



LADYWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD NETWORK SCHEME

## Overview of NNS Ladywood

**Birmingham City Councillors – Soho-Jewellery Quarter Ward  
Ward Zoom Meeting – Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020  
7 pm to 8 pm**

### **Community Asset Register**

At the end of March 2020, in line with the city-wide response to the pandemic, we revised the way we engaged with assets to undertake mapping. As we were in lockdown and no face to face delivery was taking place, we devised a monitoring spreadsheet as part of our Phase 1 approach:

- This spreadsheet was designed to enable us to continue maintaining regular contact with assets in the old way of working and also enable us to focus on some of the more immediate needs of assets and individuals at a time when many were feeling nervous, anxious and misinformed about the pandemic.
- Types of support provided include food parcels, debt and benefits advice, befriending, online health & wellbeing activities, mental health support etc. This information was then submitted weekly to BVSC.

### **Steering Group/Partnership Development/Relationships with Social Workers**

#### **Wider Steering Group**

The Wider Steering Group met once via zoom during the late/early part of the pandemic; since July 2020, we have been meeting monthly via Zoom, and extended our partnership workings due to the pandemic.

- As a partnership and with all the other city wide responses across the city, we thought it would be useful to share details of changes we made to NNS delivery in response to the crisis as well as get feedback on what work members have been undertaking since the pandemic started.
- It was really heart-warming to see the support each were giving to their local communities within the Ladywood constituency. To inform steering group members of how they too can get involved in securing funds to provide essential services during the pandemic, as the lead for Early Help Children & Families, we were also able to provide an overview of the aim of the scheme, as well as share detail of gaps in provision that could be covered through grants.

#### **Partnership Board**

The partnership remains unchanged, partners from Birmingham Settlement, Karis Neighbour Scheme, Nechells POD and Soho First CDT. Partners, in particular project support workers, received on-going support from the project lead and project coordinator via telephone and email on the direction that BVSC and BCC required the partnership to take; as part of the city-wide response. Stakeholders from the Ladywood Adult Social Care Team, BVSC and BCC commissioning team are all part of this partnership. It should be said that our approach to this very different way of working was fully supported by the stakeholders named above.

### **Social Work Team**


Interaction with social work teams was fairly limited during the early stages of the pandemic; therefore the Three Conversations model was put on hold. The team manager for Ladywood advised that some teams had experienced personal loss during the period and some were shielding, but all social workers were working remotely from home with communication undertaken via Microsoft Teams video links and emails.

- As we move into our next phases, we will need to have a wider discussion with team leads to see how we can resume the old way of working to better link with them to support the citizens they are working with now and post-COVID-19.
- As a result of lockdown measures in place and other challenges faced by social work teams across the 4 wards, project support workers were unable to participate in weekly ward meetings, as these were put on hold. The project co-ordinator was however encouraged, to attend their weekly online allocation meetings.

### **Small/Micro Grants Scheme update**

To date, grant awards totalling £89.634 have been awarded. We resumed our Small Grants Panel Meetings from July 2020 (including citizens, some of whom were on the vulnerable list) were unable to meet face to face because of lockdown, we paused our face to face meetings in March.

- During this time we encouraged project support workers to work with assets who already had a small grant prior to Covid-19 to consider a change of use for their activity to meet pandemic needs within their local communities.
- We also encouraged new applications from assets who felt they were in a position to either partner with thematic leads or deliver a service in response to the crisis on their own. To support leads across the city our commissioning officer supported with approval of applications submitted via email.
- Below is an example of the impact of awarding small grants to groups working hard to support with needs during the pandemic. This group based in Hockley also received additional top up funding to support their delivery:

	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Richmond House Park Road Hockley Birmingham B18 5HE</b></p>
<b>Number of citizens served from 13th April 2020 to current</b>	2353
<b>Number of social work referrals</b>	37
<b>Age</b>	Age range from 5yrs old to 95 years old - no gender or ethnicity recorded
<b>Older citizens (50+)</b>	Approx. 70%
<b>Children &amp; families</b>	Approx. 30%
<b>Homeless</b>	6 homeless citizens
<b>Deviations from original proposal/project</b>	No deviations
<b>Impact - what we can see happening/any trends developing</b>	More people becoming reliant on the food bank

## **Good news story**

A lady from Great Barr found £5 on the road. She added her own money and bought food which she donated to the food bank.

## **Community Asset Development and Capacity Building/Scaffolding update plans**

As well as mapping and appraising grant proposals they were also tasked with working with assets to help them understand ways to build their capacity and work towards long term sustainability. This was done in a number of ways from support with key policies, volunteers, PPE/social distancing guidelines, access to free training and telephone support.

Online Workshops consisted of mindfulness, mental health awareness, safeguarding adults, Intro to bid writing, using data in fundraising, funding surgery's, hoarding, of which 82 personnel participated in between July-Sep 2020. On-line workshops are now available for the period of Sep-Nov 2020 for all individuals and/or assets.

## **COVID-19 – Local Coordination update**

Since mid-March our work has focussed on the city-wide response to Covid-19. As the lead agency we are still part of the city-wide response to the crisis across the city, working closely with other constituencies and thematic leads identified by BVSC through cross sector partnerships. Taking account of capacity and the many challenges around the practicalities of working from home project support workers based across the 4 wards were tasked with the following during the period:

- Continued mapping of existing, new, and emerging groups, those who are providing a service in their community wards during the crisis.
- Making contacts with existing assets to establish whether they are still open/closed as well as the opportunities for re-engagement of their groups, projects (linked to government guidelines) during and post the crisis. This was undertaken via telephone, text, emails and as appropriate Zoom and Microsoft Teams.)
- Providing basic guidance, referrals, and signposting assets/individuals within communities to appropriate agencies accordingly for such things as food distribution, befriending, volunteering, mental health, digital inclusion, etc. This work was undertaken via telephone, text, e-mails, WhatsApp, and where feasible Zoom or Microsoft Teams.
- Continued work with assets (those who have already been awarded small grants) to adapt existing proposals so they fit with Covid-19 to enable them to continue supporting their communities during and post-Covid-19.
- Working with assets to submit new applications for funding (that relates to COVID-19) directly to BCC for approval whilst the small grants panel was temporarily suspended
- Continued weekly submission of data to BVSC for publishing on Route to Wellbeing from all 4 wards.

## **Citizens**

There is still citizen representation across all 4 wards of the constituency; as far as they are able to participate given COVID-19; and five out of the six being in the vulnerable age group, one having mild symptoms of COVID-19.

## **Challenges**

The challenges faced have been as follows:

- **Momentum** – Some assets have been closed since the lockdown. Many were reluctant to continue operating for fears of contracting the disease, vulnerability, anxiety, lack of understanding of government guidelines around PPE and social distancing, but some of these are now re-opening.
- **Advocacy/Mentoring** – small grantees had to re-adapt their projects given the above. They are now responding to the challenge of thinking about how they will operate during and post Covid-19. Some were very unreceptive initially, but project support workers have worked closely with assets to get them to consider various alternatives to re-engaging their respective groups.
- **Citizens** – seniors have been in the lockdown for the initial 12 weeks of COVID-19 under government guidelines, so face-to-face interaction and/or intervention has been limited or non-existent and now they are having to deal with the latest government guidelines in living with COVID-19.
- **Social Work Teams** - lack of communication and understanding where teams are with three conversations model.

#### **Gaps in provision continue to include:**

Befriending  
 Services for Somalian community  
 Deep cleaning/hoarding actions  
 Learning disability services  
 Benefits and debt advice  
 Home visiting service  
 Transportation  
 Advocacy  
 Volunteering  
 Home maintenance  
 Gardening  
 Digital exclusion – new citywide gap identified during lockdown.

#### **Good News/Stories**

- Birmingham Care Group – granted a letter from Mayor of Birmingham to thank them for the support given to their community during Covid-19.
- Three assets received grants to support the community with digital inclusion.
- St Germain's Church gave a presentation at the latest Wider Steering Group Meeting to highlight the work they undertook around Covid-19 with a grant award they received in April. An extract of the presentation follows:  
 "Due to Covid-19 the church had to re-direct its support towards the pandemic and revise its community support on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. They offered a cooked meal service. Requests for boxes/bags of food, increased week on week. They have been cooking meals for 20 to 146 individuals and giving out boxes/bags of food to approx. 170. They estimate they are reaching approximately 600 households within their local area. They have been distributing activities as well as offering telephone 'befriending' led by a trained counsellor to offer emotional well-being support around isolation of elderly citizens with health conditions, supporting large BAME family groups who are concerned over death rates, those with limited language skills, housing issues and elderly male citizens living in hostels. They have a Face Book page advertising their services. Members of the Wider Steering Group thanked Heather for her presentation. They felt that St Germain's Church were doing fantastic impressive work!

### **Social Media Links**

Ladywood NNS Facebook link - <https://www.facebook.com/Ladywood-Neighbourhood-Network-Scheme-113330650306938/>

Twitter account - @Networkscheme - <https://twitter.com/NetworkScheme>

Lead Agency Website: <http://www.birminghamsettlement.org.uk/settlement-services/ageing-well/>

### **Other Updates**

Birmingham Settlement acquired the lead role for Early Help Children & Families in the Ladywood locality. Introduced in April and run by Birmingham Children's Partnership this model brings services and communities together to respond to the crisis across the city. Working closely with schools, community organisations/groups and the public/statutory sector, the Ladywood team have been working hard supporting with family connect referrals and applications for resilience funding for families to meet emergency needs. In addition we have worked in partnership with BVSC, to operate a small grants scheme to financially support groups who can provide activities for families. Discussions are now underway with NNS Leads and the Children's Partnership to combine the NNS and Early Help Scheme models to offer a universal service to families incorporating all age groups later in the year. Interesting times ahead!!