Roots Fusion Band.

The Sunday will be focussed on workshops, storytelling and performances for young people in conjunction with **Birchfield Big Local Family Fun Day**.

For further information about the festival please contact Lekan and Kate – email: ifayorubacontemporaryarts@gmail.com – tel: 07989 983188 – website: www.ifayorubacontemporaryart.co.uk





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. 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.

All classes and activities will take place at Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road B20 3NP unless otherwise stated. For further details about these events please phone or message Suki Sohi on 0121 448 5594 (Mobile: 07421 994753) or email: suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org

MONDAY

- **Practical volunteer session** (10am—12noon) every Monday at the Secret Garden behind Grosvenor Avenue, Westminster Road and Hutton Road. Please help us develop and maintain this community garden and play area. Meet 10am at Grosvenor Avenue entrance—off Grosvenor Road. For further details please contact Andrew on 0121 448 5594 (Mobile: 07421 994752) or email: andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org
- **Computer Class**—10am—12pm. Register now for September. Learn Email, Excel, Word, Publisher and how to use social media.

TUESDAY

- **English Conversation Class**—Every Tuesday 10am—12noon. Starting again in September. Places available, please call Suki on 07421 994753
- **Stepping Forward**—Tuesday 12noon—3pm. We have a team of friendly and supportive volunteers who can support you and help you develop your skills, knowledge and confidence. One-to-one support and help with CV's, job searches and six week personal development plan. To book a place please call Suki on 07421 994753

WEDNESDAY

- **English Conversation Class**—Every Wednesday 10am—12noon. Starting again in September. Places available, please call Suki on 07421 994753
- **Computer Class**—Every Wednesday 10am—12noon. Register now for September. Call Suki on 07421 994753
- **Senior Citizens Club**—Aged 55 and over, please come along and socialise in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, everyone is welcome. For future dates please call Suki on 07421 994753
- **BRAG Community Allotment Project**—Meets every Wednesday morning 10—12noon at Livingstone Community Allotment, off Livingstone Road, Birchfield. Please contact Andrew Walton, Project Manager, on 07966 397856 or email: acwalton@hotmail.co.uk

THURSDAY

- **'Diverse Women' Group**—Every month on a Thursday 12— 2.30pm. Next meeting: 6th July. Lunch, information and networking session for local women. For more details phone / message Suki on 07421 994753 or email: suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org. (If you are a local woman who would like to share your skills and knowledge with the group by running a workshop please contact Suki on 07421 994753 to discuss.)
- **Hope Community Acupuncture Clinic**—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

FRIDAY

- **Outdoor Play Sessions for children age 4—12years. Inclusive sessions held at the Secret Garden, entrance off Grosvenor Ave & Hutton Rd, Handsworth B20 3RB. Friday 28th July, 11th August; 18th August and Thursday 24th August—also Saturday 22nd July and 19th August. For more details please contact Carol Reid—07977 880132 or Andrew on 07421 994752**

SATURDAY

- **Creative sessions indoors and outdoors for children age 4—12 years. Inclusive creative sessions aimed at children with disabilities or any child interested in art. Opportunities for youth volunteering. Saturday 1—3pm: 8th July | 5th August. | 23rd September | 28th October | 25th November | 17th December. Venue: Victoria Jubilee Allotments, Nursery Drive, Handsworth B20 2SW. Contact Carol Reid, ATHAC CIC for further details on 07977 880132.**
- **Creative Outdoor Sessions for children age 4—12 years. Inclusive sessions held at Secret Garden, entrances off Grosvenor Avenue & Hutton Road, Handsworth. Saturday 1—3.30pm: 22nd July | 19th August | 14th October | 11th November | 4th December. Contact Carol Reid, ATHAC CIC for further details on 07977 880132.**

'Diverse Women' Group

Birchfield Big Local have a very vibrant and lively Women's Group who meet up every month to take part in different activities. The group is friendly and welcoming – all local women are welcome to join us and come along to our sessions. We have food (Halal), chat followed by an interesting activity and more chat! The next sessions will be Thursday 6th July—an information session on adult education courses. If you want to come and deliver a workshop or share skills and knowledge that you have with local women please let me know. For more information call Suki on 07421 994753 or email: suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org



Senior Citizens Group

Are you over 55 years old? Come along to our Seniors Citizens Group on Wednesday 12.30pm to 2.30pm for chat, games and a nice cup of tea. Meet new people and make friends to socialise with, get out and get active in the community.

For future dates/ times call Suki on 07421 994753 or email: suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org

Are you interested in joining our 'Parents Forum'?

Birchfield Big Local are starting a new group to support local parents with children at schools in the area. The group will share information and discuss topics around getting the best educational opportunities for your children. The group will be run by parent volunteers who have been through and know about the education system and they can support other parents with a range of issues.

To register your interest call Suki on 07421 994753 or email: suki@birchfieldbiglocal.org

