

# Prevention Newsletter

## Issue 8: 2021

### Focus on Hall Green



Participant enjoying the "Sow and Grow" Therapeutic Horticultural Gardening Project at Kings Heath Park run by Thrive Birmingham

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the eighth newsletter from the Prevention and Communities (P&C) Commissioning Team within Adult Social Care. In these newsletters we want to share some of the work we support and fund that happens in communities all over Birmingham. Voluntary, community and faith organisations, along with social enterprises do some fantastic work to assist both older and vulnerable adults. This month we are focusing on Hall Green constituency, as well as some city-wide provision.

A range of classes are funded to support wellbeing and provide opportunities to connect with other people locally, as well as learning new skills. Examples in this newsletter include growing and gardening, art, swimming and yoga classes. There's a spotlight on a local music group and a community-minded litter picking group. There are also organisations which support citizens in need and examples included in this edition are an interfaith volunteer bereavement befriending service and an outreach community care project.

This edition provides an insight into the work of Hall Green Neighbourhood Network Scheme (NNS). The City Council asked NNSs to help coordinate support for citizens in need during the Covid-19 pandemic and ensured that the constituency small grants schemes supported this. The article on Page 3 summarises this work and celebrates a great outcome. **3682 citizens** in Hall Green were supported by 22 NNS projects during this time.

Can we also remind you that there are two websites which have a lot of information about NNSs including the new video explaining what they do and demonstrating some of the impact.

- You can go to Connect to Support: <https://bit.ly/3hQm1IJ>
- Or BVSC's website: <https://bit.ly/3IHuVRw>

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# Hall Green 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 Hall Green NNS

The Hall Green Neighbourhood Network Scheme aims to connect people aged 50 and over to the right activities or services in their local communities at the right time. The aim is to help people stay living at home, independently for as long as possible.

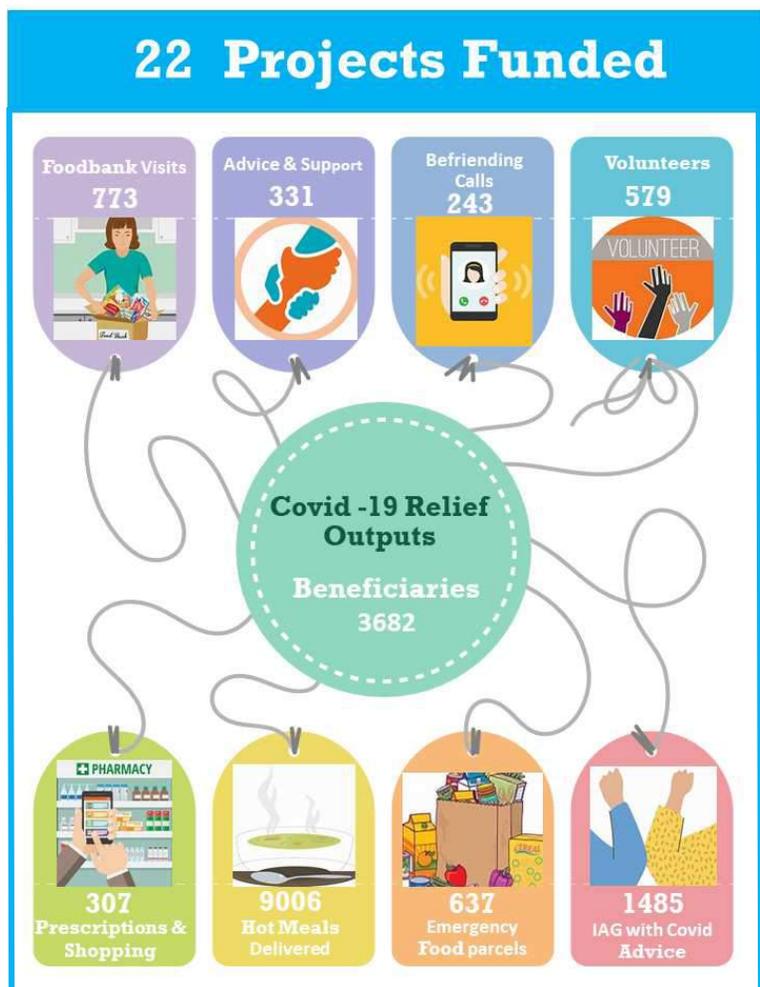
GreenSquareAccord is the lead organisation responsible for making the NNS vision for older citizens living in the Hall Green constituency a reality.

The NNS team work with community groups and organisations and help link older citizens to their local activities and services. The team engage with social workers and help connect them and the citizens they work with to community organisations. They also work with stakeholders in the planning and design of new community activities and services to improve the range of local activities.

The Hall Green NNS Steering Group oversees the project's progress and includes representation from Birmingham City Council, BVSC, and the Hall Green Social Work team, a range of statutory agencies and community organisations and local citizens.

## Capacity Building

Small grants of up to £10,000 are available to help local organisations/groups develop and run new community activities and services. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Hall Green NNS funded 22



projects with a total investment of £171,568. These were supported by almost 600 volunteers. The infographic above shows how this has benefitted the residents of Hall Green.

Over the next pages, examples of the projects supported by NNS grants in Hall Green are described. Pages 7 and 8 outline some of the further ways that the NNS team support Hall Green based community groups and organisations.

# NNS Supporting Professionals

This page demonstrates how the Hall Green Neighbourhood Network team has become valued by members of the Adult Social Care Social Work Team. There are two further services which support citizens who work closely with the NNS team. These are the GP-linked Social Prescribing Link Workers and the new Community Network Support Officers based in the City Council.

## Views from the Social Work Team

I think that NNS had a large part to play with the Kings Heath & Moseley drop in surgery before the lockdown and we have been able to identify organisations through NNS to support people living in the community which has prevented costly care packages and which will also give support with restarting the community surgery. We do refer colleagues to the NNS directory when looking at what services would be beneficial and when looking at signposting to community groups.

Heather Thompson - Senior Social Care Practitioner

Hall Green is building communities and building bridges through NNS via various platforms including the grants panel and other resources. Thank you to NNS long may it continue

Nasreen M Akhtar - Senior Practitioner/ Practice Educator

"I really find the Hall Green Communities website useful, as do the citizens"

Zara Parveen - Senior Practitioner

## Social Prescribing Link Worker

“Being able to be a part of the discussions on the Hall Green NNS Steering Group and the Digital Working Party is invaluable as I am able to contribute about issues and gaps in services I am facing when working with patients. This allows me to be able to help the NNS best use their funding to maximise impact.

Recently, I was able to inform our Diversity and Inclusion lead about the Digital Recycling Scheme so we can look to get digitally isolated patients linked up with devices so they are able to communicate with the surgery more easily.

The services & activities Hall Green NNS have funded enable patients to access relevant support locally. This means that patients have had shorter waiting times for support than when referring to larger organisations and feels more personable and trusted knowing it is somewhere that is working with their GP Surgery. ”

Jennifer Luisada - Social Prescribing Link Worker, Community Care PCN

## Community Network Support Officer (CNSO)

“I'm the CNSO for the Hall Green constituency. The service only started in February of this year. I work with citizens on a one to one basis keeping citizens connected to their local communities and reducing or stopping the need for prolonged Adult Social Care Intervention.

Hall Green NNS have been brilliant and working in partnership has made my job a little easier. I find myself using their asset directory quite regularly and the knowledge they have about the Hall Green Constituency has enabled me to work more proficiently. I was recently invited to sit on their steering group and was only too pleased to become a member. ”

Abid Akhtar – Hall Green CNSO

# NNS Grants: Music and Kindness

## Neighbourhood Network Scheme Grants

Every NNS constituency has a small grants scheme to enable the voluntary and community sector to run activities that support older adults. On this page and the next, examples of these grants in Hall Green are described.

### Misfits Music

The Capo Guitar Club was a new community-music project set up during the pandemic. The group were able to participate in online guitar sessions led by an experienced tutor, to play music, improve musical skills and foster social connections. They have since changed their name to The Moseley Rock Collective and come together to play and sing rock classics every Monday evening at the Moseley Exchange.

One participant who attended the online sessions told us they were:

“ **Very happy to have come across such a super idea. Who would have thought it, I'm 70 and loving it!** ”



Email: [info@misfitsmusic.org.uk](mailto:info@misfitsmusic.org.uk)  
Facebook: [misfitsmusic](https://www.facebook.com/misfitsmusic)

### The Springfield Project

“Virtual Springfield” was an online crafting and cookery group. Letterbox craft and recipe boxes were hand delivered to citizen’s homes to take part. Their WhatsApp group allowed participants to inspire interaction by sharing pictures and ideas

and complimenting each other’s work.

“ **I am so pleased to be able to keep in touch with you all and connect through these activities. It’s easy to feel lost and lonely during this period so I am really grateful that the activities felt so personal and we were able to discuss them in the WhatsApp group. Thanks so much!** ”



Example of a Letter Box Crafting Kit and finished fairy lights

Email: [info@springfieldproject.org.uk](mailto:info@springfieldproject.org.uk)  
Facebook: [SpringfieldProjectBirmingham/](https://www.facebook.com/SpringfieldProjectBirmingham/)  
Website: [www.springfieldproject.org.uk](http://www.springfieldproject.org.uk)

### The Bahu Trust

The Kindness Project is a confidential interfaith volunteer bereavement befriending service that offers one to one emotional and practical support to adults that are recovering from the trauma and loss of a loved one. The pandemic has taken a toll on our community and the processes of bereavement (whether through Covid-19 or not) have been even more difficult than ever, particularly as a result of the restrictions that had been placed on funerals from a faith perspective.

One volunteer said:

“ **I talked to five women who had lost their husbands since the pandemic. I was amazed at my listening skills and my confidence.** ”

Email: [friends@bahustrust.org](mailto:friends@bahustrust.org)  
Website: <https://bahustrust.org/the-kindness-project/>

# NNS Grants: Outdoors

## Thrive Birmingham

Sow & Grow brings together small groups of socially isolated people to provide a 12-week table top gardening course in Kings Heath Park. The programme is unique as it incorporates social and therapeutic horticulture which is proven to help people with almost all types of disability, and both physical and mental ill health. Their gardeners work alongside a qualified practitioner on a range of seasonal gardening activities to learn and improve their gardening skills.



One of the citizen gardeners who had suffered a stroke told us:

**“ I enjoy the learning aspect and meeting people. It’s a lovely group. Lockdown was very isolating as I live on my own, so this is quite nice. What is very good about Thrive, that I don’t have generally, is that wider understanding of people with disabilities. When I’m tired, I can just come and sit down and that is understood. Whereas, in other mainstream stuff you don’t get that consideration. ”**

Email: [Sarah.Bowers@thrive.org.uk](mailto:Sarah.Bowers@thrive.org.uk)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/thechairtythrive/](https://www.facebook.com/thechairtythrive/)

## The Muath Trust

A new digital device recycling project where donated devices are gifted to local people along with the support needed to help them get online. Recipients must be over 50, on a low income and live in the constituency.

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As one example, AD from Balsall Heath was given a new tablet for use. She is a full-time carer for her daughter and could not afford to buy her own device. She was absolutely delighted to receive the new tablet and told us that:

**“ This will help me to keep in touch with family and friends and it will also give me the opportunity to learn the new technology and explore life! ”**

Email: [support@muathtrust.org](mailto:support@muathtrust.org)  
Website: [www.muathtrust.org](http://www.muathtrust.org)

## Hall Green’s Keepin’ It Clean Litter Pickers

Established in January 2021 with just a handful of volunteers who enjoyed litter picking as an established pastime, it now has 223 active volunteers via their “adopt your street” campaign. They regularly clean over 82 roads between them and share their litter picks via social media.

### Case study

W moved to Birmingham following a family bereavement this year. She was suffering from depression at the time and has multiple sclerosis. She didn’t know anyone, apart from her sister who lives in Moseley. W found out about the group, messaged via Facebook, and joined a litter pick and has made some friends as a result. She has gained in confidence and regards the group as a community in itself.



Members of Hall Green’s Keepin’ It Clean

Email: [hgkeepinitclean@gmail.com](mailto:hgkeepinitclean@gmail.com)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/233482391674062/>

# Capacity Building in Hall Green

## Summary

### Phase 1 Commissioning



121 Total number of attendees



16 online training sessions



58 hours of training



Attendees from 63 Hall Green groups & organisations



£8,740 of investment across:

- Funding
- Safeguarding
- Volunteering
- Sustainability
- Health and Wellbeing
- Marketing

### Phase 2 Commissioning



£16,135 of investment



Programme of digital skills - training, webinars and 1:1 support



Expertise to bring in additional funding.



1:1 mentoring support on:

- Funding
- Sustainability
- Governance
- Business Development

“ Session was clear and thorough, well-paced. Extremely useful to our organisation that’s trying to put all the proper systems and procedures in place. ”

Session on Volunteer Management

“ I really enjoyed the session and found myself engaged throughout the whole two hours which is shocking! ”

Session on Social Media Strategies

## Workshops & Training

In 2020-21 Hall Green NNS invested £24,875 in training, workshops and mentoring support for local community groups and organisations.

The programme of training was developed based on findings from surveys with community organisations about their individual needs and skills gaps, input from the Steering Group and guidance from the City Council about priority areas. The NNS team were committed to, wherever possible, commissioning local Hall Green based organisations with the relevant skills and expertise to deliver the sessions.

The programme was divided into two phases. Phase One was delivered in early 2021, on-line.

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Phase Two is ongoing and is much more intensive with mentoring support being offered to individual organisations over a longer period focused on their specific areas of need.

A full impact summary is available on the Hall Green Communities website:  
<https://bit.ly/3GhXej8>

The team will be launching a further programme of capacity building in late 2021 which will be informed by the views of community groups and organisations and the Steering Group. Training around co-production, partnership working, and impact measurement are likely to feature. All of the training opportunities are advertised on the Hall Green NNS's social media channels and on the Hall Green communities website.



# Prevention & Communities Grants

## Prevention & Communities Grants

In 2018 the City Council's Adult Social Care put out a call for third sector organisations who could support the Prevention First agenda. Currently 44 organisations are funded through Prevention and Communities grants, known as P&C providers.

These final three pages highlight some of these providers. Details can be seen in the Prospectus, which is being updated: <https://bit.ly/2Xpo32K>

## Moseley Road Baths

Moseley Road Baths is a heritage Grade 2\* listed swimming baths at the centre of Balsall Heath life. For the last three years, it has been run by a community charity which has reinvigorated the pool, doubled the number of sessions and availability, improved facilities and substantially increased swimmer numbers.



**Gala Pool**

They offer swimming sessions for the disabled, the elderly, 'feel good for mental health' and will shortly extend this to a dementia friendly hour. Changing rooms are adjacent to the pool, facilitating straightforward access (with hoist whenever required) and the water is said to be warmer than most Birmingham pools! Carers can either swim or relax out of the pool. Customers can follow up their swimming with chat and conversation in their tearoom.

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**Dryside Class**

The baths also provide a growing range of 'Dryside' activities, based in the Gala Pool, itself an architectural gem. Customers can do Drum'n'Bounce yoga, family friendly activities in the school holidays and at weekends, as well as many other activities.

All are welcome to come along, enjoy the health benefits of swimming in a unique setting, take part in their cultural activities and enjoy this hub of the Balsall Heath community.



The Prevention and Communities grant helps to fund these activities. We were pleased to hear that the Government, in the recent budget, allocated Moseley Road Baths and Balsall Heath Library over £15 m towards restoring the building.

Email: [simon56.stirling@gmail.com](mailto:simon56.stirling@gmail.com)  
Website: <https://moseleyroadbaths.org.uk/>  
Facebook: MoseleyRdBaths

# Health and Wellbeing

## Grange Park and Digby North Resident's Association

Grange Park and Digby North Residents' Association is a group of local residents who meet to discuss local issues that affect them. The association uses their Prevention and Communities Grant to employ a Community Care Worker who provides an outreach service to elderly clients living in the B9 and B10 area.

During the pandemic their support became more flexible to meet the needs of their clients. Central to this support was the mental health of their clients so they provided activities, phoned them daily, maintained contact with their families, provided access to local health services, liaised with the local fire and police services to ensure their safety; enabled access to digital services and obtained food parcels.

One of the challenges from the easing of restrictions has been that they have had to support clients to build their confidence to re-engage in the community. They have done this by networking with local groups who provide activities for clients to take part in safely.

The impact of the support is summed up by a client's comment

“...**Lockdown made me feel isolated and unappreciated. Hearing a friendly and re-assuring voice over the phone made me feel on top of the world.**”

Email: [noreenmadden76@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:noreenmadden76@yahoo.co.uk)  
Phone: 0121 772 6422

## DeafPlus - City-wide Support Empowering Deaf People

deafPLUS is a national charity that works to empower deaf people to take control of their own lives, by developing their potential and supporting them to achieve independence.

Deaf people often feel isolated and marginalised in society as they are not given access to the same opportunities or resources as hearing people



and the pandemic has further exacerbated this.

In Birmingham deafPlus run the BWELL project with funding from a Prevention and Communities Grant. They have continued to provide a health and wellbeing service to deaf residents across Birmingham via digital platforms. They hold bi-weekly coffee mornings for community members which offer exciting workshops from local services in a peer support environment, and a range of wellbeing activities and events in the local community with the aim of encouraging social integration and accessibility.

Recent activities have included an arts and crafts acrylic painting session and an online cooking workshop teaching participants how to make healthy salads from different cultures.

Residents have attended the coffee mornings/afternoons religiously as they realise the importance of remaining connected and empowering one another, especially during the pandemic.



# Supporting Citizens

## Deaf Plus Continued

An example of a citizen who has been supported by deafPlus is Ms B who is Deaf and uses BSL as her first language.

As Ms B was the only deaf family member, she became quite isolated as she didn't feel she could participate in family discussions.

This was exacerbated by the fact that she had expected lockdown to last only a few weeks. She became anxious as time went on as the family in the house would discuss Covid-19 updates on the news but no one would involve her as they could not sign.

After receiving some updates from deafPlus about their health and wellbeing activities now being available online, she asked if she could participate.

She began attending the coffee morning and said she immediately felt emotional and relieved at

being able to talk to her Deaf friends and attend activities again which helped her "feel more herself" again. She reported over the months that she no longer felt so anxious and isolated and that she had not realised how depressed she had been feeling. She also attended information workshops where the latest Covid-19 updates were delivered in BSL which helped eliminate a lot of her fears and concerns.

She said without deafPLUS she fears her emotional and mental state would have declined to levels of concern as her family has no empathy for how she was feeling not being able to communicate with anyone there and having no friends in the area.

Because of this situation, deafPlus also decided to arrange deaf awareness sessions with families and friends.

Email: [beate.grinspone@deafplus.org](mailto:beate.grinspone@deafplus.org)  
Website: <https://www.deafplus.org/our-locations/birmingham>

## Opnocs: Befriending in South Birmingham

Opnocs works to alleviate loneliness and social isolation of older people. They primarily serve Hall Green, Kings Heath, Yardley Wood, Billesley and Brandwood.

They have volunteer befrienders who visit or phone citizens on a weekly basis. Sometimes the citizens supported get together for a meal or afternoon tea. In addition, there are regular trips and events throughout the year. There are also weekly coffee mornings and chair yoga in Kings Heath. Support around use of smart phones and tablets has been beneficial recently as has advice for carers.



Although much of the activity is social and about having a good time and keeping fit, sometimes Opnocs steps in to provide more support. One citizen, H, has a weekly phone call from a befriender which she says that she looks forward to as without the support of Opnocs her only contact is with her son.

H's son visits a couple of times a week to bring food and take her washing, but H refused carers due to the fear of transmission of the virus.

During one phone call H complained about damp in her flat and being extremely cold. Opnocs' Administrator contacted her landlord who immediately addressed the situation and provided more heating.

Opnocs has also made a referral to Adult Social Care due to safeguarding concerns and are awaiting the outcome. As lockdown restrictions have eased the Administrator has managed to visit and discuss a short stay in a care home and is supporting H with her finances.

Email: [info@opnocs.org](mailto:info@opnocs.org)  
Tel: 07951 737875

# Contact Details

## Hall Green NNS Contact

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@HallGreenNNS



@HallgreenN



<https://www.hallgreencommunities.org.uk/>

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**Hall Green**  
Neighbourhood  
Network Scheme



## Birmingham City Council Commissioning Team Contacts

The Prevention & Communities Commissioning Team consists of:

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