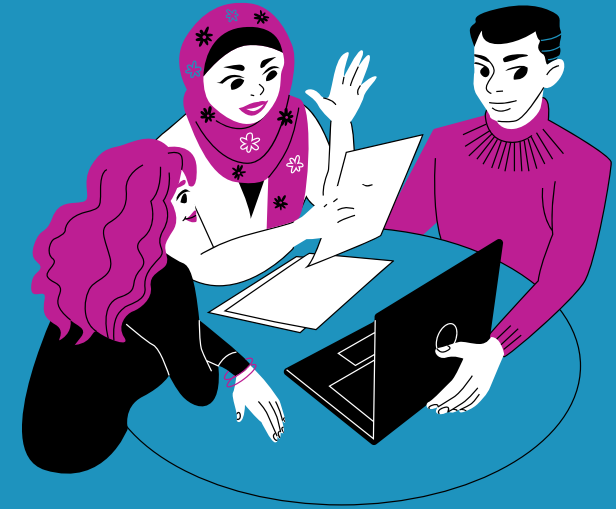


COMMUNITY ANCHOR ORGANISATIONS ACTION PLANS



EAST BIRMINGHAM SHARED PROSPERITY FUND, COMMUNITY PILLAR

READY 2 LEVEL PROGRAMME

URBAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

OVERVIEW OF THE CAO

The Urban Development Foundation (UDF) was established in 2004 as a charity (1105249). UDF focuses on serving the communities in and around East Birmingham.

UDF's mission is to create resilience in the communities of East Birmingham by nurturing and incubating grassroots organisations.

The Foundation has brought together professional volunteers and people from all walks of life. Their contribution has developed into community

projects that have been identified and used by people in need. UDF's role has widened to include research, training, dissemination, consultancy and the innovation of new concepts.

UDF has set out to support members of the community through grassroots infrastructure to take responsibility for their community. Empower them with skills and confidence to tackle complex issues, and in defined areas of deprivation and/or need.



**Urban
Development
Foundation**



CONTEXT

In the context of the Levelling Up programme, UDF recognises the paramount importance in addressing multifaceted challenges, our focus lies on implementing comprehensive transport and infrastructure improvements, aligning with the new HS2 line, to unlock economic potential. Simultaneously, we actively support community-led initiatives to enhance local centres and green spaces, nurturing the heart of urban life. UDF prioritises health and wellbeing by collaborating with the medical sector, introducing innovative solutions such as social prescribing to bridge health disparities. We believe that our approach, grounded in collaboration and sustainability, aligns with the broader goals of the Levelling Up programme, fostering equitable development and improving the overall quality of life for residents in East Birmingham.



APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY PROCESS

SUMMARY

Definition

VISION

- Incubating other organisations
- Become a community anchor with a base/asset in Small Heath
- Develop income generation
- Provide services to communities across all of East Birmingham, including Bangladeshi, Kashmiri and refugee communities
- Become a 'One Stop Shop' for residents and community organisations
- Develop Halal mortgage options / housing association model

Discovery

Our purpose to exist is to 'Support grass roots organisations become resilient and self sufficient'

WHY DOES UDF EXIST?

- Came from the SRB1 programme
- Small Heath Forum was also a precursor
- Established after this in 2004
- Established to meet the needs of the BAME community – specifically Bangladeshi, new arrived communities from Eastern Europe for example, Italian Bangladeshis and Somalian from Horn of Africa.
- Offered access to mainstream services that were not otherwise being accessed by these groups

- At this time, there was a lack of voluntary sector support organisations working with these communities
- Offered assistance in integrating into local communities and UK life
- Currently has 4 trustees, 7 volunteers and sessional staff

GOALS

- Capacity building – for both UDF and other third sector organisations in the area
- Diversify income stream so that not reliant on grants
- Want to be in a position to tender for larger contracts
- Want to have a building that can generate income
- Model that Small Heath Forum used – they bought a church building and then incubated other voluntary organisations
- Short term – find a building / base in Small Heath
- Medium term – make the asset self-sustaining
- Medium term – house / incubate other organisations – one stop shop model
- Long term – self sustaining and not reliant on grants
- Managed growth



CURRENT SERVICES

- Capacity building – governance support to other orgs., developing financial policies and procedures, compliance with charity commission rules etc.
- More trusted than BVSC as they are local and embedded in the community – BVSC are sometimes viewed as being too close to the council
- Employs sessional staff and volunteers to run the services
- Offered telephone support during covid
- Information and Guidance services – a core part of what they do, but not always funded. Takes lots of volunteer hours. Users referred locally and through the mosque.
- Support mosques in the area, particularly in terms of governance and diversifying and income generation
- Offers mediation support for couples pre-divorce – there is a cultural understanding
- Work with social services around child protection and domestic abuse cases
- Service gap – a need to develop more services for women in the community

WHAT ARE YOU REALLY GOOD AT?

- Helping grassroots organisations
- Family support
- Bid writing and making connections – have secured a number of small grants over the years and are well known in the community and sector
- In depth understanding about the charity sector and governance

TRUSTEES

- 1 with medical background
- An accountant
- Young person who works for Amazon
- Kabir gives the most time to the org
- Used to have a woman on board, but not any more – would like to recruit
- Would like someone with a disability also represented on the board



SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

(Internal) Focus on your positive personal attributes and those of your staff, eg adaptability or scalability

- Financially sustainable
- Structured and well managed
- Competent management
- Openness & transparent
- Ability to write bids & raise funds - recently secured £50K from lottery
 - Have a fundraising plan and target for next year
 - Good relationship with funders
- Wealth of knowledge in the sector
- Well connected with the communities
 - Good at collaborating
- Known within the voluntary sector
- Ability to nurture grassroots organisation
- We are accessible & Multilingual
- Ability to engage with diverse community
 - Honesty – often use external consultants to carry out evaluations of their programmes
 - Don't compromise on their values and beliefs
 - Aware of what's happening in the city
 - Very place-based
 - Focussed and forward thinking
 - Strategic
 - Trusted

WEAKNESSES

(Internal) Concentrate on the negative internal aspects of your charity, eg lack of adequate skills or cash

- Management diversity
- IT skilled staff (would like to digitise everything)
- Needs & Interest analysis of Vol Sector
- Community asset base
- Creating resilience in East Birmingham
- Lack of surplus funds
- Funding dependency – need an asset to be able to generate income
- No core funding
- No core staffs
- Lack of office space
- No meeting area
- Toilet facilities
 - Kabir writes all bids currently
 - Organisation in general is very reliant on Kabir's input
 - Need a volunteer training programme to upskill and build a strong base of people to take on some of the work of Kabir
 - Not a particularly diverse board



OPPORTUNITIES (EXTERNAL)

List what external opportunities exist for the benefit of your company, eg: untapped markets

- Establish our sense of belonging
- Meeting the needs of BAME Community
- To be self-sufficient and self-sustainable – do not want to be dependent on just 1 individual
- To improve Information technology
- Collaboration & partnership work
- Community Cohesion
- Develop Community Hub / One Stop Shop
- Infrastructure creating Opportunity
- Best Practise
- Create work Culture
 - Significant opportunity tied to securing a base / premises within Small Heath
 - Being part of the R2L programme is an opportunity in itself – recognition as an anchor org, connections with others, relationship with BCC
 - Potential of being involved with the creation of a business improvement district on the Coventry Road
 - Opportunity to incubate and nurture other groups – help them with funding, HR and governance
 - Rental income from buying residential properties
 - Create a subsidiary to generate income
 - Create a pipeline of talent – nurture young people in the community

THREATS (EXTERNAL)

List what external factors may have a negative impact on the growth of your enterprise, eg your competition

- Competition - need to turn this into collaboration
- Community politics
- Exploitation
- Accusation
- Local politics
- Competing with larger organisation
- Divide and rule
- Manipulation
- Dishonesty Lack of transparency
- Bitter Relationships
 - Anything to harm Kabir's own personal reputation would have an impact on the whole organisation



PESTLE

Political:

- Government Policies and Regulations: Charities are influenced by political decisions. Changes in government policies, tax laws, and regulations impact their operations. For instance:
- Tax Deductions: Alterations in tax deduction rules affect donor behaviour. Charities must adapt fundraising strategies accordingly.
- Funding Availability: Government funding programs may fluctuate based on political priorities. Charities need to stay informed about available grants and subsidies. If there is a change of Government at the next election, will Levelling Up finance remain available?
- Advocacy and Lobbying: Charities engage in advocacy work to influence policies related to their cause. Political support or opposition affects their ability to drive change.

Economic:

- Donor Behaviour: Economic conditions directly impact charitable giving. During economic downturns, donations may decline as individuals prioritise personal finances.
- Fundraising Strategies: Charities must diversify funding sources. Economic stability affects corporate sponsorships, individual donations, and grant availability.
- Cost Management: Economic fluctuations impact operational costs. Charities need financial resilience to weather economic challenges.

- Due to the position that BCC finds themselves in, funding for third sector organisations will be extremely limited over the coming years.
- What economic opportunities might there be from private sector redevelopment investment in the city?

Social:

- Community Engagement: Charities play a crucial role in community development. Their programs address social issues, promote inclusivity, and enhance well-being.
- Demographic Trends: Understanding population dynamics helps charities tailor their services. Ageing populations, urbanisation, and migration patterns influence their focus areas.
- Public Perception: Charities rely on public trust. Social awareness campaigns and transparent communication build credibility.



Technological:

- Digital Transformation: Charities should embrace technology for efficiency and outreach. Key areas include:
- Online Fundraising Platforms: Leveraging digital platforms for donations.
- Data Management: Efficiently tracking donor information and impact metrics
- Social Media: Engaging with supporters and sharing success stories.
 - Storytelling is really important – particularly around the raised profile of E Brum organisations through the R2L programme itself.
- Cybersecurity: Charities handle sensitive data; safeguarding it is critical.

Legal:

- Compliance and Governance: Charities must adhere to legal requirements
- Reporting: Regular financial reporting ensures transparency.
- Employment Laws: Proper management of staff contracts, wages, and workplace safety.
- Charitable Status: Maintaining tax-exempt status requires compliance with legal norms.
- Environmental:
- Sustainability: Charities can promote environmental consciousness:
- Green Practices: Implementing eco-friendly policies within their operations.

- Climate Change Initiatives: Addressing environmental challenges aligns with their mission.
- Community Resilience: Charities contribute to disaster preparedness and recovery.
 - Likely to be a greater need for community organisations to set up and fill the gaps where cuts in BCC budgets are reduced.

Design

Theory of Change

What is the problem you are trying to solve?

What will you solve by having a base in Small Heath?

- Will create a community hub that will act as a once-stop-shop (for the needs of both individuals and businesses)
- Will give the organisation financial sustainability by being able to generate revenue

Who is your key audience?

Grass Root Organisations

Voluntary organisations

Based Groups

Diverse Community

Funders

Statutory organisations: Seen as a negative thing to engage with social services / police– therefore a one-stop-shop would make access easier, as no-one else will know what you are entering the building for, and what services you are accessing. Important to bring the services to the community, reducing travel for individuals to access support.

Potential collaborators – have a list of 30ish organisations that they have already worked with.

Who are your stakeholders?

Clients and services users

Volunteers

Voluntary groups

Women's groups

Faith Based Organisations Mosque / Madrasa

Local Business

Organisations with a social purpose – including some private enterprises?

What is your entry point to reaching your audience?

- Needs to be in the heart of the community – local / walking distance (particularly women)
- Services available in community languages to allow access
- UDF already have a record of delivery, established relationships and a database of contacts
- Needs to be seen as a safe space

What steps are needed to bring about change?

- Securing a site (will rent in short term if necessary)
- Business development to generate income – particularly around the asset (conferences, events, training space, meeting rooms, offices, kitchens etc.)
- Identify potential partners who could use the space – need to do an analysis of both collaborators and potential competitors
- Need to move away from service delivery themselves - want to enable others to do so
- Need to be innovative
- Need to upskill volunteers and increase paid staff – too much reliance of Kabir at the moment, which is a significant risk

Delivery – need to provide the following from the base: advocacy, cllrs surgeries, IAG

What is the measurable effect of your work?

- To become the incubator and facilitator of the frontline services – enabling other organisations to deliver
- Upskilling partner organisations and helping them with business development, fundraising and HR etc. Want to empower others and help them access funding
- Act as an umbrella organisation

What is the long-term change you see as your goal?

Increased capacity.

Smaller organisations growing and then 'fleeing the nest'.

UDF to cast themselves in the community and grow, developing others with them.

Delivery

Action Planning – securing an asset

1. Identify potential premises and locations.
2. Shortlist the criteria required for a building. Important to include the potential to generate income to ensure financial sustainability.
3. Carry out feasibility studies for individual sites once identified. May need to secure funding to pay for this?
3. Fundraise for a deposit. UDF has individuals who are willing to invest money or provide a loan. Need to decide whether a separate entity is established to purchase a property, and whether the charity then buys it back or simply rents it from the private investor/owners. Need to explore the legalities of this and ensure it is transparent for investors and future funders. Some scoping work is required around the legal structure of a separate organisation that will purchase the building. Advice from the Community Land Trust?



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for the CAO by the learning mentor

Short term

- Secure a building/asset (either as a purchase, community transfer or lease). Key requirements are an accessible location for the communities that UDF serves and the ability to generate income from the building.
- Fundraising / securing finance for investment into a building/asset.
- UDFs ability to scale up to meet increasing demands by service users ('customers').

Long term

- Upskilling and training of volunteers and securing income for more paid opportunities. Important to mitigate against the risk of Kabir doing the majority of the work at present. Needs a skilled team to ensure the sustainability of the organisation.
- Identifying partners and collaborators to deliver direct services to individuals, so that UDF can focus on supporting emerging organisations. Also important for these partners to potentially be fee-paying tenants.
- Exit strategy for existing chair/trustees.

Recommendations for being Ready to Level

- Use the organisation's influence to advocate for policies and practices that benefit the community, such as improved infrastructure

- and better public services. An example of this can be to spearhead conversations about establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) on Coventry Road.
- Collaborate with other local community organisations, schools, statutory agencies, and other businesses to address community needs collectively. This could involve joint initiatives, resource sharing, or sponsoring community events.
- Creating awareness that you are an anchor organisation/incubator and have in place access to relevant stakeholders ('access to markets') so that you have the ability to, whether through introductions to potential funders/stakeholders or guidance on market entry strategies, can significantly accelerate their growth.
- Offering workshops, seminars, and training sessions on various aspects of charity, such as business development, marketing, finance, and legal matters, can help grass roots organisations develop their skills and knowledge base.
- Widening UDFs trustee group – skills audit (IT, Commercial business background, HR, Sector knowledge, Funding, MarComms)
- Existing policy gaps e.g. Environmental Policy, Building management ISO9001?
- Create HR Portal – others can access/recruitment.
- Funding unit - bespoke



THOUGHTS ON LEGACY

1. Emergence of small grass roots org – incubating/supporting.
2. Continued engagement - collaboration with the other 9 orgs – meet quarterly, UDF are happy to draft terms of reference if all agree.
3. Work on joint funding opportunity.
4. Peer to peer support.
5. Sharing good practice – study visits.
6. Inspiration for future projects - reflect on the lessons learned from the programme and how they can inform future initiatives.
7. Call to action - getting involved in related efforts by BCC should there be a follow up on the R2L programme.



COMMUNITY ORGANISATION ACTION PLAN

Introduction

What we have learnt from the Appreciative Inquiry (summary)

The appreciative inquiry allowed us to explore and at times challenge what the purpose of UDF is and what role we need to play to provide meaningful contribution as an anchor organisation.

The SWOT and Golden Circle helped us realise our strengths and the opportunities available to us.

The Theory of change session helped us think through what we want to achieve, and we need to get there and the resources we need.

The overall process has helped us understand our key focus and services but most importantly our USP and how we differ from other organisations that are operating within the same areas.

Our main takeaway from the sessions has been we need to:

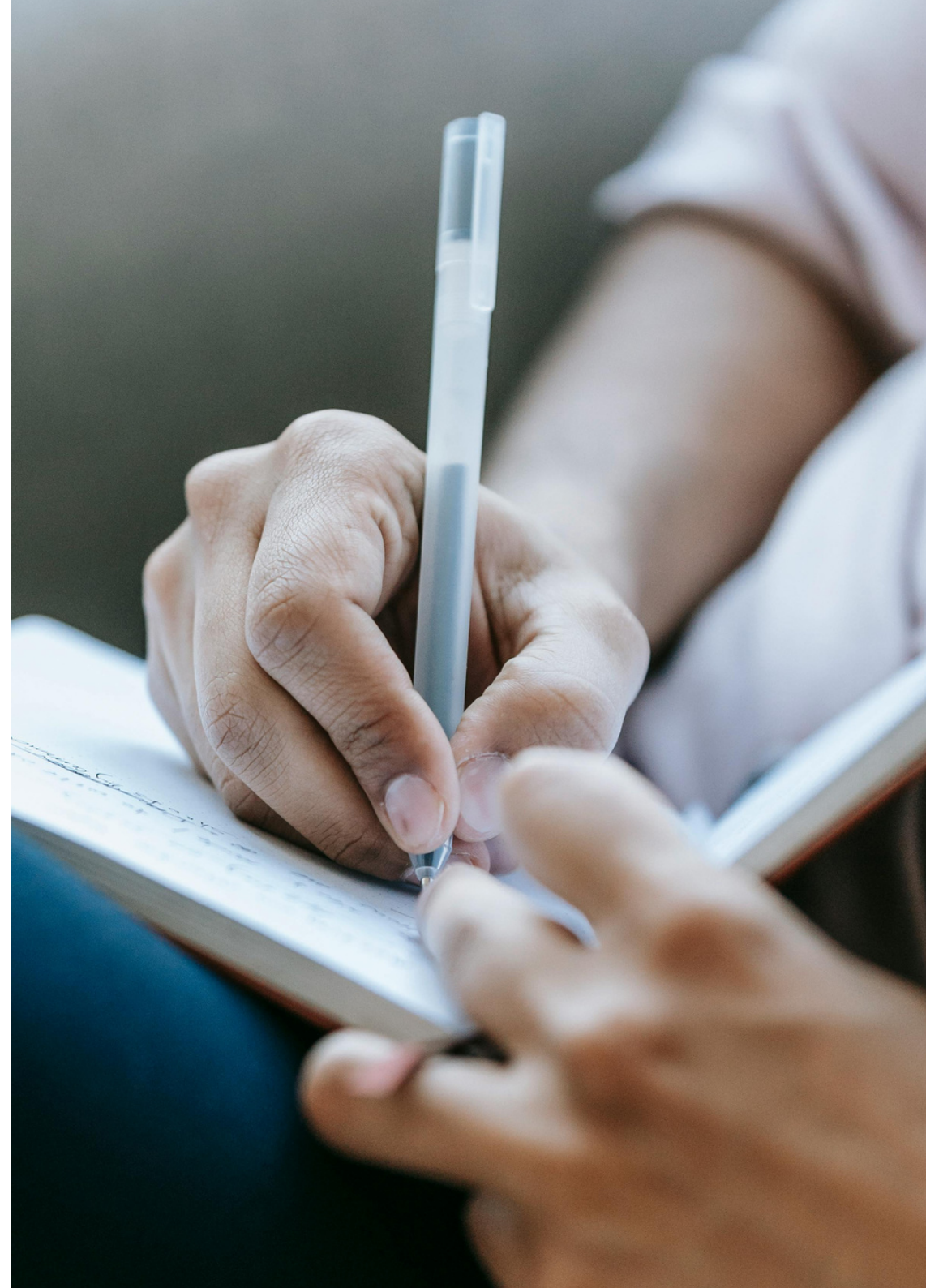
- Be focussed on our services and try not be everything to everyone, we have our unique USP we need to leverage our strength.
- We are more of a b2b organisation and that become clear during the AI process, we will be position ourselves accordingly.
- Engage in more collaboration opportunities across the city and in East Birmingham.
- Upskill our staff and volunteers.
- Undertake a skills analysis and identify gaps and try and recruit a small cadre of trustees.



Summary of the Programme delivered

We have fulfilled all the key items as we have listed in our project application. These are as follows:

- Arranged Action Learning Network events, (ALNE) sharing experiences, and collaboratively learning. The event aims to contribute insights, foster collective advancement, and drive positive change, aligning with the Levelling Up agenda for the community's betterment.
- Produced digital material for UDF (i.e. roller banner) and improved our website.
- Attend 4 Collaborative sessions on:
09/02/24, 23/02/24, 15/03/24, 25/03/24
- Attend the Look and Learn Visit on: 01/03/24
- Engage with 9 AI sessions with our Learning Mentor's Kathy Hopkin and Mashkura Begum
- Organised a local event on Monday 25th March 2024 that was attended by over 30 people. Keynote speakers included Assistant High Commissioner from Bangladesh, Karolina Medwecka (BCC), video message by West Midlands Mayor Andy Street.
- Produced a realistic action plan that will help UDF progress and play a key part in future Ready 2 Level initiatives.



COMMUNITY ANCHOR ORGANISATION ACTION PLAN

Action Area	Description	Timeline	Where we need input from other partners
1.	Scan what is available in terms of suitable BCC assets that we can apply for as part of asset transfer. This would also be looking at potential private sites.	MARCH - MAY	BCC
2.	To draft a criteria list for the type of venue we are looking for that would be suitable for us.	APRIL - MAY	UDF
3.	To draft a brief for feasibility study	MARCH - JUNE	UDF
4.	Explore and understand the right legal structure for UDF that is needed to take on a physical asset (i.e. is a charity suitable or should think about becoming a CIO or another alternative.	MARCH - JULY	UDF Birmingham Community Matters

COMMUNITY ANCHOR ORGANISATION ACTION PLAN

Action Area	Description	Timeline	Where we need input from other partners
5.	Enhance existing database of stakeholders working with and would like to work in the future especially if base is secured who would UDF like to partner with?	MARCH – JULY 2024	UDF
6.	Explore the potential funding opportunities for capital work	MAY – AUG 2024	UDF Get Grants
7.	Training Plan for Volunteers and Trustees (Undertake Skills gap analysis – see what skills are necessary within the leadership to take the organisation through the next period of growth)	APRIL – JULY 2024	UDF

DISSEMINATION

