

Background info for Sports & Community Centre Manager – October 2024

Birmingham Settlement is at an important phase in its long history; developing our owned assets and services as we build for the future. To help us achieve our goals we wish to appoint a high-quality candidate to the role of Sports & Community Centre Manager; to lead the development and renewal of our Kingstanding Centre which was returned to our care after a long-term lease to Birmingham City Council; in particular, focusing on sports and community action. We have recently developed a small community gym, are nearing the completion of a new outside sports pitch, and are continually reviewing and looking for further development opportunities, as well as delivering our core services relating to wellbeing, nature, community action, and money advice. The role will work closely with the CEO and Management Team as well as our Board of Trustees as we continue to develop and deliver the Settlement's exciting vision for the long term.

More information about the Settlement is available at www.birminghamsettlement.org.uk the purpose of this paper is to provide context on our priorities for the immediate and medium term – it is not the be all and end all of the Settlement, merely a brief to provide additional summary information about the charity as we continue to adapt to challenges presenting while pursuing our long-term objectives; which are the development of our assets and services to generate income to support our work and sustainability – we strive for innovation, imagination, and enterprise to see us through today, tomorrow and further ahead, whatever challenges come our way.

Our Strategic Objectives

In 2022 we re-affirmed our strategic objectives to ensure our work is focused, committing to five key areas:

- To improve financial resilience
- To build individual and community wellbeing
- To develop people
- To build environmental knowledge, awareness and action
- To build a sustainable organisation

1. Financial resilience

The Settlement has a long history of innovation in the development and delivery of money advice services with many of the areas where we work scoring heavily on the indices of deprivation for all sorts of reasons. Our mission is to create opportunity and choice and to put it bluntly, if people are worried about bills, rent arrears, buying school uniforms, or simply putting food on the table, they are not able to focus on building opportunity and so choice for either themselves or their community. By providing timely and professional money advice services we can give practical advice and support to alleviate at least some of the pressure and stresses facing those struggling to manage. Whether it be debt management plans, benefit claims, grant applications, budgeting

skills – our money advice services can be a starting point in creating the right environment for people to move on with their lives; with the cost-of-living crisis continuing to affect so many, pressuring and impacting peoples’ ability to cope, offering flexible and timely support is needed now more than ever.

2. Wellbeing

While the title ‘wellbeing’ in the context we think of today is relatively new, as with money advice, we have a long history of providing wellbeing services. Whether through arts, sports, dance, healthy eating, environment, or similar services; the promotion of wellbeing (however we interpret it) is key to ensuring that people are physically and mentally in a position to take advantage of presenting opportunities and so live happy, healthier lives. We have therefore adopted the ‘Five Ways to Wellbeing Principles’ and added our own sixth principle – be safe! Our wellbeing principles are:

- Connect
- Be active
- Take notice – be mindful
- Keep learning
- Give to others
- Be safe

3. Developing people

Following on, if our people and communities are financially stable and feeling happier and healthier, they are in a better position to learn and achieve, to realise their aims through training, employment, and greater community involvement – in turn building voice to influence the services and environments around them. Whether that be setting up community groups, starting a micro-business or simply attending forums and taking part in discussion about their neighbourhood. However, our people often need further support to help them develop the confidence and skills to do those things and with that in mind, as well as regular employment support and IT training we are also developing more grassroots training to equip people with the skills they need to make a difference. We have developed and deliver a range of courses from mental health awareness to professional boundaries, from first aid to setting up a community group. Training is not new to us and has evolved from our original training arm NMTU (National Money Advice Training Unit) which was formed in the early 1970s to what it is today – a much broader offer that we are keen to build and expand with our partners.

4. To build environmental knowledge, awareness and action

Our impact on the environment is in the news daily and it is critical for all our futures that we take steps to reduce and reverse that impact. Using our assets, in particular our newly developed Nature & Wellbeing Centre by Edgbaston Reservoir which covers a 3.5 acre site and is a 25 minute walk from the city centre, including eco-learning domes,

amphitheatre, grow plots, tea room, and open spaces, but also our Sports & Community Centre in Kingstanding which has open spaces including a large field to the rear; we have an opportunity to work with partners to show what we can do as individuals and communities to adapt and learn from the past, to improve the prospects for sustainable futures as well as improving our own immediate environments; including learning more about how to grow, care for and nurture the spaces and areas where we live. Again, an area we are working hard to develop.

5. Sustainable organisation

To meet the above objectives, we must ensure we have the required resources in place; we need to make sure we have the financial backing to make it happen and as such, our fifth strategic objective is to make sure the Settlement is viable and sustainable long-term. We know that reductions in public spending in recent years has had a significant impact on the sector as a whole and that includes us. Reality is we must be more robust, enterprising, and smarter in the way we do things – we must be fleet of foot and adaptable to survive in what is a very difficult, and increasingly difficult environment. While we will always want to be involved in statutory funding where we can influence and push for positive change, we also want to work more closely with other funders and partners – in particular, trusts and foundations who share our vision and where we already have positive partnerships on which to build. We also want to grow our earned income and we have several ways of doing that including the development of our assets. Ideally, we are aiming to achieve a 3-way split between statutory, fundraised, and earned income which we believe will give us the voice, partnerships, and security we need moving forwards.

Assets

A strong asset base will help us achieve our objectives.

We own and are developing a large Sports & Community Centre in Kingstanding where this role will be mainly based. The Centre was leased to Birmingham City Council from 1971 until December 2020 when it was returned to our care. The site has recently had a new outside sports pitch installed as well as a small community gym, it has many rooms and a good outside space which we intend to develop as a nature zone. In addition, we have purchased a garage next door to improve parking and access; there is much more to do but there is huge potential for developing a vibrant and successful asset for the area.

The Settlement also owns a 3.5-acre 'playing field' by Edgbaston Reservoir in the heart of Ladywood where we have been based since we were established over 120 years ago. In 2021 we built and opened The Red Shed, a small, accessible wellbeing centre which 'opened' the playing field up for all to enjoy, and we have now opened our new Nature & Wellbeing Centre which includes two geodesic 'learning' domes and an amphitheatre, along with wider development of the open space for sports, growing, and leisure.

Along with the investment and developments of our two owned assets above, we have also taken on 3-year leases on two units in the Newtown Shopping Centre where our Money Advice Team is based.

While the above sites represent our key or biggest assets for service development and generating new income, we also run 3 charity shops and have taken on a 70-foot canal boat moored a short distance from the Nature & Wellbeing Centre by Edgbaston Reservoir. Our people have a wide range of skills and experience, are committed and keen to maximise our assets and we have invested heavily with reserves; we expect all our assets to flex and generate income to build sustainability and services, to help us grow and thrive.

Governance / People

We are a registered charity governed by a Board of Trustees who delegate day-to-day responsibility for the running of the charity to the CEO and Management Team. We have a mixed staff team of approx. 40 delivering a range of services – we are often described as an amalgam of small projects sitting under a single banner – we are a classic community anchor organisation and go through regular change depending on funding, feedback, and ideas from staff.

Our Management Team currently comprises:

Chief Executive				
Nature & Wellbeing Centre Manager	Sports & Community Centre Manager	Money Advice Services Manager	Income & Communications Manager	Finance & Corporate Services Manager

Funding

We have an extremely mixed funding base which reflects the diverse range of services we deliver. Our turnover for the 2023/24 financial year was approx. £1.8m and we expect to maintain that level for the immediate and medium term; our aim is to build in the longer term, but we have to accept for now, the uncertain environment in which we operate means we do flex up and down, and so we are looking for consistency in the immediate and medium term. Our audited accounts are available through the charity commission website and details our main funding streams and gives more general detail about the Settlement.

For an informal chat about the role please ring Theresa Gniadkowski on 0121 250 0782 or email Theresa.gniadkowski@bsettlement.org.uk

End.