

FIRESTARTERS

Spark Change! Impact Report

2021

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Firestarters Spark Change!

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Become a Firestarter

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Firestarters Spark Change!

The Case for Starting Fires

“Liverpool City Region aims to be the most progressive, values and ethics-led economy in Europe”

➤ Build Back Better Report, 2021



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FIRESTARTERS

COME
TOGETHER.
TAKE
ACTION.
SPARK
CHANGE

Ethical
and liv
purp

FIRE
START
ERS

The Case for Starting Fires

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Firestarters is a community of changemakers putting purpose before profit.

We get people from the private, public, and third sectors talking so that positive action can happen. We do this through live events, actionable next steps and community accountability.

**Firestarters
is community
lighter fuel.**

Meet the Firestarters project leads

The people lighting the way

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Ruth Hartnoll

Founder & Content Director

"Firestarters naturally lends itself to the Liverpool City Region as it's a city with a living and breathing social economy. Our hope with Firestarters is that it will bring everyone into one room to do more good."

- 2020



Aaron Fontenot

Firestarters Project Lead

"Before COVID-19, I spent a lot of my time in networking events, often as the youngest person in the room, and the only non-white person. For me, the whole business networking landscape had become really stale and outdated. Firestarters is going to change the status quo by creating a business networking community that truly values diversity."

- 2020



created by

**matchstick
creative**

What we do

Firestarters was born from Matchstick Creative, a purpose-driven marketing agency in Liverpool. We help organisations who want to create a positive impact communicate clearly.

When we understand each other better,
great things happen.

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Building Back Equal Series

Consulting the community

Before we set out to change the world, we brought Liverpool's leaders together to help us decide what social issues we should address. Diversity, purpose and a deeper level of curation were the top priorities. Equipped with the knowledge of the burning issues within the community, it was time to plan for our first event series: Building Back Equal.

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Building Back Equal:

Inclusive economic recovery from COVID-19

Our Building Back Equal series brought the Liverpool City Region's (LCR) ethical business leaders together to explore what part they can play in driving an inclusive economic recovery from COVID-19.

7

As well as shining a light on existing inequalities, COVID-19 disproportionately affected marginalised groups in areas like health and wellbeing, business, and employment.

Social responsibility, diversity, and inclusivity now sit at top of the agenda for many brands. In this new environment, ethics can't be an afterthought.

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Meet the panel



Emeka Onuora

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Race Equality Programme

"Some of the challenges we've found for black business include not having access to the same advice, support or funding, and not being able to grow and develop"



Natalie Denny

Founder of Skywriters & Programme Manager for the
Anthony Walker Foundation

"I would like to see measurable real change. We should be able to sit there and say "ok, if I want to make it from A-B then this is how I would do it."



Chelsea Slater

CEO of Innovate Her

"Often it's the people in more junior or mid-level positions that aren't necessarily the decision-makers, that are passionate about this and are the ones who end up taking it on."



Francesca Manca

Founder of Underwing

"We need to understand that unless we work together, there are some barriers that won't come down."

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Building Back Equal:

Being black in the Liverpool City Region

Black people in the Liverpool City Region are:



Paid £1.10 an hour less than employees



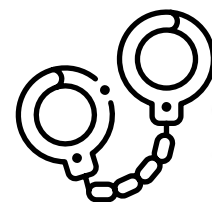
Paid

10% less

after graduating

3X

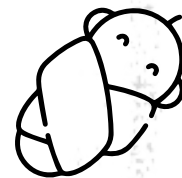
more likely to be stopped and searched



Twice as likely

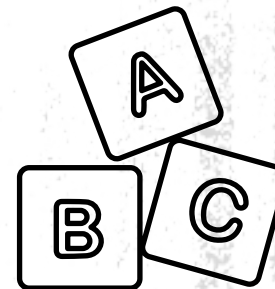
to not own their own home

Early Life



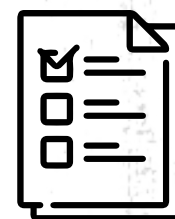
Twice as likely to be born into child poverty

United Kingdom



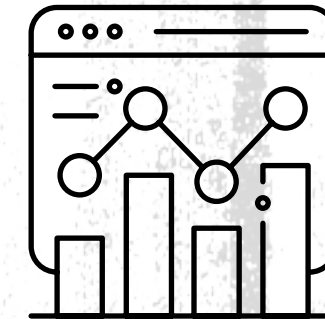
Black people in the Liverpool City Region are least likely of all ethnic groups to meet the early years expected standard in development

Liverpool City Region



Least likely of all ethnic groups to achieve a strong pass in their English and Maths GCSE's

Liverpool City Region



It's good for business

Companies with more culturally and ethnic diverse teams are:

33%

more likely to see better than average profits

Building Back Equal:

Event outcomes

Insights



A need for measurable change that can be sustained



The importance of language when speaking about diversity, inclusion and equality



The need for unconscious bias training at the top of all organisations

Quotes

"It's about collaboration and being able to share and understand each other, and to understand that someone else's success isn't at your detriment."

– Natalie Denny

"Some of the challenges we've found for black businesses include not having access to the same advice. Not having access to the right support."

– Emeka Onuora

"We need to drop this thing with the competition. There's enough money in the world for everyone."

– Francesca Manca

Action

Firestarters committed to expanding the series to include two more industry-specific Building Back Equal events

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Building Back Equal 2:

Destination Tourism & Culture

COVID-19 left many cultural businesses uncertain over their futures, as support and resources were quickly redirected to areas and industries that were considered essential. Building Back Equal 2: Destination Tourism and Culture set out to build on the findings of our first Building Back Equal event.

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We dove deeper into the discussion focusing on industry-specific challenges and opportunities. Destination Tourism and Culture brought together 40 of Liverpool's most influential creative, cultural and tourism organisations.

The event was opened by keynote speaker Yaw Owusu, Senior Manager of the PRS Foundation and Curator of the Liverpool LIMF Festival. Yaw ran a Q&A about the PRS Foundation's Power Up Programme and introduced some great discussions on the tourism and culture sectors.

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Meet the panel



Yaw Owusu

PRS Foundation, LCR Music Board, LIMF

Yaw is the Senior Manager at the PRS Foundation, sits on the LCR Music board and works as a curator at LIMF. He's hosted a Q&A discussion all about the PRS Foundation's Power Up Programme.



Kevin McManus

Head of Music for Liverpool on LCR music board

"We're conscious that we've seen initiatives, and statements and manifestos come and go and nothing much changes."



Sarah Lovell

Lead Officer for Culture for the Liverpool City Region

"We're not very good at optimising some of the resources that we have and the knowledge we have, and making it an ongoing learning and not just a flavour of the month"



Emma Smith

Artistic Director and CEO of the Liverpool Irish Festival

"We're not good enough yet. Until there is no more oppression in our city, we are not good enough yet"



Andrew Ibi

FACE, LJMU & Bold Agency

"It's only if you change the system, the structure and the people in charge of those systems that I think we might begin to see some change"



Claire McColgan

Director of Culture Liverpool

"There's an opportunity for Liverpool in that, in leading the way and starting to look at how you get working-class kids into the arts, by changing the curriculum in some ways"

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Building Back Equal 2:

Event outcomes

Insights



There needs to be more arts and culture education for young people



Diverse representation should be at the top level of organisations



Structural changes need to happen within organisations

Quotes

"How do we inspire young people to build on what's happening now?"

– Sarah Ogle

"How do we actually change, 'nothings changed'. How do we stop having this continuous pattern?"

– Andrew Ibi

"Our ambition in terms of culture and tourism, particularly with music and arts – Not every city has that power coming from a certain sector."

– Yaw Owusu

Action

We launched our Firestarters newsletter that helps the community to stay updated by pulling purpose-driven news and resources together

Building Back Equal 3:

Meet the panel

Employment & Skills

The pandemic and multiple lock downs have had a dramatic effect on employment. The following diverse groups have been over-represented in job losses associated with COVID-19:

- Young people
- Ethnic minority groups
- Older workers
- Disabled workers
- Women
- Part-time workers
- Low-paid workers
- Self-employed people

For the third and final event in our Building Back Equal series, we brought together local experts in employment and skills to explore challenges facing the LCR's purpose-driven businesses.

Employment and Skills was an opportunity for attendees to make meaningful cross-sector connections with purpose-driven people and organisations across the region.

Paul Amann

Principal Officer, Employment & Skills at Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

Paul is responsible for the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's 'Narrowing the Gaps' aspects of employment and skills policy. He has been working in employment and skills and equality issues for over 30 years.

Amanda Follit

Senior Manager, Marketing Operations Services at EPAM

"It is the responsibility of employers to make sure they are networking with other people who can bring class diversity into their organisations"

Tracy Fishwick

Co-founder & Managing Director at Transform Lives Company

"It's not about survival of the fittest. It's about the survival of the nurtured."

Ben Osu

Senior Lead - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion at Everton Football Club

"We need more sponsorship - not just for giving advice but putting people forward for opportunities, giving them a chance."

Building Back Equal 3:

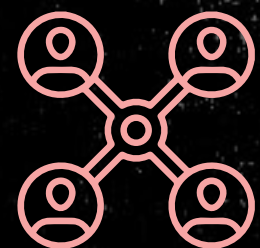
Event outcomes

Insights

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The main challenges around addressing inequality of opportunity include exclusion and accessibility



The main opportunities for creating change lie in employer education and employee support networks



Employers could begin to address these challenges and opportunities by considering who's in their network and how they can change it

Quotes

"Nearly everybody who gets a job in arts organisations gets them through word of mouth."

– Tracy Fishwick

"The Liverpool City Region has more economically-inactive people than almost any other part of the country."

– Paul Amann

"Employers must make sure they are networking with other people who can bring class diversity into their organisations."

– Amanda Follit

Action

Following from the discussions in this event, we held a second event on Employment and Skills in 2022



What happened next?

Partnering up

After the success of our Building Back Equal series, we were engaged by a number of partners who wanted to use our processes and community to gain insights and drive action around specific challenges.

This included:



Zero Carbon Liverpool

Engagement with the LCR Combined Authority's Vision for Net Zero Carbon by 2040



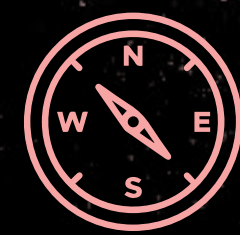
Mental Health & Wellbeing in the workplace

An event in partnership with the Growth Platform and Metro Mayor Steve Rotherham on Mental Health in the Workplace



Establishing an ethical framework for personalised care

Exploring challenges around establishing an ethical framework for personalised care with Cheshire and Merseyside Health Partnership



Is this the North?

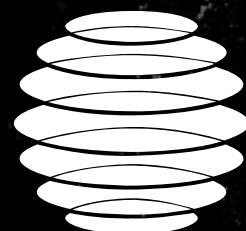
Holding a session on northern identity and getting involved in your local space with NP11



Zero Carbon
Liverpool

Pathway to 2040: a greener city region

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) set our city region an ambitious target of carbon neutrality by 2040, which was put forward in their [Net Zero Carbon 2040 Action Plan](#).



**LIVERPOOL
CITY REGION**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

METRO MAYOR
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

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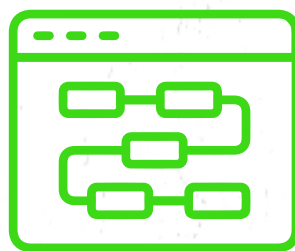
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Zero Carbon Liverpool

We wanted to help them on their mission to tackle the climate crisis. Firestarters supported the LCRCA's engagement campaign through an event that set out to:



Bring together a diverse group of socially-driven disruptors to discuss how the Action Plan will affect their organisations and the region



Make further developments to the Action Plan

Meet our keynote speaker



Rachel Waggett

Principal Environment Officer of the LCRCA

Our keynote speaker, Rachael Waggett, highlighted which sectors would be most affected by the Action Plan and the impact it will have on them. Rachel also drew attention to the LCRCA's vision statement.

Meet some key attendees



Garth Dallas

Founder and Legal Director,
Dallas Consulting



Alex Kelly

Community and
Partnerships Officer, Baltic
Creative CIC



Andy Cairns

Programme Manager at the
Innovation Agency

LCRCA's Net Zero by 2040 Vision Statement

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By 2040, many more office workers will work from home for at least part of the week, reducing their need to travel, benefiting their family lives. Local businesses will thrive as they are more accessible to people. Every home is connected to fast digital networks which help to connect people and services, reducing the need to work at an office.

Certain jobs, e.g. those in heavily polluting industries, will either no longer exist in the same way or will be done differently to how they're done today. There will be new types of jobs linked to the greener way we will all be living and there will be retraining allowing people to take advantage of these new opportunities."

Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace

Firestarters Spark Change!

18

Wellbeing at work

We hosted a private event in partnership with Growth Platform for 20 exclusive guests who could help them to reach these goals. As an organisation that's passionate about supporting employees with their mental health, we were keen to get involved.

growth.
platform

Liverpool City Region Growth Company

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Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace

19

In support of World Mental Health Day 2021, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Growth Platform launched a campaign to promote good mental health and wellbeing at work. The goals of the campaign were:



To highlight the mental health resources available to support businesses in the LCR



To open discussions about how to make these resources more relevant and shareable

Meet the panel



Steve Rotheram

Metro Mayor of Liverpool

"As the pandemic started to unfold in May 2020, and whilst we were still facing the imminent threat of COVID, I started to think about what issues we would face when we did eventually return to some sort of normality and what would the aftershock of the virus be to our health needs, and specifically what the consequences of COVID would mean for our mental health requirements"



Elaine Derbyshire

Executive Director of Communications, Corporate Governance and Estates and Facilities, Merseycare



Mark Basnett

Managing Director of Growth Platform, Liverpool City Region's Growth Company

Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace

Key themes

20

1 Culture

“Productivity is related to mental health, and I wish there was a way I could bring that into the culture.”

– Louisa Burman, Awesome Liverpool

2 Trust

“Currently, 78% of staff say they wouldn’t trust surveys in case it got back to their employer. I think that is a barrier in itself.”

– Phil Noon, Evolving Mindset

3 Flexibility & control

“I think it’s really important to have conversations with each other about how you work, and how you want to work.”

– Sophie Stephenson, Open Media

4 Education & employment

“One thing is about how we effectively manage our time. We use stuff like the Eisenhower matrix to prioritise our workload. All of that type of stuff, I don’t think there’s enough of it in the workplace.”

– Louisa Burman, Awesome Liverpool

5 Preventative and holistic

“Perceived organisational support is one of the key factors for that person to feel comfortable in that job role. A lot of that is extrapolated across team, culture and organisation.”

– Edward Lynch, LYFE

Establishing an
ethical framework for
personalised care

A fresh approach for better care

Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (CMHCP) needed a fresh, innovative approach for creating ethical frameworks for health and social care. Firestarters hosted a private session to help CMHCP come up with their first-of-its-kind ethical framework.



Cheshire and
Merseyside
Health and Care Partnership

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Establishing an ethical framework for personalised care

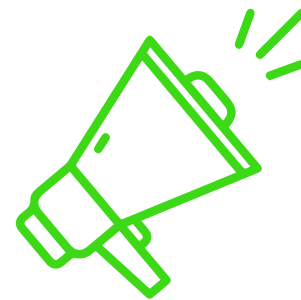
We were joined by 15 people from some of the region's most socially-driven businesses including Wirral and Liverpool City Councils, the NHS, and Integrated Health and Social Care.

22

Our keynote speaker was Dave Sweeney, Director of Partnerships at CMHCP. Dave opened the event by helping attendees understand CMHCP's ideas for their new framework, which had to:



Address health inequalities across the region



Promote better health outcomes and wellbeing practices

Meet our keynote speaker



Dave Sweeney

Director of Partnerships at CMHCP

Dave Sweeney is the Executive Director Of Partnerships at Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (CMHCP). He helps CMHCP expand their innovative work across Cheshire and Merseyside, allowing their impact to transform more people's lives.



Establishing an ethical framework for personalised care

Key themes

23

1 Ethical & Personalised

“There needs to be an inclusion of EDI (equality, diversity and inclusion), thinking about different backgrounds when determining baselines, which have been set up usually by white men.”

– Natalie Denny, Anthony Walker Foundation

2 Connectivity

“I do a lot interpreting for Italian people in tribunals and GP surgeries, and everything seems very disjointed. The school doesn’t talk to the hospital, who doesn’t talk to the judge, who doesn’t talk to the family...”

– Francesca Manca, Underwing

3 Flexibility & control

“We have to have policies in place but we also need to trust the human in the organisation to recognise those values that underpin the policies.”

– Angela Lake, 50Eight

4 Simplicity

“What does simple look like through different lenses? We have so many frameworks but how do we make this framework the priority?”

– Rebecca Mellor

5 Resource

“We need to factor in financial constraints. The NHS only has so much financial resource.”

– Edward Lynch, LYFE

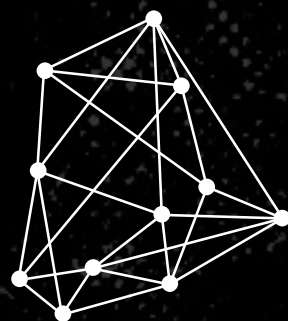
Is this
the North?

What being Northern means to us

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Our final private event of 2021 was on a subject near and dear to our hearts – Liverpool and the North. Our event in partnership with NP11, 'Is this the North?', facilitated a discussion on what it means to be northern and what would inspire locals to get involved in spaces near them.

NP11



Is this the North?

NP11 is a partnership between the public, private and governmental sectors that aims to improve lives across the North of England. They wanted Firestarters to help them corral key stakeholders in order to form a proposition to guide citizens towards creating an impact together.

Clare Devaney, Place & Culture Programme Lead for NP11, was our fantastic keynote speaker. Clare took us through what we mean by Northern spaces and co-design. From Clare's opening speech, attendees went into the difference between place and space, and how we can make spaces fair for the public.

Meet our keynote speaker



Clare Devaney

Programme Lead for NP11

Strategic Lead for Place and Culture in the North of England, NP11

Dr Clare Devaney is an experienced strategist, researcher and communicator with a specialist interest in place, cultural heritage and grassroots innovation.



Is this the North?

Key themes

26

1

Culture

“From experiences of living down south there is almost an expectation to assimilate into the cultures in another place.”

– Jack Murphy, Matchstick Creative

2

Identity

“I think being northern to me just makes me feel comfortable. I feel very centred, and grounded in being northern. It just makes me happy. It's not a pride thing it's an inner emotional thing.”

– Edna Robinson, Peoples Powerhouse

3

Context

“People always tell you when you're northern. If you're outside the north-west it's a common thing.”

– Greg Macoy, Matchstick Creative

4

Place vs Space

“A fair public space is a safe public space. I think that should be the number one priority for anyone really.”

– Amber Jones-Eddy, Matchstick Creative

5

Involvement

“If people do feel disempowered, they'll just assume they can't influence things and so they won't bother.”

– Edna Robinson, Peoples Powerhouse

What's next for Firestarters in 2022?

February

The Purpose Accelerator – Ethical Investment | Sponsored by Gather

April

The Purpose Accelerator – Next Generation Talent | Sponsored by Gather – The Good Business Festival Insights report

July

Firestarters CIC
Firestarters Summer Social

October

Firestarters presents...
Black Founders Accelerator event

March

Firestarters x The Good Business Festival – Powering Communities/ Green Revolution/Cultural Inclusion

May

The Purpose Accelerator – Start-Up Culture | Sponsored by Gather

August

Firestarters Innovation Project

November

Spark Change 2023 Survey

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Let's spark more change together



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Thank you to everyone that helped us to start the fire in 2021. We hope that you can all join us in 2022 for more collaborations and illuminating discussions. Let's spark more change together.

Find out why you should be excited about [Firestarters](#) and our latest events.

Got a project for the Firestarters? Reach out with your idea to firestarters@matchstickcreative.co.uk

Come and join our growing Firestarters community, follow us on [Twitter](#) and sign up for our [newsletter](#).

