

Prevention Newsletter

Issue 4: 2021

Focus on Hodge Hill



Photo credit: Saheli Hub. Cycling for the over 50s in Ward End Park is one of the community-based activities grant funded by the Hodge Hill Neighbourhood Network Scheme. For further information contact: shaafia@saheli.co.uk

INTRODUCTION

There is some fantastic work happening in communities all over Birmingham. As the Prevention and Communities Commissioning Team, based in Birmingham City Council's Adult Social Care Directorate we're pleased we can support some of this. Each month we focus on a different constituency to share local knowledge and showcase the wide range of initiatives taking place. We aim to share examples and 'stories of difference' from across all the different services and support we manage. This includes Neighbourhood Network Schemes, the Prevention and Communities Grants Programme, our Covid-19 response, Vulnerable Adults Grants and the city-wide Information, Advice and Guidance contracts. So welcome to our fourth newsletter!

Adult Social Care has recently appointed Community Networking Support Officers (CNSOs) in each constituency. In Hodge Hill the CNSO is Mary Jordan. The CNSOs work on a one to one basis with an individual in proactively undertaking "preventative" work to stop or delay people needing to enter the care and support system. Therefore, Mary works with people prior to them having care and support needs. She also works with those individuals who often fall through the cracks of Adult Social Care as they do not quite meet the threshold, but without support, will likely end up coming back to the system in crisis. She says: "At this present time, I am mapping the area, gathering resources and looking for local community hubs, churches and community connectors, to promote the service and connect me with the local community." Check the back page for contact details.

We recognise the amazing support given by voluntary, community and faith organisations to communities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Thank you! It is clear the Covid-19 vaccination programme is progressing well and there is a wealth of information about the Covid-19 vaccine programme in Birmingham, including useful community information, on the BVSC website: www.bvsc.org/Pages/Category/vaccination-programme

Organisations have supported us in pandemic and we look forward to working with them in the recovery process. We are supporting BVSC and Acivico to provide workshops and one to one support around building risk assessments to assist with reopening. If you would like to take this up please contact Michele on admin@bvsc.org

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Hodge Hill Neighbourhood Network Scheme

What Are Neighbourhood Network Schemes?



Neighbourhood Network Schemes (NNSs) are designed to support older people in Birmingham to connect with individuals, groups, organisations, activities, services and places in their local neighbourhood. They are an integral part of Birmingham City Council's community social work model.

A key task of NNS teams is to identify all the community activity and services which can support people who are 50+. This information can now be found on the Connect To Support Directory: <https://birmingham.connecttosupport.org>

Key aims of Hodge Hill NNS

Hodge Hill Neighbourhood Network Scheme (NNS) supports people 50yrs+ to connect to other people, group activities and services in their area. The scheme can help older adults with living healthy and independent lives, staying active, reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation. We work with social workers, GPs, social prescribers and other health and care professionals.

The team consists of:

- Abdul Raheem, Community Manager
- Natalie Swain, Development Worker
- Ravoli Blake, Coordinator
- Dirk Wright, Grants Officer

Hodge Hill NNS often work with small groups such as residents' groups, to empower members to use their expertise within the community, to build activities that serve citizens.

They do this by working in partnership with charities such as Birmingham Community Matters, host grant writing workshops and share other funding opportunities on a regular basis. From one of their grant-writing workshops, they encouraged Lea Village and Kitts Green Residents' Group to push forward with their project idea and apply for NNS funding. This project was subsequently awarded funding.

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Free Training for Local Groups



Hodge Hill NNS conducted a short survey back in autumn to identify gaps in skills and knowledge throughout the Hodge Hill community.

From this they hosted 12 training sessions/workshops, which included a variety of topics such as safeguarding, mental health, domestic violence, structures and committees and healthy living. These workshops have been a chance for community group members to brush up on training, and strengthen their organisations

Fantastic Support for the Community

Supporting community groups throughout the pandemic has not been easy with the new way of working being remotely.

Although some groups have closed permanently, many were able to adapt the way they work to continue providing support to their community. Whether it was emergency food supplies delivered to doorsteps, online coffee mornings or a digital lending library, community groups across the constituency have really pulled together to be there for one another.

NNS - Supporting Social Work Teams

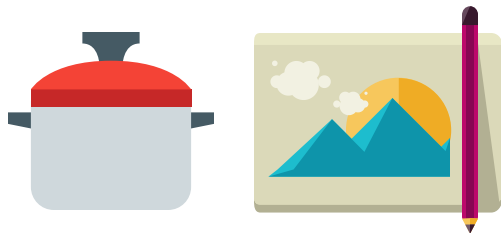
Linking to Local Organisations

This month we have spoken to a couple of members of the Hodge Hill Adult Social Care team to find out how the Neighbourhood Network Scheme has helped them find the right support.

Mumtaz Sharif, Senior Social Care Practitioner explained that he was supporting a citizen and her family who were, in need of an urgent food supply after recently moving into their new property.

It transpired that the citizen's details had been delivered to her previous address and fraudulently used. The citizen's benefits were subsequently suspended until the matter was fully investigated, leaving them without any money for food or essential items for a number of weeks. Thanks to NNS, they were able to request emergency food parcels which were delivered to the citizen and her family on two separate occasions from As-Suffa.

The NNS team were also able to provide additional details for another emergency food organisation, Green Lane Mosque in Bordesley Green. They deliver and provide hygiene and cleaning products, which were also very much needed. The citizen was extremely grateful for our support and the information provided by the NNS.



Mumtaz said

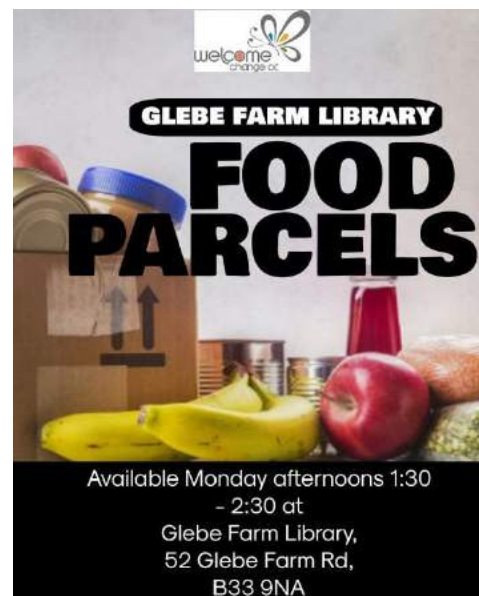
“ I also made a request to the NNS for a citizen with a learning disability and autism, who has not attended their day centre, for the last 14 months. The citizen was previously attending five days per week. This has impacted on her health and wellbeing, as she was lacking structure and stimulation. The citizen really enjoys creative activities, cooking, jigsaws and puzzles. ”

“ After contacting the NNS, I learnt that Age Concern have home activities, including cooking packs. Their Day Care at Home service provides food bags, recipes, colouring books, mindful word searches and so on. Age Concern delivered the items to the citizen who really enjoyed using them, especially the cooking packs. In addition, I found out that the NNS has also funded a puzzle project, providing puzzles/ jigsaws to over 50s. ”

A Welcome Contact

We have also heard from Mohammed, a Social Care Practitioner, who said:

“ I was supporting a citizen who was not able to leave his home and needed a food parcel. I phoned so many different organisations without any success. I emailed Hodge Hill NNS who provided me with the details for Lea Village Community Hub, which was local to the citizen. I made contact with Lea Village Community Hub who arranged a food parcel to be delivered on that afternoon. Lea Village Community Hub would normally not deliver food parcels and work on a collection only basis, however given the circumstances, it was agreed. ”



CONTACT
EMAIL
SAM.MARSH@WELCOME-CHANGE.ORG.UK
OR CALL VICKI ON 07415162289

Extending NNS to Younger Adults

New for Hodge Hill NNS

Currently all Neighbourhood Network Schemes across the city have a focus of adults over 50. The City Council is piloting extending the existing NNS model to benefit a wider range of citizens in two constituencies. Hodge Hill will be one of the pilot areas, along with Sutton Coldfield.

Who Will Benefit from this Proposal?

The pilot will be to support younger adults with additional needs, aged 18 to 50 years, who have a long-term disability or are likely to have a care or support need in the future.

In particular this will include people with:

- learning disabilities,
- physical disabilities,
- autism,
- mental ill-health, and
- sensory loss or impairment.

The current key focus on supporting community activities for the over 50s will very much continue too. In addition, this is not about providing additional case work for citizens, but supporting all community organisations to better engage with these groups and run activities and services.

The aim of these one year pilots is to learn about what support is needed by citizens with these additional needs, which community organisations or assets are providing support and how the NNS model will need to be adjusted to meet these needs. This learning will help us to consider what to do in the future.



Photo by Hristo Sahatchiev on Unsplash



Image designed by Freepik

What Type of Activity Will be Supported?

There is already a wide range of community based activity and services run across the city for these groups of people.

Examples include the inter-generational art project for the Deaf community (mentioned on page 11), discos for young adults with learning disabilities, support groups run by and for citizens with particular disabilities, befriending and sailing for people who are blind and visually impaired and production of a Covid-19 "soothing pack" for those suffering anxiety.

We Need Your Help!

Hodge Hill NNS will be collating a list of any such activity in the constituency and mapping this, and, along with social work teams, agreeing priorities. Later in the year the plan is to release some additional NNS grants to support additional activity.

We would love to hear from you if you run an organisation that supports citizens with those particular long-term disabilities or if you would like to do more to include them. We are also hoping to talk to citizens with disabilities to better understand what else is needed locally. Please get in contact via the NNS contacts on the back page.

All Eyes on the East

What is Inclusive Growth?

The City Council's East Birmingham Inclusive Growth team have been working closely with the Hodge Hill NNS to develop new and innovative approaches across the Hodge Hill constituency.

The East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy (EBIGS) was launched in February 2020. The strategy is the foundation for a wider initiative looking to transform East Birmingham – giving this vast swathe of Birmingham (everything from the A38 Kingsbury Road in the north to A45 Coventry Road in the south) the attention it deserves – and untapping its vast potential.

The strategy focuses on projects of all types and works alongside organisations of all sizes.

There are four key areas of focus and projects fit into different timescales, short and long-term:



Jobs and Skills



Health and Wellbeing



Transport and Infrastructure



Local Centre and Green Spaces

Working Together

The EBIGS team is very fortunate to have a very strong relationship with the Hodge Hill NNS team and we have been working closely to develop a wide variety of projects. Successes to date include:

- Joint working to assess what assets are located in Hodge Hill.
- Referring groups who can potentially benefit from NNS funding. In many cases projects have been successfully funded.
- Hodge Hill NNS has referred groups and projects to EBIGS.



Photo credit: EBIGS Team

- Helped to develop cross-boundary working, especially between Hodge Hill and Yardley constituencies – owing to the very extensive and complex boundary.
- Joint working of new innovative projects to help resolve longstanding issues.
- The EBIGS team regularly attend Hodge Hill NNS Steering Group meetings, update sessions, project meetings and community events.



Photo credit: EBIGS

Going Forward

James Carless from the EBIGS says:

“ The work to deliver EBIGS has just started, and we have no doubt that this EBIGS/ Hodge Hill NNS relationship will continue to strengthen and provide even more successes going forward. This is an important time for East Birmingham and our colleagues at Hodge Hill NNS are a very important part of this. ”

E-mail: planningandregenerationenquiries@birmingham.gov.uk

Tel: (0121) 303 3988

Web: www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20054/planning_strategies_and_policies/2048/east_birmingham_inclusive_growth_strategy

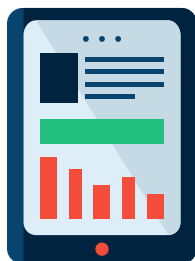
Hodge Hill NNS Small Grants

What are these grants?

POhWER as the lead facilitator for Hodge Hill NNS (HHNNS), has opened up two fund streams during 2020-21. These are the HHNNS General Fund and the HHNNS Covid-19 Emergency Fund. Both of these funds remain available to apply to for the foreseeable future. However, guided by central government, as the country moves towards the end of the national Covid-19 Roadmap, the HHNNS Covid-19 funding programme will end in June 2021.

The priorities reflect feedback from local organisations and social workers and, during the Covid-19 pandemic have included physical and mental health wellbeing and digital exclusion.

Access to Technology



'L.E.A.P' is a lending I.T. library that ensures equal access for ALL to online services and learning, which promotes, supports and strengthens the whole families' well-being.

It is being run by Go Woman Alliance, an Alum Rock based organisation.

Each device is customised on loan to include, English language apps, Zoom, Adobe etc. The project provides all round support, including access to welfare services, self-development and social participation activities. L.E.A.P supports citizens to take charge of their future and builds members' confidence. The L.E.A.P project has filled a short-term gap that arose from the coronavirus pandemic, which has ensured that during lockdown, citizens within Alum Rock and Ward End have the support network they need.

Email: Yasmin Akhtar - yasmin@gwacic.com
Website: www.gwacic.com/

Hot Meals and Chats

Lea Village and Kitts Green Neighbourhood Forum is a volunteer-led organisation in Lea Village (which is in the Glebe Farm and Tile Cross ward). Their core focus is bringing our community together and providing support for their most vulnerable residents in the Lea Village community.



With a small grant, from NNS grant scheme they were able to provide a weekly soup kitchen and walk and talk sessions for vulnerable older residents (aged 50+) affected by Covid-19 and the lockdown during November and December 2020. They provided 30 people per week. The hot meals helped these vulnerable people meet their basic needs at a difficult time. It helped ease the loneliness and depression caused by isolating and they felt reassured that the community cared for them.



One citizen explained how this support had benefitted her:

“When my husband went into hospital and passed away during the pandemic, I felt extremely lonely. The support I have received from LVKG Neighbourhood Forum and First Needs Community Hub has made a huge difference to my life. It has given me the opportunity to express my feelings.”

Email: leavillageforum@outlook.com
Website: www.facebook.com/LVKGRF

Hodge Hill NNS Small Grants (2)

Listening to Women

Bethel Health and Healing Network promotes good mental health and wellbeing among the diverse communities of Birmingham and surrounding areas.

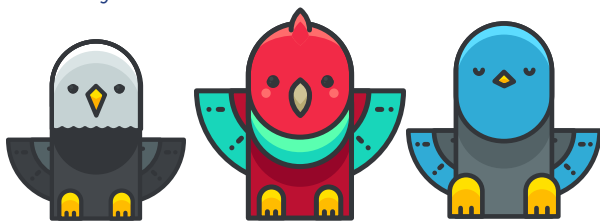
Through a grant from the Hodge Hill Neighbourhood Network scheme, they were able to expand the Rapha Listening Service in the Hodge Hill area and provide a safe and non-judgemental listening support to women aged 18 plus experiencing low level mental health issues or who were lonely and isolated.

The grant enabled them to recruit and train 15 female volunteers in Effective Listening Skills and develop a diverse team with local language skills. 31 vulnerable women accessed up to 12 listening sessions. Participants felt listened to and valued and supported at a time when things had been particularly challenging and they have been better able to manage their personal issues and stress.

Email: rapha@bethelnetwork.org.uk
Website: www.bethelnetwork.org.uk/rapha-services/
Phone: 07825 221150

Bags of Hope

The Bags of Hope project has been run by Christ Church with St Margaret's in Ward End. Here is their story:



“Over the last year, we have become increasingly conscious of the impact of social isolation on our neighbours and friends. We came up with the idea of delivering monthly “Bags of Hope.” The aim was to cheer people up with bags containing something to do, a friendly message and other goodies. Personal delivery acknowledges the value to wellbeing of a regular doorstep conversation.”

In March, each bag contained a ceramic bird feeder, with pens to decorate and some birdseed so that bag recipients could get creative and then feed the birds outside - here is one happy recipient showing her beautiful artwork!



Email: rev.ruthccwe@gmail.com
Website: www.ccwe.org.uk

Welcome Change Foodbank



When the Glebe Farm Library closed, Welcome Change wondered how they could help the local community during the pandemic and decided to set up a food bank. Before long they had a foodbank operating from Lea Village, Lea Forest Academy and Glebe Farm Library (covering Shard End and Glebe Farm & Tile Cross wards) every week! We have been told:

“There was a real sense of community and support and were able to get donations from lots of different sources and my car seats were permanently down as we picked up donations most days. It was heart-warming to be able to help people through such a difficult time.”

Website: www.welcome-change.org.uk
Email: hello@welcome-change.org.uk
Website: <https://welcome-change.org.uk/>

Prevention & Communities Grants

What are these grants?

In summer 2019 there was an open application process for organisations able to support the City Council's Prevention First agenda. Forty-six organisations were successful. Details can be seen in the Prospectus (bit.ly/2JfWH8K). Due to Covid-19 these have had to adapt, but almost all are still delivering activities and support. Please contact them directly to check what they can offer at the moment.



Moving Outdoors & Online

“ I am Rashta Butt the Centre Manager at **Unity Hubb**. We are based in **St. Margaret's Church, Ward End** and deliver a range of activities and services to meet the needs of local people. Our Prevention and Communities grant has developed and expanded these services.



Due to Covid-19, our support has changed from centre based to online and outdoors activities including:

- WhatsApp peer support groups
- Allotment projects
- Zoom - Well-being; Chaii and Chat; Yoga; cooking; play sessions
- Work with volunteers to deliver services
- Community clean ups.

Going forwards, we're excited to get back on the ground and to start welcoming the community again at our centre. We will build on our pandemic experiences and continue to deliver and develop new activities.”



The Diverse Garden



St Margaret's Community Trust Unity Hubb has received additional NNS funding to support women in the area and have been using an allotment innovatively.

Being able to grow produce has made people feel reconnected with their heritage. Citizens have brought their children and grandchildren and are growing vegetables that are not normally grown in the UK using seeds from Pakistan that they share with others. The allotment is also a place where people can come and meet – it's not just about growing.



Following conversations between the women about childhood, community volunteers are going to create a clay oven or tandoor at the allotment. This will enable citizens to rediscover their childhood memories of outdoor cooking and cooking in a clay oven.

Although the community engaged with the idea of creating the clay oven are predominantly Pakistani, members of the community with Caribbean, Iranian and White British backgrounds are excited about using the oven and sharing skills that they have around outdoor cooking from their own cultures. Rashta's vision is for the community to be able to harvest food from the allotment and then cook and eat it together.

Email: Info@stmargaretscommunitytrust.co.uk
Website: www.theunityhubb.co.uk

Prevention & Communities Grants (2)

Day Care At Home

During the pandemic, Age Concern Birmingham received a call from Mr W who had just returned home from hospital and among his post was one of their leaflets and a rainbow picture painted by Quinn aged 7.



Mr Wilson said:

“ I am so very grateful that this young boy who doesn't even know me, has taken the time to paint such a difficult thing so beautifully, because rainbows are not the easiest things to draw, and the bald-headed man in the picture” could actually be me!



The Prevention and Communities Grant supports Age Concern Birmingham's day care services across Birmingham. Throughout Covid-19 they have adapted their service and provided a flexible range of support including:

- Well-being calls to provide extra support and reassurance
- Essential food, meals and non-food delivery
- Information Advice and Guidance

LJ said:

“ The shopping service has been a life line in the current situation. Our lovely volunteer, Emma, always phones when she says she will and rings me to let me know if there's anything she hasn't been able to get, giving me another choice. She's not just a volunteer, to me she's now a friend.”

sulford@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk 0788411758
Email laurels@ageconcernbirmingham.org.uk 07908870904

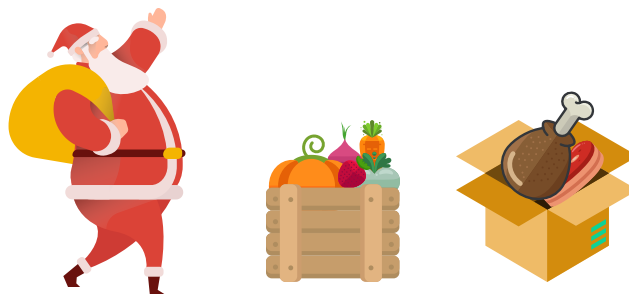
Support in Bromford

CAFLO is a charity running a community and sports centre in Bromford. Their Prevention and Communities Nifty 50's project, supports people aged fifty plus to adopt a healthier lifestyle by attending healthy eating and exercise sessions and providing volunteering opportunities.

Through the hard work of their team and partners, they adapted their service to meet the demands of Covid-19 by offering:

- Food parcels and hot meals home deliveries
- Providing free fresh food in the community
- Mental health support and
- Volunteers Befriending support.

As restrictions ease, people still need food parcels, benefit advice and mental health support. To meet these challenges, CAFLO will recruit new volunteers and develop plans so they will meet the future needs of people in their community.



Over the Christmas period they saw how the community came together. They supplied fantastic food boxes including meat and vegetables to over 100 families.

Some of the staff and volunteers worked 14 hour days to ensure the project was a success. The hard work paid off with comments such as:

“Without CAFLO Christmas would have been desperately lonely.”

“Thank you for the Christmas presents and the dinner. I now believe in Father Christmas. You made us feel cared for and loved”

“CAFLO really made our Christmas.”

Website: www.facebook.com/Community-Actions-for-Local-Opportunities-321534858738344/

BID Services - A Vulnerable Adults Grant Case Study

What are the Vulnerable Adults Grants?

At the beginning of the pandemic the City Council put out a call to the voluntary and community sector. This was to provide additional support to adults who might be clinically vulnerable to Covid-19 and also to isolation and poor health due to lockdown. Sixteen organisations were grant funded. BID Services is one example that operates city-wide.

Supporting the Deaf Community



Credit for photo: BID Services

BID Services ensures comprehensive support to Birmingham's Deaf, hard of hearing and Deafblind community by providing training to stakeholders and Befrienders, employment services, youth activities, digital training and services relating to health and well-being.

During Covid-19, BID Services provided a range of services and activities to ensure that those living with sensory impairments were able to avoid isolation and access the support they needed.

They connected people to each other through a befriending service and online activities such as a social group for Deaf and hard of hearing citizens. In addition to providing social connections, befrienders were assigned to identify needs such as food parcels, shopping, medication and other essential supplies. Befrienders have also been collecting and delivering food, shopping and medication.

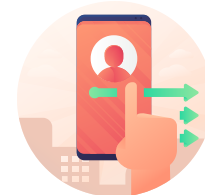
Daily updates given around Covid-19 were often inaccessible to the Deaf Community. Therefore, BID Services provided regular updates via visits and video calls, in individuals' preferred method of communication. Alongside this work, BID Services has worked with the Public Health to create and disseminate accessible information regarding Covid-19 to the city's Deaf community.

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How "H" Has Been Supported in Lockdown

H struggled during Covid-19 and had self-isolated at her sister's home. H is profoundly Deaf and has a visual impairment.

H felt very isolated and lonely and received very little support due to Covid-19 restrictions. For a long period of time during lockdown, H did not venture out and felt nervous when going for a walk up her road with her dual sensory guide dog. This left H feeling the strength in her legs weaken, causing an additional worry for her. H's sister only has basic BSL and therefore H missed conversations in her first language.



H was then matched with one their volunteer Befrienders. Following this, H regularly messaged to say thank you and that she was enjoying the company and having someone to speak to and laugh with over FaceTime and help her understand the current situation with Covid-19.



H was also supported to setup and use Zoom, and was linked with an exercise tutor delivering remote chair-based exercises, which helped to increase her leg strength. H also joined the BID Services Friday Art Group, an intergenerational project aimed at increasing wellbeing through art activities for Deaf young and older people.

Website: www.bid.org.uk/birmingham-the-west-midlands/birmingham-the-west-midlands-1
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bidsv

Contact Details



Hodge Hill NNS Contact

Natalie Swain, Development Worker
Email: HodgeHillNNS@pohwer.net
Phone: 0121 726 8577 (charged at local rate)

Hodge Hill
Neighbourhood Network
Scheme (NNS)



Follow Hodge Hill NNS on Facebook:
[@hodgehillneighbourhoodnetworkscheme](https://www.facebook.com/hodgehillneighbourhoodnetworkscheme)



Birmingham City Council Commissioning Team Contacts

The Prevention & Communities Commissioning Team consists of:

- Emil Prysak – Team Manager:
Emil.Prysak@birmingham.gov.uk
- Rita Adams – Contract Manager for Hodge Hill NNS:
Rita.Adams@birmingham.gov.uk

Plus:

- Rukia Siddique
- Quaced Hussain
- Matthew Bick
- Claire Starmer
- Susan Coke
- Rita Adams

To make a referral or enquiry to Mary Jordan (see page 1) or one of the other nine Community Networking Support Officers across the city please contact:

CommunityNetworkSupportTeam@birmingham.gov.uk

We are supported by BVSC

- Benita Wishart – BenitaW@bvsc.org
- Rosie Barrett

