



Birmingham
Community
Matters

newsletter



Hello friend!

Here's your Birmingham Community Matters newsletter for December, packed with festive warmth - and wishes that 2022 will be easier for everyone.

We're sorry this newsletter is in a different format from usual. It appears that naughty elves have played havoc with our mailing system. If you have trouble accessing the information below, let us know and we'll find a different way to reach you.

info@birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk

How are you?

We know the pandemic is continuing to test people's strength in every way imaginable. If you're finding yourself despairing once again, please know you're not alone. We're thinking of you - and we're here to support you and your community group or project, which is surely needed and valued more than ever in these uncertain times.

Since the first lockdown in 2020, we've been inspired to see Birmingham community groups and volunteers adapting to ever-changing rules and guidelines to keep their activities safe and successful. You've been amazing!

We've also had to adapt to keep BCM's services running. We made this the theme of our 2020-21 annual report:

[Making the most of a difficult year: our pandemic story.](#)

BCM Christmas gathering

After holding our 2020 Christmas party on Zoom, it was a joy to bring our team and trustees together in person last week for a small, Covid-cautious gathering. We met at Moseley Hive on Friday - a light and spacious pop-up community hub on the high street, run by Moseley Community Development Trust in Moseley's former Pizza Express premises. We thoroughly recommend it as a venue for your own get-togethers, when it feels safe and right to meet in person again.



Here we are at Moseley Hive, with Claire Johnson – our lead for Selly Oak NNS – present thanks to some low-tech picture editing magic! Claire was (like so many people now Covid cases are rising rapidly again) isolating at home with her family, and we missed her lots.

Celebrating Communities

If you joined our mailing list after attending a Celebrating Communities session – welcome! We don't usually host our newsletters in this awkward way and hope you will keep subscribed for future, sleeker editions.

As you probably know, the deadline has now passed for submitting Celebrating

Communities grant applications. You will hear from Birmingham City Council about the status of your application in due course.

If the staff appraising the applications think your proposal shows promise but needs strengthening, you may be referred to us for further support. If that is the case, we look forward to working with you soon!

Recruiting student volunteers

Wouldn't it be great to have the input of some bright and capable student volunteers in your organisation? Join us and Birmingham City University on Tuesday 18 January (3-4pm, online) to discuss ways to recruit and support student volunteers.

[Learn more and sign up for free.](#)

NNS sessions

Please note that we've been commissioned to hold the following events for NNS* groups in certain constituencies of Brum. If you're interested in the topics, and would like to network with NNS-funded groups in the area, please feel free to join us.

Building lunch club connections - Selly Oak NNS

Monday 20 December, 10 to 11am

Monday 10 January, 9 to 10am

Monday 7 February, 12 noon to 1pm

Wednesday 9 February, 12 noon to 1pm

Monday 14 March, 3 to 4pm

Managing community buildings - Selly Oak NNS

Wednesday 12 January, 9 to 10am

Wednesday 16 March, 3 to 4pm

Keeping your project Covid-safe - Selly Oak NNS

Friday 17 December, 12 noon to 1pm

Friday 14 January, 9 to 10am

Friday 11 February, 12 noon to 1pm

Friday 18 March, 3 to 4pm

Creating a volunteer role description - Selly Oak NNS

Tuesday 25 January, 4 to 5pm

*'NNS' refers to Neighbourhood Network Schemes - a programme across Birmingham which seeks to reduce loneliness and social isolation in people aged over 50. **This video tells you more.**

Book a one-to-one support session in the new year

Have you got a question or challenge relating to your Birmingham community group, project or idea?

Ask us about [booking a one-to-one support session](#) to talk it through with a Community Matters Helper.

This process is most effective when you tackle one issue at a time and identify 'next steps' alongside your Helper. When you've achieved those, you're welcome to return for another session.

Thanks to the National Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund, a session will cost you nothing except your time.



info@birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk

Our Christmas plans

BCM will be closed from 5pm today (Friday 17 December) to 9am on Wednesday 5 January 2022.

However, staff will be available for a limited period between Christmas and New Year for any enquiries related to Celebrating Communities application strengthening support. Please use ccsupport@birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk.



Happy Christmas

– from Birmingham Community Matters



Read on for more events and opportunities from our colleagues and partners . . .



New small grants programme in Birmingham

Birmingham City Council's Neighbourhood Development Support Unit (NDSU) is trialling a new programme of grants, aimed at small, well-established community groups and organisations who are trusted in their local areas.

The NDSU Covid-19 Recovery and Community Support Small Grants programme is aimed at helping grassroots groups recover from the detrimental effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Grants of up to £2,000 over six months will be available, to help organisations change, adapt and expand their delivery. Requests can include funding to cover items such as essential running costs, activities and equipment.

[Learn more on our blog.](#)



Get support to run a community pub

Have you ever dreamed of getting together with some likeminded people and running a community pub?

Plunkett Foundation is a UK charity dedicated to helping communities save their pubs, shops and services through community ownership.

It is calling for groups in Birmingham to step forward to take over their local pubs – or risk losing them entirely.

Partnering with the West Midlands Combined Authority, the charity is offering free expert advice and funding to help West Midlands groups establish business plans, appeal for volunteers, handle legal matters and raise the finance to save their pubs.

Find out more on our blog.



Take the Brum Budget Challenge ...

... and tell Birmingham City Council what's important to you.

The council has launched an interactive webpage to get people thinking about how they wish the organisation's budget to be prioritised to best meet their needs.

The Brum Budget Challenge allows you to adjust the amount spent on key services provided by the city, or alter the income generated via chargeable services or council tax, as you try to set a balanced budget.

The feedback you give from completing the Brum Budget Challenge will be considered by the council and help inform decision making ahead of the finalisation of the 2022-2023 budget.

Take the Brum Budget Challenge.



Make your new year's resolution to play or sing with Misfits Music

Would you love to sing with a choir? Or do you play an instrument but haven't had a chance lately (or ever) to play with other people?

Based in south Brum, Misfits Music is a friendly organisation offering a range of music groups for people who sing or play any musical instrument to any ability. Find out how to join the Misfits choir, rock band or instrumental groups by visiting misfitsmusic.org.uk or emailing rob@misfitsmusic.org.uk.



Rethinking Income Streams: free training for social enterprises

We can't usually support community interest companies (CICs) with our events and services. It's not because we don't love them ([here's why we must have the policy](#), in case you're interested) - and we're always pleased to share resources and information with people who run them.

So here's something useful right here! To help social impact organisations adapt to the 'new normal', social enterprise development organisation iSE and the Social Enterprise Academy are offering a free series of sessions on new ways to generate income. [Learn about Rethinking Income Streams on our blog](#) - and sign up for the January sessions.



Board opportunities at Birmingham Friends of the Earth

Birmingham Friends of the Earth (which also operates [The Warehouse](#) in Digbeth) is seeking a new chair of the board. The environmental change organisation is also looking to recruit one or two new board members. If you love community buildings, care about the environment and have relevant skills and time, [here's what you](#)

[need to do to apply](#). The deadline is Monday 24 January.



Interesting events

We've rounded up these events in Birmingham and beyond to keep you inspired and energised through the winter months.

If you have a January or February event you'd like us to consider sharing in our next newsletter (coming out in early January), please email info@birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk as soon as you can.

December

Online Muslim Singles Event 25-40 Birmingham

Sunday 19 December (and other dates)

Pranayama Joy of Breathing

Wednesday 22 December (and other dates)

Birmingham Cathedral Guided Tour

Monday 27 December (and other dates)

January

Birmingham Meditation: Learn, practice, relax and grow!

Sunday 2 January (and other dates)

Caring for Carers Dementia Support Group

Monday 3 January (and other dates)

Well Body & Mind LGBTQ+ Men's Social

Saturday 8 January (and other dates)

Menopause Cafe - hosted by Women's Network at University of Birmingham

Friday 14 January

Tree Warden training

Saturday 15 January

Black mixed-race Birmingham in perspective: 'Making Mixed Race'

Wednesday 19 January

Possible2Achieve. Employability and skills in East Birmingham

Wednesday 19 January

Onsite Chair Massages: Innovation Bham

Tuesday 25 January

Transgender Awareness Training

Monday 31 January

Keep going ... thank you for reading this far!

Merry Christmas!

Thank you for subscribing to our newsletter and continuing to help Birmingham Community Matters grow in 2021.

Keep well, keep safe, and we hope you get to enjoy the holidays with the people who matter most to you.

Love from the BCM team

www.birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk (new website coming in 2021)

www.twitter.com/brummatters

www.facebook.com/birminghamcommunitymatters

You are subscribed to our mailing list either after attending one of our sessions or from signing up via our website. You can of course unsubscribe at any time – just email **info@birminghamcommunitymatters.org.uk**.



**Everyone has something to learn and
everyone has something to teach**