



Our Journey with the Community Development Worker Service 2011 to...

In 2011, Common Unity, as a key partner with Birmingham Mind were successful in winning the contract for a Birmingham wide CDW Service. We were invited to partner this process due to the recognition that our unparalleled knowledge of communities and what makes them tick would strengthen the overall provision and vision of a new public facing CDW service. Ongoing successes have ensured that over the last five years the CDW service has gone from strength to strength under our direct operational guidance realising ground-breaking developments in a range of much needed programme areas whilst ensuring that the voice of the community has not been lost in the process.

A key challenge has been the opportunity to realise a range of programmes that has also required clear organisational partnerships outside of the core CDW contract with key alliances being built with an array of notable, high profile third sector organisations across the City including BVSC, Freshwinds and Digbeth Trust. This wider partnership, with a clear remit for well-being, has ensured shared ownership in respect of the Reader Programme, the 5 Ways to well-being programme, Suicide Prevention, Youth and Community engagement through URBRUM, Mental Health First Aid, Recovery Approaches and the Community Health Champions Programme. With an emphasis on well-being as an outcome, the CDW service with support from allied third sector organisations and small social enterprises across the city has realised a provision of well-being services that we feel is unparalleled.



...2016





Our Journey with the Community Development Worker Service

2011- 2016
CONTINUED

As Health, Social Care and other public facing sectors have evolved and expectations upon Common Unity regarding our specialist areas of delivery have increased, after much consideration, we have decided to concentrate our focus on the wider agenda of wellbeing in the community through a range of new, innovative and exciting approaches.



The last five years, through our involvement, has seen significant positive changes in the way the CDW service engages across communities and we are ensuring that the CDW programme will continue to evolve with the necessary steps being taken to respond to community needs well into the future even without our direct operational guidance.



We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our partners and the communities we have engaged with over the last five years for making the CDW service the success it is and hope the service will continue to flourish when our formal involvement ceases in March.



Message from the Director

It has been non-stop at Common Unity over the last three months. In addition to the usual demands that Christmas and the New Year has on us all we have continued to work tirelessly to deliver high quality services.

We continue to meet demand for suicide prevention training across Sandwell, as well as realise new opportunities for training delivery across the UK, in addition, URBRUM has further evolved to better meet wider community need on the key issues that affect them.

Alongside this, we have developed new and exciting collaborative partnerships across the voluntary and statutory sectors both locally and nationally, providing ongoing strategic support in respect of our community facing services and have conceptualised, designed and developed, with partners, the first national **ManMade Conference** set for Mens' Health Week in June 2016."

"Happy New Year!"

Welcome to Issue 4 of Vanguard Community News.

Caron Thompson
Director - Common Unity



Supporting the cause

"Suicides devastate communities and supporting those bereaved by suicide is a mammoth task in its own right."

With over 6000 people each year taking their own lives across our communities in the UK, the impact on those left behind is unfathomable with the level of loss experienced requiring direct support. Cruse Bereavement Care Birmingham provide an invaluable level of support both individually and at a group level for those bereaved by suicide but funds have been tight to maintain this service. Alongside Forward For Life, we were delighted to present Lesley Hales from Cruse a cheque for a £1000 - the money we raised coming from ASIST training we delivered to Birmingham citizens in October 2015.



ManMade in Dudley, was so successful that we have been approached by the national charity, Family Action, to deliver a pilot in partnership with them that engages the men who access their services.

As part of this pilot an independent evaluation is being undertaken to show the true impact of this innovative programme.



ManMade | THE CONFERENCE

Men are killing themselves. Every two hours a man takes his own life in the UK and the numbers are rising. These men are husbands, brothers, fathers, sons, work colleagues, guides, friends and soul mates and there is a story to be told.

As part of Men's Health Week, June 13th 2016, Common Unity in association with Forward For Life are hosting:

"ManMade | THE CONFERENCE Men surviving change in an ever changing world"

For men to survive change in an ever changing world, **ManMade | THE CONFERENCE** throws on the table an invitation to all to better understand the reasons why many men may think they would be better off dead, the impact of suicide by men, what solutions are already being developed and implemented as best practice examples as well as provide a forum where new possibilities can be considered and new partnerships developed. This ground breaking conference will bring together private, public, voluntary and community sector organisations, individuals with lived experience of suicidal behaviour as well as forward thinking innovative organisations from across the country who work with men who need support.



We are a not-for-profit organisation with a clear organisational mandate for active social investment going above expectation to ensure we are a recognised "can do" organisation. Our business has social objectives meaning we reinvest for the benefit of the communities we engage with including free/minimum cost training, project development and wider programme support. Common Unity provides services with social aims and ensures social ownership through both formal and informal participation with a range of stakeholders including users, community groups and employees. Through being a small social enterprise and through the use of highly skilled associate links, we are able to keep our overall management, internal staffing and administrative costs to a fair minimum whilst also ensuring the highest quality of delivery across communities.

URBRUM THE VIDEO

Birmingham is a fusion of ethnicities. People from all walks of life, people from many different cultures – people like us. Brummies. Black, brown, white, yellow...whatever, it doesn't matter. Most of us just want to live in peace with our neighbours, not cause trouble and not be troubled. But this diversity of race and culture may cause issues when people misunderstand each others' way of life. URBRUM is all about bringing people together.

It's about us gaining a better understanding of our cultural differences, allowing ourselves to see the other side of the story and to make Birmingham one community... one community where everyone belongs and no-one is ignored. One community that we, and our children, can be proud of. URBRUM is community driven. It aims to promote a much needed dialogue on issues related to mental well-being. We are not target driven, we are people driven and community focussed – URBRUM is not exclusive – it aims to include everyone and to appeal to everyone... because URBRUM is for everyone.

