

# Birchfield Big Local News

Autumn 2019 / Number 15

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

## Family Coach Trip to Weston-super-Mare



In previous years Birchfield Big Local has funded coach trips for residents, but never organised its own. Partnership member Leosha Daniels suggested that this year we organise a trip for families to Weston-super-Mare.

Two coaches were hired from Birmingham International Coaches for Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August. As the day approached, we anxiously watched the weather reports as heavy rain was forecast. In the event we timed our arrival at Weston perfectly as the rain had just stopped and apart from the odd shower it remained dry but overcast for the rest of the day.

The families enjoyed the day including attractions such as the donkey rides, a sand sculpture trail, funfair, pier with its amusement arcades and fish and chip restaurants, and the town centre.

We stopped on the way there and back at the service station run by the Gloucester Gateway Trust. A farm shop sells produce from local farmers and the services employ local people from more disadvantaged areas of Gloucester. Profits help fund local regeneration projects.

Thanks to Mehnaz, our new Volunteer Coordinator for organising the trip and to coach drivers Jenny and her husband for getting us safely there and back.

*"We had an absolutely beautiful day, lovely memories with family/friends. Brilliant idea to stop at the self sustaining service station, THANK YOU BIRCHFIELD BIG LOCAL."*

*"Thanks Big Local we had great time, especially the children meeting amazing people."*

## Launch of Creative Civic Change

Creative Civic Change was launched at an event at Church Vale on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May. The event brought together residents from two Big Local areas—Birchfield and Welsh House Farm.

It is the start of a three-year programme that aims to bring together people in both communities to share their gifts and passions, and bring about positive changes in the two areas.

Church Vale was chosen as the venue for the launch as the creative use of public open space has already emerged as a priority with residents. We were also able to highlight the wealth of creative talent in the area by inviting local artists to provide activities for the event.

Thanks to Birmingham City Council and Amey PLC, the road in front of the shops was closed off and this small public space at the junction of Wilton, Hutton, Robert and Church Vale Roads was transformed for the day.

Activities included: Family arts and crafts with Claudette Holmes, Adlin

Shorter, Scylla Parkyn and Danni De Camber; live music with Seikou Susso and Phil Bowers; Tree dressing with Faith Pearson; and a specially commissioned exhibition of photographs taken by Vanley Burke. Pete Chaplin was on hand to take free portrait photographs of families on the day.

Creative Civic Change will involve artists in residence working with schools and young people in both areas, providing much needed opportunities to engage with arts and creativity.

It will also help enrich home grown initiatives such as the Welsh House Farm Carnival and Birchfield Jazz Festival and enable the two communities to come together and share their experiences.

The two communities will make and share stories through a film club and children's library and work towards community art commissions aimed at reclaiming and transforming public spaces in the two areas.

Creative Civic Change is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, the Calouste Gulbenkian



*Transforming Church Vale for the day to launch Creative Civic Change*



*Musicians Seikou Susso and Phil Mckenley provided the entertainment*

## Birchfield is Thriving!

The Secret Garden and Grosvenor Avenue entered this year's It's Your Neighbourhood Awards organised by the Heart of England In Bloom. Assessors, Carol Miller and Jenny Bowers visited the area in July, and the outcome was announced at an event at the Tally Ho banqueting suite on 12<sup>th</sup> September. We achieved a Level 4 Thriving Award, which is excellent for this, the first year of entry.

Thanks especially to the residents on Grosvenor Avenue who have worked alongside Birchfield Big Local, the Crick Project and BRAG (Birchfield Residents Action Group) to put up hanging baskets, plant pots, and introduce a mixture of flowers, herbs and vegetables in the raised bed at the end of the avenue.



## How to contact Birchfield Big Local

**Big Local**  
Birchfield

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Volunteer Coordinator: Mehnaz Afzal— [mehnaz@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:mehnaz@birchfieldbiglocal.org) (07421994753)

Youth Worker: Russell Green—[russell@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:russell@birchfieldbiglocal.org) (07419 213430)

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





**Dorrette Hanson—Editor**

I completed my diploma in Engineering and will be attending a graduation ceremony in November. I'm really looking forward to this. A big congratulations to the other women volunteers who passed courses this year including Mehnaz Fatma, Salema Bibi and Adlin Shorter. Congratulations also to Mehnaz Afzal for her appointment to the post of Volunteer Coordinator and to Carmen, Claudette and Sharmaine for their performance at the REP theatre in the play – "The Brummie Iliad" – in July. All three were involved in last year's Furnace Community Theatre Project and have continued their interest in drama, with support from Birmingham REP.

I recently read for the Birmingham Talking newspaper and they're interested in recruiting more people to become volunteer readers.

At Big Local Connects in Nottingham this July I attended a workshop by AFTA Thought who deliver drama-based training. They will be delivering some Equalities and Diversity training for Birchfield and Welsh House Farm Big Locals shortly. It's a different way of getting people to talk openly about what unconscious bias is.

It was good to see so many activities for children put on over the summer. I enjoyed the event at the Secret Garden to launch the My Endz booklet and unveil the mural. I am looking forward to taking part in other events in the coming months that Birchfield Big Local will be organising. Let's continue to support and enjoy events that bring the community together.

**Birchfield Big Local Partnership**

What do you care about? What would you like to do to make Birchfield an even better place to live and work? Birchfield Big Local is looking for residents to join the Big Local Partnership.

To find out more about what's involved please contact Andrew on T: 0121 448 5594 or M: 07421 994752—or call in at the office—Grosvenor Road Studios, 16 Grosvenor Road.

**MY ENDZ Summer Scheme**

Starting on 29<sup>th</sup> July, Birchfield Big Local youth team ran a two-week programme of creative activities for 8-16-year olds. The programme was run in partnership with Mind Over Body, Malika House and the Black Arts Forum, helping to connect organisations working with young people across the constituency.

The two-week programme was well attended with over 35 young people attending regularly, including some that had not worked with Birchfield Big Local before. The young people had a wide range of activities to choose from, such as self-defence sessions, gardening, enterprise workshops, free play, computer programming plus various outdoor activities. The sessions were geared to the different age ranges that attend with added support from volunteers and qualified staff, that arranged the young adults into house groups.

The groups mixed well and actively engaged in the sessions with staff, and many new friendships were made between children. Some external agencies were invited to deliver specialist, challenging and educational opportunities. For example, Dwayne Wallace from the Intelligent Motivational Attitudes (I.M.A) led an anti-youth violence workshop. The session focused the group regards raising their educational aspirations whilst resisting the challenging environment that some had experienced due to poor social choices and peer pressure around joining gangs.



**Raising Talent**

On 28th August, one of our local young adults "JOJO" entered the Talent Factor#el show case held at STORIES, Ladywell Walk in the city centre.

She participated with Birchfield Big Local Youth team in partnership with Stephan aka "Trackz" over a 5 week period at GRS studio's. During these sessions, she wrote two songs and worked on the beats, style of her sound, gaining insights into the workings of a professional studio and understanding the skills required to create new tracks from scratch. JOJO had not officially performed before and dedicated her energy in creating professional tracks with dance choreography and styling.

Other sessions, explored "Enterprise" and the developing need for the future generation to focus on creating wider opportunities in their educational development; building self-confidence, resilience plus leadership/people centred qualities, so that if the young adults wish to follow alternative routes to success, they understand the foundations of achievement.

In the computer coding workshop, a group of 14 young people learnt about the future technology opportunities. The group had the challenge to learn coding with their own small "bots". The group enjoyed the activity as many had never engaged in such an activity before. The group were able to leave the session with their own programmed "mini-bot" and an understanding of how computers work beyond just playing computer games.



Coding workshop

Other activities were the multimedia workshop, where a small group working with *Malkeys Music Productions* created a track from scratch using instruments, software and creative writing sessions. The group also created a music video for the track, which was warmly received by staff and parents, whom were impressed with the quality of the track and group's over-all participation.



Making the music video

Towards the end of the programme there was a party in the park celebration at Handsworth Play Centre. This was attended by over 70 young adults from across the area. This day was a fun day to share feedback with parents and volunteers, and build wider community cohesion. Much positive feedback was received from the parents and young people.

Participants received certificates and MY ENDZ t-shirts in recognition of their active participation in sessions.

Russell Green, BBL Youth worker said *"This year's summer scheme has been a real success, working with other local partners to build a great youth offer. Feedback from the young adults included having the opportunities to mix with new and old friends, and to meet over the holiday with young people from a wider geographic area. The aims of the programme have been successful in strengthening and educating our young stars for the future"*.

Finally, we at BBL would like to thank all that made this summer a great time and participated in creating and delivering an educational programme. A big thanks to Asante, Nyah, Marcia, Abbie, Marsha, Roots and all the other staff/volunteers, whom there is too many to thank for their commitment, care and love in safeguarding, mentoring our future generations.



Playing Monopoly

various age ranges, whom all had to perform in front of a live crowd. She performed her track **"keep Grinding"** a cappella style which was warmly received by the audience and later said: *" It was good and the people were lovely and showed love towards all the acts. If you weren't there, people missed out, Positive vibes"*.

JOJO X finished in the top 6 and expressed her talent's with confidence and a new assurance that she can do this and any other event again with quality tracks and the support of Birchfield Big Local Youth team.

Thanks again to "Trackz" aka Stephan for his commitment and professional approach in supporting JOJO. Look out for future tracks and hopefully an EP coming soon.



The Talent show was well attended with numerous acts with various genres from across the city, and



# Commonwealth Games 2022

Birchfield Big Local have been working with Angus McCabe and Paul Morgans from Birmingham University to document the changes proposed as part of the Commonwealth Games. A photomontage with voice over has been produced and can be viewed on the Our Bigger Story website - <http://ourbiggerstory.com/>

The proposed developments include:

- Demolition of the flyover near One Stop Shopping Centre with a new simplified junction between the A34 and Aldridge Road.
- Development of the Athlete's Village on the former site of The Employment Access Team at Birmingham City University – to include 5000 new homes for working with Lendlease—project mixed family use and older

people, with public open space plus a new school and community facilities.

- A new bus and rail interchange to be redesigned by Transport West Midlands. This will be subject to a separate consultation
- Changes to the Perry Barr Island including the demolition of shops along the A34. The current road underpass will be retained but the pedestrian subways are to be removed. The existing roundabout will be changed to a crossroads with traffic lights where pedestrians and cyclists will cross at street level.

to enable local people to access future employment opportunities arising from the Games developments.

Local people are invited to complete an expression of interest form with details of any skills, qualifications and career interests. **For further details please contact Birchfield Big Local on 0121 448 5594.**



Demolition of the former Birmingham City University building to make way for the athletes village



Birchfield Road flyover near One Stop Shopping Centre



Underpass and subway at Perry Barr Island



## Volunteer Coordinator

Hi, my name is Mehnaz Afzal and I joined the Birchfield Big Local team in July this year, as the new Volunteer Coordinator.

I am excited to be part of an organisation whose vision is to work towards a community where everyone is connected and can contribute and celebrate their gifts and talents. Helping to bring about a long-term change that will empower Birchfield to continue being a thriving, resilient and engaging community for years to come.

I am a proud local resident; I have strong links to the community as I was brought up in this area and am now happily bringing up my own family here. I particularly love the cultural diversity within the area and the sense of community which are an invaluable asset to our neighbourhood. Over the years I have become familiar with some of the local families and residents of our area, and I look forward to getting to know more of Birchfield community through my role.

I feel volunteering is key to the success of any community and organisation. In my own volunteer journey, volunteering has proven to be a great way for me to expand my skill sets, meet interesting people and give something back to the community. I have been fortunate to have had numerous volunteering opportunities over the years, for example, in a governance capacity as Parent Governor in the local schools, helping set up my child's

school PTA, organising community family Summer trips, volunteering at local charity events to help fundraise, and recently, over the last two years volunteering for Birchfield Big Local, including coordinating and planning the Women's group.

Volunteers are not just unpaid individuals they are valued people who contribute their time, skills and knowledge to help make a positive difference. I would encourage you to contact me if you are interested in volunteering and want to learn more about our numerous volunteering opportunities, I am sure you will find the experience rewarding.

We are looking for volunteers for the following projects:

- Over 50's Meet & Eat Lunch Club—cooks and helpers needed for monthly sessions
- Health& Wellbeing Sessions including Diabetes Programme
- Stepping Forward Job Club—practical support to help find employment.
- Community Conversation Group
- Connecting communities through creative craft/arts sessions

Please feel free to contact me if you are interested in attending or volunteering for any of the above projects. **Contact Mehnaz Afzal on Tel: 0121 448 5594 Mobile: 07421994753 or Email: [mehnaz@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:mehnaz@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**



## Local Social Birchfield

Birchfield Social Enterprise Hub Directory 2020



## Birchfield Social Enterprise Hub

Birchfield Big Local has just launched a Social Enterprise Directory with Athac CIC and UnLtd. The importance of supporting social enterprise was realised from day one of Big Local in Birchfield. Birchfield residents have many gifts, passions and skills to offer and the aim has been to help people share those gifts and talents for the benefit of the wider community.

Starting in 2014, BBL has been working in partnership with UnLtd to promote opportunities for social

enterprise and provide support. Initially this was through the Star People's Award but more recently has been through the Resilient Communities programme. Since 2014 twenty-five awards have been made totalling just over £100,000.

In 2018 ATHAC CIC took on the role of anchor organisation for a Social Enterprise Hub to be based at Grosvenor Road Studios. Following a launch in December 2018, regular workshops and training sessions have been organised and the forthcoming directory will include details of 22 local enterprises engaged in supporting people in areas such as health and fitness, mental health, nutrition advice, acupuncture, coaching for children, activities for older adults, music production and festivals, youth activities, gardening and recycling, training and capacity building, support for families with disabled children, social media workshops, careers guidance with employment support, sports coaching and much more.

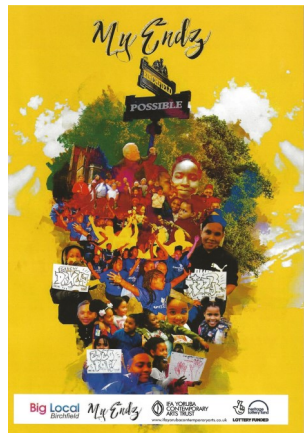
## Mural Launch at Secret Garden

Turnout was excellent on Saturday 13th July to celebrate the 'My Endz' heritage project with young people at the Secret Garden. To launch the booklet and unveil the mural we were joined by guest speakers Father Bob Stephens, Vanley Burke and Hector Pinkney and young people entertained with words and music. Workshops included Kung Fu, Face painting and Graffiti art.

The project was coordinated by Kate Luxmoore (Ifa Yoruba Contemporary Arts Trust) and Russell Green (Birchfield Big Local) with assistance from Nyah Cole and Daniel Hamilton and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Thanks to all who participated in the project and contributed to the

booklet and mural including the artists and visiting speakers – well done all!







# 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.**

**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 Mehnaz on 0121 448 5594 (Mobile: 07421 994753) or email: [mehnaz@birchfieldbiglocal.org](mailto:mehnaz@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](mailto:andrew@birchfieldbiglocal.org)**

## TUESDAY

- **Meet and Eat**—Starting in November an opportunity for people—especially older residents (50+)—to enjoy a meal together and engage in activities at St Mary's Church Hall, Handsworth. **For further details please contact Mehnaz on 07421 994753**

## WEDNESDAY

- **English Conversation Class**—Every Wednesday 10am—12noon. **To register please contact 0121 448 5594**
- **Elders' Club**—Every Wednesday 12.30—4.30pm. Aged 50 and over, please come along and socialise in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, everyone is welcome.
- **BRAG Community Allotment Project**—Meets every Wednesday morning 10—12noon at Livingstone Community Allotment, off Livingstone Road, Birchfield. **For further details please contact: 0121 448 5594 (Mobile: 07421 994752)**

## THURSDAY

- **Women's Group**—Every month on a Thursday 12—2.30pm. Lunch, information and networking session for local women. (If you would like to share your skills and knowledge with the group by running a workshop please contact: 0121 448 5594)
- **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

- **Social Enterprise Hub— Growing your micro-enterprise: a series of workshops covering the following topics:**  
**Income generation streams and options**—Friday 8th November 10—1pm  
**Bid writing for Beginners (Write your Award for All bid) - a step by step guide**—Friday 15th November 10—1pm  
**What happens if you don't promote? A range of low cost no cost tools**—Friday 22nd November 10—1pm  
**For further details of the workshops and the Social Enterprise Hub, please contact Carol Reid (ATHAC CIC) on 07977 880132**

## Rucha Nutrition and Communities Engage and Thrive

**Getting our communities fit and healthy to improve quality of life.**

Parveen is a local lady who is a qualified nutritional therapist and Mental first aider. She is passionate about getting the community fit and healthy for optimal health.

Holistic workshops and programmes include:

**Diabetes and nutrition** - Cooking sessions, mindset coach, fitness instructor and shopping session

**The Brain Health programme**- A nutrition and lifestyle programme to help with mood, anxiety and memory

**Cardiovascular health**- Food to help with blood pressure, Cholesterol, heart health.

**Children's Health and wellbeing**- What foods to eat, importance of vitamins, sleep and exercise.

**Mental Wellness**- Connection with food and mood.

One to one healthy meal planning/ cooking and shopping sessions for the elderly, those with physical disabilities or limited mobility at your house.



Community cooking sessions for specific medical conditions i.e cooking for Diabetes, Heart health and Arthritis.

**For more information please contact Parveen at:**

**E: [Info@ruchanutrition.com](mailto:Info@ruchanutrition.com) or [CETCommunity@gmail.com](mailto:CETCommunity@gmail.com)**

**M: 07484 355895**



## Impact 4 Life Wellbeing CIC

**Inclusive Fitness and Wellbeing Services**

Shamala Antonio, the Founder is a qualified Social Worker, qualified Personal Trainer, Fitness Instructor and Nutrition Advisor. Shamala is passionate about providing services and opportunities for everyone to thrive.

Beneficiaries include those aged 50 plus, those with limited mobility, those with learning needs, those with physical disabilities as well as children and young people.

Services include: Personal Training, group fitness, smoothie bike hire services, personalised fitness and nutrition programmes, nutrition advice, specialist foot care services.

**For further information please contact Shamala Antonio on:**

**E: [info@impact4life.co.uk](mailto:info@impact4life.co.uk)**

**M: 07492099896**

**W: [www.impact4life.co.uk](http://www.impact4life.co.uk)**  
(Currently undergoing development)

## Coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support

Thanks to all who attended the coffee morning on 2nd October at Grosvenor Road Studios and gave so generously in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

Together we raised a total of £100. Well done Mehnaz and all the volunteers involved.

