

Birchfield Community Association

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statement for the period from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Charity name: Birchfield Community Association

Principal address:

c/o United Reformed Church
13 Wilton Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B20 3RX

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the charity are:

1. To develop the capacity and skills of the members of the socially and economically disadvantaged community of Birchfield Ward, Birmingham, in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society.

2. The promotion for the public benefit of urban regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation (and in particular Birmingham's Birchfield Ward) by all or any of the following means:

- a) the relief of poverty in such ways as may be thought fit;
- b) the relief of unemployment in such ways as may be thought fit, including assistance to find employment;
- c) the advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly among unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with work experience;
- d) the provision of financial assistance, technical assistance, or business advice or consultancy in order to provide training and employment opportunities for unemployed people in cases of financial or other charitable need through help:
 - (i) in setting up their own business, or
 - (ii) to existing businesses;
- (e) the creation of training and employment opportunities by the provision of workspace, buildings and/or land for use on favourable terms;
- (f) the provision of housing for those who are in conditions of need and the improvement of housing in the public sector or in charitable ownership provided that such power shall not extend to relieving any local authorities or other bodies of a statutory duty to provide or improve housing;
- (g) the maintenance, improvement or provision of public amenities;
- (h) the preservation of buildings or sites of historic or architectural importance;
- (i) the provision or assistance in the provision of recreational facilities for the public at large and/ or those who, by reasons of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social and economic circumstances, have need for such facilities;

- (j) the protection or conservation of the environment;
- (k) the provision of public health facilities and childcare;
- (l) the promotion of public safety and prevention of crime; and
- (m) such other means as may from time to time be determined subject to the prior consent of the charity commissioners for England and Wales.

Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit

Activities such as the Telephone Befriending Service and Seniors group have helped reduce social isolation for older residents and provide an opportunity to offer advice and support on a range of issues. With increases in energy and food prices many households are experiencing financial pressures. The project to provide advice and advocacy on home energy saving measures and fuel bills will help with this and the ability to provide vouchers to the most vulnerable households to purchase food and other essentials is welcome.

The Commonwealth Games created the opportunity to organise community events and activities aimed at bringing people together to celebrate the history and diverse cultural heritage of the area and raise awareness of the community organisations active in the area and the services that they provide.

As the Big Local programme closes out more effort has been made to build the capacity of the charity through work on the Business plan. The move to the United Reformed Church as an office base and community hub has enabled the effective use of these facilities which are available for community use five days a week in an area where such facilities are difficult to find. The charity is looking forward to exploring the potential for a longer-term relationship with the church to the benefit of both parties.

Statutory declaration

The Trustees declare that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

Achievements and Performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity for the year

This report covers the financial year from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. Working in partnership with other local organisations we have been able to secure funding to provide advice and support on home energy saving measures and reducing fuel bills which will help residents facing increases in the cost of living.

Being based near one of the main venues for the Commonwealth Games 2022 enabled us to secure funds to bring people together to celebrate the diverse cultural heritage of this part of Birmingham and create a legacy for the Games.

As the Big Local programme ends, work to develop the charity as a legacy has intensified through the development of a Business Plan and the creation of an inclusive space or community hub that is accessible to all. The move to Wilton Road United Reformed Church in early 2023 has created the opportunity to make effective use of the facilities there as an office base and hub for activities that will benefit the local community and help meet the objectives of the charity.

Community Hub and Business Plan

With refurbishment work at Grosvenor Road Studios starting in early 2023, we had to find alternative office accommodation and locations for activities. Fortunately, we had already developed a relationship with the Wilton Road United Reformed Church and started moving some of our activities there in the autumn of 2022 and finally left Grosvenor Road on 30th January 2023. The intention is for the church to become a community hub from which the charity will operate from Mondays to Fridays and occasional Saturdays. As the legacy body for the Big Local programme in Birchfield, the Trustees continued to work with support from Mark Walton from Shared Assets on a Business Plan for the charity. Mark will also be providing training to the Trustees on such matters as governance and the roles and responsibilities of Trustees. The charity will continue beyond the close-out for Birchfield Big Local which is planned for June 2024 and the community hub and associated activities will become the focus for the work of the charity together with outreach work in the local community.

Telephone Befriending Service

Volunteers continued to provide this service to older adults in the area to help reduce isolation and offer advice and support.

Seniors Group

With funding from Perry Barr Neighbourhood Network Scheme, we were able to continue the weekly Seniors group sessions. These moved to Wilton Road United Reformed Church in autumn 2022.

Some of the seniors were part of a project – Life in Cars – with the British Motor Museum near Gaydon in Warwickshire and organised by Athac CIC and Creative Civic Change in partnership with the museum staff and volunteers. The participants created artwork, including photographs, stories, drawings, and clay models, in response to the rich collection of artefacts and vehicles during a series of visits to the museum by families and older residents from Birchfield and Welsh House Farm. This culminated in an exhibition at the museum. Many of the seniors have a background in the motor industry, having worked at car plants such as Rover and Jaguar.

Later in the year the seniors were able to host a visit to the church by some of the volunteers from the motor museum; share in a game or two of dominoes; and learn something about the heritage of Birchfield.

BCAN Energy Programme

Together with five other local community organisations, Birchfield Community Association was able to apply to the Energy Saving Trust's Energy Redress Scheme for funding to support

work around fuel poverty. The project started in February 2023 and will enable all five organisations to employ an energy adviser to provide advice and advocacy on energy saving measures in the home and help with reducing fuel bills for vulnerable households.

Food Vouchers

The Association has been able to continue with offering food vouchers to individuals and families in need of support with meeting basic needs, though on a smaller scale than previously.

Family Fun Day

With funding from the Commonwealth Games Celebrating Communities Fund we were able to organise a Family Fun Day on Sunday 24th July at the Boat House Café in Handsworth Park. The event helped to bring the community together to celebrate with music, arts and crafts, sports, and games in the lead up to the Commonwealth Games. The Fun Day followed on from the Birchfield Jazz Festival held at St Mary's Church on Saturday 23rd July.

Birchfield Heritage Trail

We were able to complete the first of two trails celebrating the history and diverse cultural heritage of the area - one of twenty heritage trails across the city funded through the Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund. The trail reveals some of the hidden secrets of the Birchfield area, how the place has changed over time and the many links between Birchfield and other parts of the world including Commonwealth countries. The trail is available both online and in printed format and in person guided tours were organised during Birmingham Heritage Week (9th – 18th September).

Representatives from all twenty trails across the city were invited to a celebration event at the Old Library Digbeth on 13th December. A second trail is being developed which will be launched for Birmingham Heritage Week 2023.

Financial Review

This is the second full financial year for the charity which was registered on 19th January 2021. The principal sources of funding were small grants, mostly from Birmingham City Council, to deliver projects and services that meet the needs of Birchfield residents. However, in collaboration with five other local community organisations, the charity has been able to secure funding through the Energy Saving Trust's Energy Redress Scheme. This will enable the organisation to employ a part-time worker.

The charity is in negotiation with members at Wilton Road United Reformed Church and the West Midlands Synod to agree a Licence to Occupy the building that is beneficial to both parties. With support from Shared Assets, the charity is developing a Business Plan and, with assistance from Stir to Action, a funding strategy which will help to guide future funding priorities.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

Foundation model constitution

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Registered 19th January 2021

Trustees

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Appointed
Jimoh Folarin	Chair	19.01.2021
Sabirul Islam		19.01.2021
Tom Clements		19.01.2021
Shamala Antonio		20.03.2023

Barbara Petris stood down as a Trustee during the year and Shamala Antonio joined the Trustees. Many thanks to the Trustees for their continued time and commitment.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustee's report above.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees.

Signature:



Full name: Jimoh Folarin

Position: Chair

Date: 11th January 2023

Birchfield Community Association
Financial Statement
1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

Income and expenditure

Income

Voucher scheme	3,000.00
Celebrating Communities Fund	3,808.00
Heritage Trail (Final Payment)	1,000.00
Perry Barr Neighbourhood Network Scheme Grant for Seniors Group + Vouchers	4,560.00

Total income **12,368.00**

Expenditure

Food vouchers	4,500.00
Family Fun Day	3,466.25
Heritage Trail	1,635.00
Room hire – Seniors group	1,000.00

Total expenditure **10,601.25**

Balance from 31st March 2022 **4,313.08**

Income from 01.04.2022 – 31.03.2023 **12,368.00**

16,681.08

Total expenditure **10,601.25**

Balance as of 31st March 2023 **6,079.83**

Signed on behalf of the Trustees.

Signature:



Full name: Jimoh Folarin

Position: Chair

Date: 11th January 2023