

Birchfield Community Association

Charity Number: 1193147

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statement for the period from
1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025**

Administration details

Charity name: Birchfield Community Association

Principal address:

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

Bank: Metro Bank, One Southampton Row, London WC1B 5HA

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

This year was significant as it marked the completion of the Big Local programme in Birchfield. Birchfield was one of 50 areas that completed the programme in July 2024, while the remaining 100 areas are scheduled to finish by March 2026.

The charity plays a vital role in the legacy of the Big Local programme. It is dedicated to continuing community development led by residents and focused on the specific needs of the area. The charity aims to strengthen the capacity and skills of local people, enabling them to identify their needs and priorities and work towards addressing them.

Until July 2024, the charity received support from Shared Assets and Stir to Action to develop a business plan and funding strategy, and this helped secure the necessary funds to continue its activities beyond the end of the Big Local programme.

Efforts have been focused on developing Wilton Road United Reformed Church as a community hub that delivers activities of benefit to residents. Among these activities is the Women's Group, which meets weekly, along with the Seniors' Club, a weekly session designed for individuals over 50. This club aims to reduce social isolation while providing advice and support to older residents. In partnership with Birmingham Adult Education Service, regular adult education classes in English and Creative Arts have also been provided.

The hub is registered as a Warm Welcome Space with the aim of providing a free, safe, and welcoming environment for individuals to access support, activities, and services throughout the year. The hub also continues to host creative arts sessions for young people with learning disabilities led by Athac CIC. The Ladywood and Perry Barr SEND/Disability network group holds bi-monthly meetings at the hub. Additionally, the Birchfield Environment Strategy Group meets monthly, bringing

together local community organisations along with representatives from the City Council and Midland Heart, a major social housing provider.

As a member of B:CAN – Birmingham Community Action Network, the charity has been able to continue providing energy advice and advocacy to vulnerable households by employing a part-time staff member.

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

This report covers the financial year from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025. The Lottery-funded Birchfield Big Local programme came to an end on 31st July 2024, and with it the support received from Birmingham Voluntary Services Council as the Local Trusted Organisation. Birchfield was one of 50 Big Local areas to reach completion in the summer of 2024, and the Big Local programme as a whole will finish in March 2026. The charity plays a vital role in the legacy of the Big Local programme. It is dedicated to continuing community development led by residents and focused on the specific needs of the area.

In the months leading up to the end of Birchfield Big Local the charity continued to receive support from Mark Walton at Shared Assets to help develop a business plan and support from Dan Woolley and Megan Romania at Stir to Action for a funding strategy. With Dan and Megan's help applications were prepared to the Laing Family Trust, 29 May 1961 Charitable Trust and National Lottery Awards for All. Of these three funding applications the National Lottery Awards for All was successful and a grant of £19,900 was received in November 2024.

The focus for fundraising has continued to be the delivery of activities at the Birchfield Community Hub based at Wilton Road United Reformed Church. A timetable of activities has been established including a Women's group and Seniors club both of which meet weekly and adult education classes delivered in partnership with Birmingham Adult Education Service. The hub is used on a Monday by Athac CIC for creative sessions with Athac Creative Artists, a group of young adults with learning disabilities. Some of the young adults also volunteer with BCA at the Seniors Club.

B:CAN Energy Programme

BCA has continued to provide advice and support on home energy savings as a member of B:CAN (Birmingham Community Action Network). The charity employed a part-time energy adviser for five months, from late February to August 2024, to deliver advocacy and assistance to vulnerable households. Funding for the project, sourced from the Energy Redress Scheme, ended in January 2025, followed by the funding from Brum Energy in March 2025.

However, the B:CAN Energy partnership, led by Witton Lodge Community Association, successfully secured additional funding from the Energy Redress Scheme, set to begin in April 2025. The partnership has expanded from five to ten community-based organisations, allowing them to cover most of the city. Birchfield Community Association will be active in Birchfield Ward as well as Handsworth, Lozells, Handsworth Wood, and Perry Barr. This new funding will enable the charity to employ a full-time energy adviser.

Warm Welcome Space

Birchfield Community Hub is one of over 200 Warm Welcome spaces located throughout Birmingham. These spaces are free, safe, comfortable, and welcoming places where people can engage in activities, access services, receive practical advice and support, and connect with their community. Warm Welcome spaces are available year-round, not just during the winter months.

Seniors' Club

The Seniors group meets every week at the Birchfield Community Hub. Dominoes is a popular activity among the men, and we have expanded our offerings to include arts and crafts, which has successfully attracted more women to join. As a result, our attendance is now balanced with an equal number of men and women. Light refreshments are provided, along with a half-hour session of chair-based physical activities.

Adult Education Classes

The charity continues to offer classes in partnership with the Birmingham Adult Education Service at Wilton Road URC. These classes include 'Introduction to English (ESOL)' and 'Creative Arts,' both of which are particularly popular among local women. In the past, a course on digital skills was also offered, and the plan is to resume this offer once a tutor is found.

Crick Lane Playing Fields and Birchfield Children's Centre

The Birchfield Community Association is among several groups working to bring the Crick Playing Fields into community use. These fields feature two sports pitches and changing facilities and are part of a Section 106 agreement with the housing developer, Persimmon Homes. The Crick Playing Fields group, which also includes the Handsworth Association of Schools and various local sports organisations, is

collaborating with Birmingham City Council to ensure that Persimmon Homes complies with the requirements of the Section 106 agreement. The ultimate goal is to have the community manage the site for use by local schools and the wider community.

Birchfield Children's Centre is an asset owned by the City Council that may be available for sale or lease in the near future. The Birchfield Community Association has registered the building as an Asset of Community Value and has expressed interest in exploring the possibility of a Community Asset Transfer or lease. The Association is advocating for the building to be operated as a centre managed by the local community.

Financial Review

Before July 2024, the funds for BCA were held by Birmingham Voluntary Services Council (BVSC) on behalf of the charity. BVSC also served as a Local Trusted Organisation for Birchfield Big Local. On July 31st, the funds held by BVSC were transferred to BCA's Metro Bank account. A total of £18,519 was transferred, which included £14,767 from the Energy Redress and Brum Energy projects and £3,752 from previous grants to the charity. We note that the starting balance for the current financial year has changed from the prior accounts due to a reconciliation difference after the transition of funds held by BVSC to the charity's own bank account.

During the year ending 31st March 2025, the charity received £32,864 in grants.

25/09/2024	4,964.00	Perry Barr NNS	NNS grant for the Seniors' Club
02/10/2024	4,000.00	Birmingham City Council	Warm Spaces Grant
08/11/2024	19,900.00	National Lottery Community Fund	Awards for All Grant
12/12/2024	2,000.00	Birmingham City Council	Warm Spaces Grant
05/03/2025	2,000.00	Birmingham City Council	Warm Spaces Grant

In addition, there was income from the Energy Redress Scheme and Brum Energy Project through the partnership with B:CAN Energy. This relies on the B:CAN Energy partnership meeting quarterly performance indicators.

The charity received valuable support from Stir to Action in developing a funding strategy and in preparing some initial funding applications. A primary focus for fundraising is to secure core costs needed to operate the community hub. This includes expenses such as staff salaries, volunteer reimbursements, rent, and utilities.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

Foundation model constitution
Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered 19th January 2021

Trustees

Name	Role	Date appointed
Jimoh Folarin	Chair	19 January 2021
Sabirul Islam	Trustee	19 January 2021
Baljeet Singh Ghataora	Trustee	27 March 2024
Mohammed Zahoor	Treasurer	8 May 2024
Nyah Cole	Secretary	8 May 2024
Mehnaz Afzal	Observer	

Many thanks to the Trustees for their continued time and commitment.

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

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Signature:



Full name: Jimoh Folarin

Position: Chair

Date: 30th January 2026

Birchfield Community Association

Financial Statement

1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

Income

	Amount (£)
Perry Barr Neighbourhood Network Scheme	4,964
Warm Welcome Grant Fund	8,000
National Lottery Community Fund Awards for All	19,900
B:CAN Energy Project (Energy Redress Fund)	14,362.5
Brum Energy Project	17,595.97
Other	150.00
Total income	64,972.47

Expenditure

	Amount (£)
Project Manager	10500
Energy Adviser salary	4,492.07
Sessional staff	540
Staff expenses	41.06
Volunteer expenses	2148
Professional fees	194.5
Rent	6,050
Utilities	1,840
Insurance	332.08
Telephone & broadband	1,416.63
Website	439.98
Printing/photocopier	216.06
Office & cleaning supplies	437.84
Art & Craft materials	139.81
Catering and refreshments (Seniors' Club)	1,262.05
Travel (Seniors' Club)	339
Bank charges	235
Total expenditure	30,624.08

Income minus expenditure

64,972.47
30,624.08
34,348.39
15,187

Balance brought forward

Balance as of 31st March 2025

49,535.39



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name

Birchfield Community Association

On accounts for the year ended

31st March 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1193147

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Andy Hopkins

Date: 3/2/26

Name:

Andy Hopkins

Address:	BVSC Latham House
	33-34 Paradise Street
	Birmingham B 2AJ

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

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