



www.unlock-urban.org.uk

Resourcing Urban Discipleship by: -

- **Unlocking real life stories of urban people**
- **Revealing Good News of the down-to-earth Christ**
- **Releasing life changing skills and confidence**



is . . .

a Christian mission charity that has been working since 1972 to help urban churches of any denomination to respond to the challenges in their areas.





We are . .

especially concerned with helping oral learners; people in 'text-shy' cultures to explore the Bible.





does . .

establish local partnerships in UK cities to help churches find appropriate ways of working with the Bible within their local culture.





and . .

offers training and resources to other individuals, churches and agencies placing Christian workers in urban contexts.





doesn't . .

**have a one size fits all
approach, or tell you what's
best for your own situation.**

**We respond
to the local
context.**





Unlock's origins

Unlock was founded in 1972 by a group of Christian leaders & ministers who shared a concern for the people of Britain's inner cities. Unlock was 50 years old in 2022!





WHAT WE BELIEVE

Jesus does not exclude anyone from growing in their Christian faith simply because the way that they take in information, think, or learn, is different to the ways in which the Church has always done these things.





WHAT WE BELIEVE

Jesus does not exclude anyone from the Church or the Kingdom because they are 'not the right kind of people'.





WHAT WE BELIEVE

Jesus does not make anyone feel that they are beyond the reach of God's Grace because they are 'not posh enough'.





WHAT WE BELIEVE

Jesus does not want anyone to feel excluded from church life because they do not have the *right qualifications*, or the *right kind of job*, or live in the *right kind of house, or street*, or read *the right books*, or have the *right way of speaking*.





WHAT WE BELIEVE

- ▶ The fact that no one ever *meant* to make people feel that way does not mean that it has not happened.
- ▶ The church needs to be prepared to *listen attentively to those who have felt marginalized or excluded.*





WHAT WE BELIEVE

Those who the church has
somehow kept at the edge are
often those
from whom
we have
most to learn.





WHAT WE NOTICE . .

**Christians can, and do,
learn about their faith simply by:-**

- sharing stories from their own everyday experience *and*
- - relating them to the stories in the bible . .





AND THEN . .

- deciding what to do about it
- taking action and
- sharing stories of the actions they have taken
- and so on





UNLOCK'S SIMPLE APPROACH

- ▶ Is easy to facilitate once you know how
- ▶ Is accessible to people who are alienated by traditional, text based methods of studying Christian faith.





UNLOCK'S SIMPLE APPROACH

- Can be a refreshing approach for those who are quite comfortable with traditional Bible study methods!
- Often includes food and creative activities



Unlock's Approach

Unlocking Life

Experience

Start with the group telling stories from their real life experience.

Leading to more experience

What we learn now is learnt for life and changes us. We also learn to keep reflecting!

Revealing the Down to Earth Christ

The real life stories are compared to similar situations in the Bible.

Releasing Life Changing Skills

Change happens as a result of linking real life experience with the Bible. This change often leads to action among others.





Do you want to Know how?

Unlock Training

- ▶ Anywhere in the UK
- ▶ Morning, afternoon, evening or daytime
- ▶ Up to 30 people
- ▶ Useful, and fun as well
- ▶ Contact us to arrange a date





Unlock Training

Prior to the pandemic we provided Unlock training events in: York, Hull, Norfolk, Sheffield, Birmingham, & Preston.

Where would you like Unlock Training? Talk to the staff, or contact the office to arrange.





Training Feedback

- ▶ 'The course was inspiring and has provoked a few ideas!'
- ▶ 'This teaching will help us to engage with adults at our Defenders Feast and Messy Church groups in a different and more effective way'.
- ▶ 'We have been looking for how we can engage with people who are seeking faith and the Unlock method will give us a way to teach people about the Bible and about faith.'





STUFF HAPPENS

Feeding & Being Fed.

Donna; a struggling young mum attended an Unlock session about food: two days later, she rushed into lunch club, still really excited about what she had learned, shouting out; 'five loaves & fishes & 12 baskets... 12 BASKETS leftover!!!!' Donna tells her daughter that she wants a Bible; there was a child like wonder in her response to the session; it connects to her own experience of feeding & being fed. She likes to have her freezer and cupboards full and feed her children on demand. Her sister is there too; they were giving each-other permission. They are filled with wonder at a super-abundant God.





Things People have said . . .

'Unlock are specifically committed to a section of society that the church often neglects, because that section of society is perceived as not having the intellectual capacity to engage adequately with the Bible, which is often regarded in the church as a text for experts. Unlock reaches out specifically to a marginalized group and in doing so, Unlock follows the example of Jesus.'

MR. CHAV

By Roger Hargreaves





SEEING JESUS

From an Unlock worker

As I drive to the estate every week I pray in the car on the way. I ask Jesus that all who I

meet that day will see something or hear something of Him in me.

Yet every week I see something and hear something of Him in them.





STUFF HAPPENS

STOP!

Using the 'say it how it is' 2 Kings session (Mess & Mistakes & Muddling through): Jane's boyfriend bought a van, she's lent him some money; she is uncomfortable, feels trapped. In the session she came across the stop sign. She heard about God saying that he was not happy with the way people were behaving. It was an entirely new concept. It had never occurred to her before that she had both the right and the power to simply say 'No'. On the Friday she came in and said, 'I've done it! Got the money back and never saw him again'. The power to say 'No' became new a feature of her life; she's since made other choices on that basis.





Unlock has a website . . .

www.unlock-urban.org.uk/

On it you will find:-

- ▶ **Unlock stories**
- ▶ **Unlock resources**
- ▶ **Updates from the places we are working**
- ▶ **Our plans for the future**
- ▶ **How to support Unlock's work**
- ▶ **Information about the next Unlock London walk and Unlock training events**





Get In Touch

URBAN

UNLOCKING
LIFE

www.unlock-urban.org.uk

Unlock aims
to give a helping
hand to the church
to relate the
gospel to all people
around them.



About Unlock



Information



Support Unlock



Free Resources

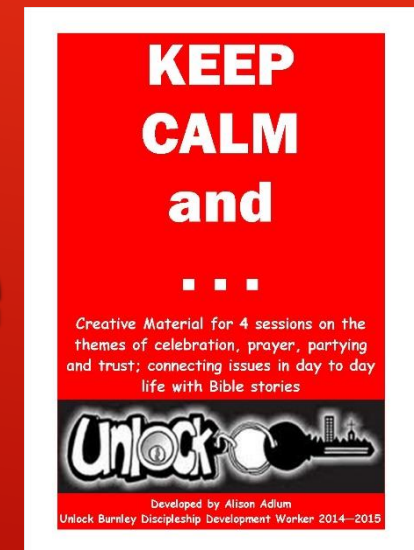
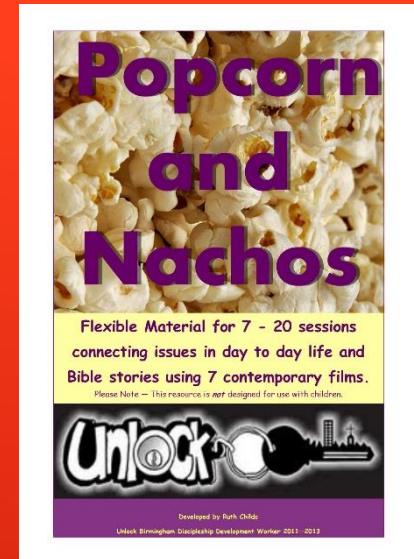
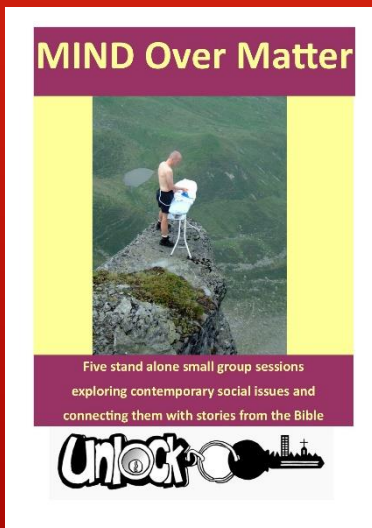
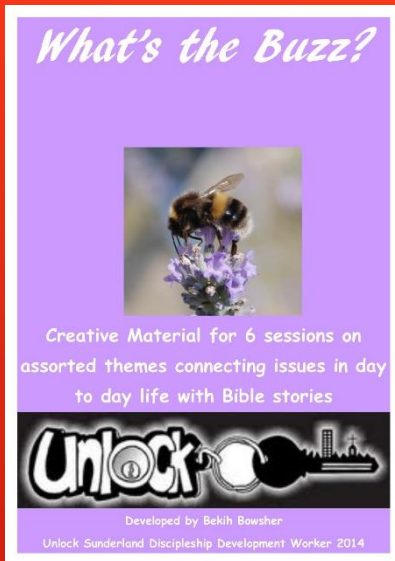


Available Free



Unlock resources and approaches to download from the website

www.unlock-urban.org.uk



The Year We Stayed at Home



A Pick and Mix Resource pack of activities and Bible linked materials for reflecting on our shared experiences of the COVID 19 Pandemic



Most Recent



www.unlock-urban.org.uk

Slithers of Gold



Creative Activities and reflections on the themes of Guilt, Mending and Grace; connecting issues in day to day life with Bible stories



Developed by Dawn Lonsdale
Unlock Chief Officer with Claire Cullingworth

STARTER FOR TEN Getting people talking



Starters for *REAL* Conversations



Developed by Siggy Parratt-Halbert
Unlock Woodhouse Worker

Trailing Bible Tales Connecting with your local community through Seasonal Interactive Trails



Prepared by Siggy Parratt-Halbert
Unlock Woodhouse Worker
With contributions from Lisa M Neal of Heanor

Chatting with the Creator

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



FYI: THERE'S A 100000000 OF PEOPLE DOWN THERE THANKING YOU THAT IT IS FRIDAY

Making it Easy for Folk to Chat with God



Designed by Siggy Parratt-Halbert Unlock
Woodhouse Worker

Unlocking Feelings



Creative Activities and reflections on the themes of Emotions; connecting the way we feel in day to day life with Bible stories



Developed by
Cathy Westby in Hull



MORE RESOURCE PACKS . .

- ▶ **The Heart of the Estate**
- ▶ **Unlocking Bible Women**
- ▶ **What's the Buzz?**
- ▶ **Keep Calm and . . .**
- ▶ **Pop Goes the Weasel**
- ▶ **Popcorn and Nachos**
- ▶ **Unlock DIY**
- ▶ **Unlock Stretched Out**
- ▶ **What Now?**
- ▶ **Easter at St Jude's**
- ▶ **Unlocking The Prodigal**
- ▶ **The Veronica Sessions**



www.unlock-urban.org.uk



THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID . . .

'Unlock have understood the importance of Scripture as narrative, rather than an abstract text that communicates principles. You do not flatten out the extraordinarily rich range of literature in the Bible into a series of principles'





STUFF REALLY HAPPENS!

Family.

A mum & 3 grown up daughters; very local; attended toddlers and messy church. First they all joined in with Unlock - Surviving Xmas, then 'New Year; New You'. One can't read & write; they started doing exercise (walking etc) as a result of the priorities session, one of them acting as a local leader. Now there is a family exercise group. Then the Minister takes the group and continues it as an nurture course; all four are now members of the church, full on; plus one of their male partners. Family reinforcement really helps.



THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID . . .

During Unlock DIY, after a taster Unlock session:-

- ▶ 'This is more like *with-reach* than out-reach'
- ▶ 'I liked that I didn't feel taught at but rather that we were learning together'





THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID . . .

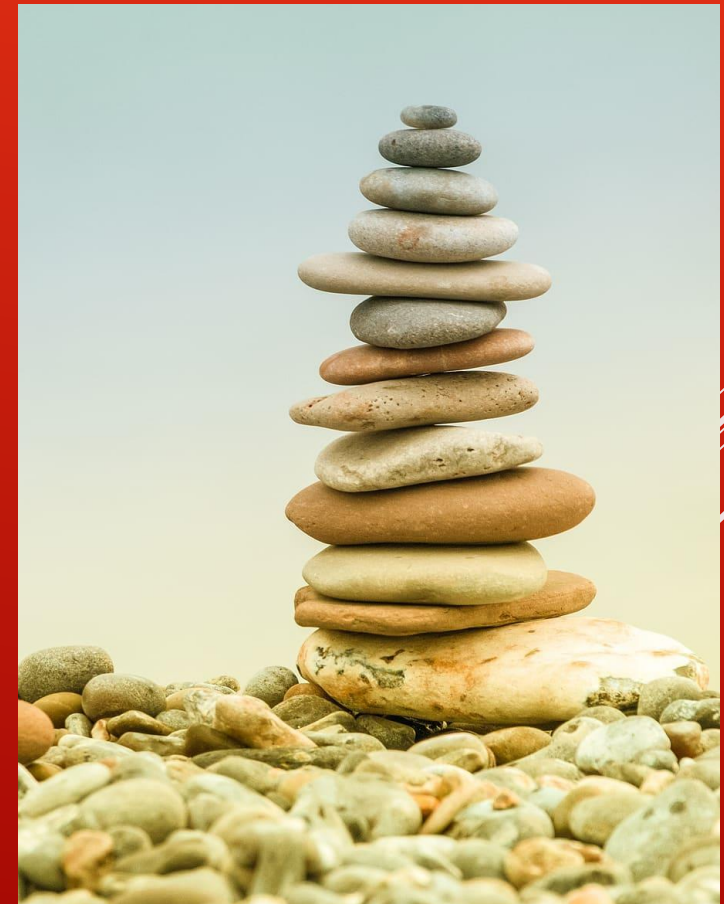
- ▶ 'Unlock have understood the importance of the narrative of people's lives and how our story interacts with God's story.'
- ▶ 'Unlock have understood how text can paralyze and intimidate people while images can release people into expressing themselves and thus becoming part of a learning community.'





THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID . . .

- **"You can trust the Unlock process; you know you won't go far wrong"**
- **"Other things can be so cringey, but with this you just feel more confident"**
- **"People are less bothered about talking about the bible than we think!".**





FROM AN UNLOCK WORKER . .

When I started on this Unlock journey 10 months ago I wasn't quite sure which way or where it was heading! I came to the estate not knowing anyone. Would anyone want to be part of this journey? The local residents have been amazing, supportive and encouraging. In the beginning they said, 'Well, we'll support you, but we're not religious!' but now they've started asking questions about faith, church, God, and suggesting things we could do together. We are journeying together, it's a good feeling!





THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID . . .

- **"People are changing their perspectives and behaviour, to say they have some authority for that". For example, Toni: "I live this way now because of Jesus".**
- **"Our stories first: they open an emotional door". "The same story (feed5k) had gone right over Kerry's head before".**





THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID . . .

'Unlock sets out to set people free to discover God's story for themselves, rather than creating dependence on Bible 'experts'.'





THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID . . .

'Unlock goes back to the way in which Christ taught, using stories and situations as the common



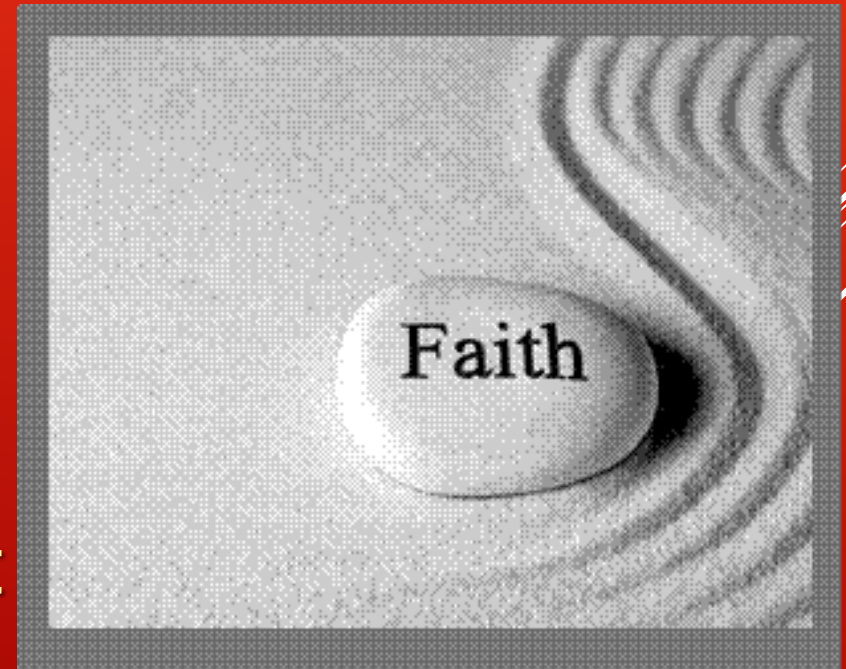
starting point, which enables a sharing, not from the power invested position of the pulpit but from a common humanity.'



What about the faith bit?

I feel really encouraged by the meetings with the residents and how they are engaging with what my work with Unlock is about.

That was evident when in one of the meetings when someone was getting quite enthusiastic about what we could do in the Craft & Chat group and someone else said, 'yes, that all sounds great, but what about the faith bit'!





THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID . . .

- ▶ 'Unlock helped me realise that the Bible is relevant to my life now'
- ▶ 'Unlock brings our everyday lives into conversation with the Bible'
- ▶ 'People's experience is a valid lens for looking at the Bible'





Things people have said . . .

- 'Alpha just doesn't fit; Unlock is much more relevant to the people in our community'
- 'Starting with experience is a strength because everyone can talk about their own experience.'





WHAT CHURCHES CAN DO:-

1. Take concrete and regular action which clearly communicates that the day to day lives, work, and experiences of *Everyday Christians* is highly valued.



We can do it!

PEPE.COM



WHAT CHURCHES CAN DO:-

2. Find someone on the church fringe, or beyond, who isn't a confident reader, and ask them to give you some *honest* feedback on how comfortable they feel in your church's worship and learning, or working groups; then act to improve the situation. (Like asking someone in a wheelchair to do a disabled access survey of your building.)





WHAT CHURCHES CAN DO:-

3. Collectively and individually - put *at least as much* time, commitment and energy into doing community things in the community as you do into doing churchy things in church.





WHAT CHURCHES CAN DO:-

- ▶ **Support Unlock**
- ▶ **Promote Unlock**
- ▶ **Donate to Unlock**

**The work we do is
only possible because
individuals and churches fund
it.**





RESPONDING TO COVID

As we started to cautiously emerge from COVID lockdowns it seemed appropriate to offer the opportunity for the congregation to reflect and begin to process the experience of this past 24 months

We have used an Unlock resource called 'The Year We Stayed At Home'. It is a very flexible resource that allows for easy adaptation to different congregations and contexts.

I am excited by how the congregation has grown in confidence to express their thoughts and feelings and how much we have learnt from each other. Over time the conversation has deepened and there have been signs of growing maturity and respectful listening and sharing with each other.

FEEDBACK FROM A VICAR IN A FORMER INDUSTRIAL PARISH.





Clay Crosses

In the ceramics group we did, there was some left over clay and I asked what would happen to it; the leader said it would be thrown away. I asked if I could have it and I sat and moulded it into small stones and made the shape of the cross in each one.

When they had been fired, the people in craft and chat asked what I was going to do with them and I said I'm going to get them blessed then anyone who would like one can have one, they're small enough to fit in your purse or a pocket and it's just a reminder that God is with you wherever you are.

I had them blessed then forgot they were in my bag; one of the young mums who comes to the group came in late, and she said, I've come for my stone, have you brought them?

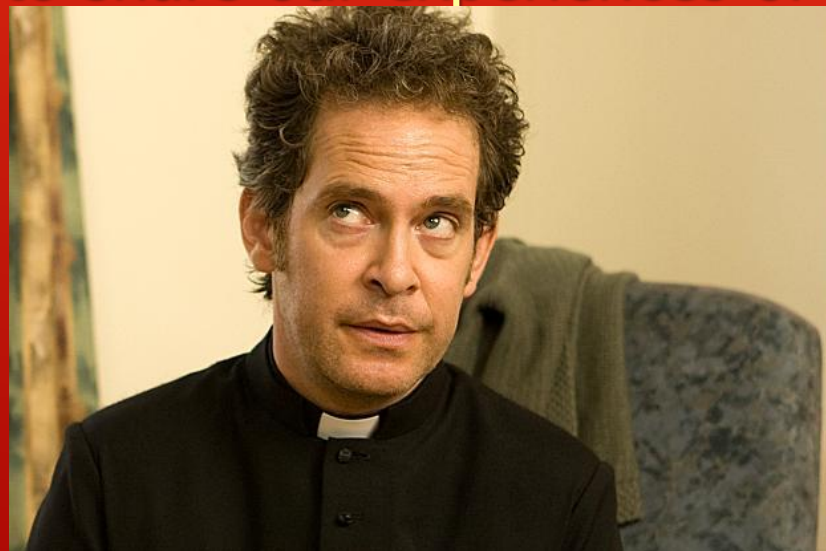
Everyone took a stone (some took more for family members). I know it's only a small thing, but my heart soars to know that several people are walking around the estate knowing that God is with them.





A Humble and Grateful Vicar

Our Lent course has had a very strong Unlock influence and it's been such a great experience. We are a church full of very practical, down to earth people who tend to be quite private about what goes on inside them and not have huge amounts of confidence. Unlock has enabled us to share our experiences of prayer and God in a much more open way. That, in turn has led to a new courage and willingness to pray for and with one another, which makes me a very humble, grateful, happy Vicar indeed.'



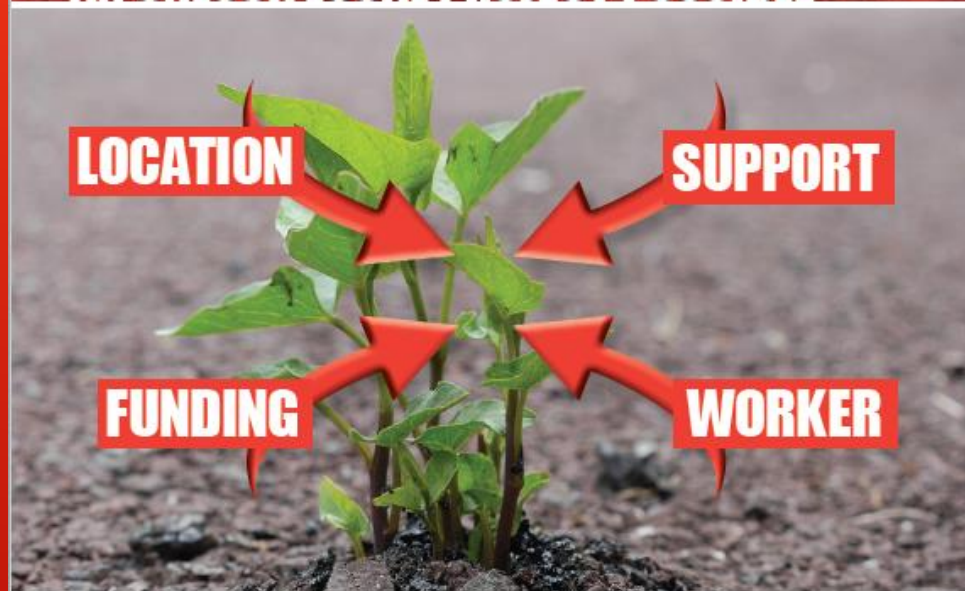


LOCAL PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

UNLOCK LOCAL PROJECTS

UNLOCKING REAL LIFE STORIES OF URBAN PEOPLE
REVEALING GOOD NEWS OF THE DOWN TO EARTH CHRIST
RELEASING LIFE CHANGING SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE

FOUR ELEMENTS COME TOGETHER TO MAKE
AN UNLOCK LOCAL PROJECT POSSIBLE



THE UNLOCK DEVELOPMENT WORKER DELIVERS
MATERIALS COURSES KNOW HOW
ADVICE SUPPORT SKILLS
IN THEIR LOCAL AREA





Unlock Local Partnerships

Unlock develops 'Unlock Local Teams' and employs Unlock Discipleship Development workers, part time, in UK Cities.

Unlock workers share Unlock's expertise and experience to enable and resource local churches





Unlock Local Partnership Projects

WE NEED SOME NEW LOCATIONS

At Unlock we are working to rebuild our local partnership work after the pandemic years. To do this we are looking for new local partners; churches, or local groups; who would like to grow their ability to: -

- ▶ **Unlock real life stories of urban people**
- ▶ **Reveal Good News of the Down to Earth Christ**
- ▶ **Release life changing skills and confidence**



Unlock Local Partnership Projects

- ▶ We now only have active Unlock work in Rotherham but *we really want to do more.*
- ▶ We are looking for groups of people in other UK cities who are willing to work with us to develop further Unlock Local Partnerships
- ▶ If you want to know more about this please contact the Unlock National Office





Treeton, Rotherham



The local team in Treeton, have run a number of seasonal Unlock sessions; for Remembrance, for Valentines day, Mothering Sunday and Easter.



Local Christians are learning how to grow their connections in the local community



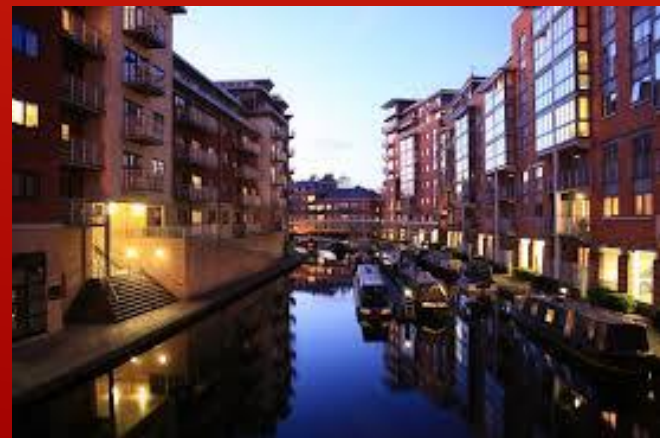
Cameron Carr is our Unlock worker for Treeton, Rotherham



West Midlands - something new



**The local partners would
need to contribute
£6000 over two years**



**We have the
possibility of some
funding towards
new Unlock work
in the West
Midlands.**

**We'd like to hear
from local churches
or groups of
churches who would
like to explore the
possibility of
developing some
Unlock work.**





Bible Women in Woodhouse Sheffield



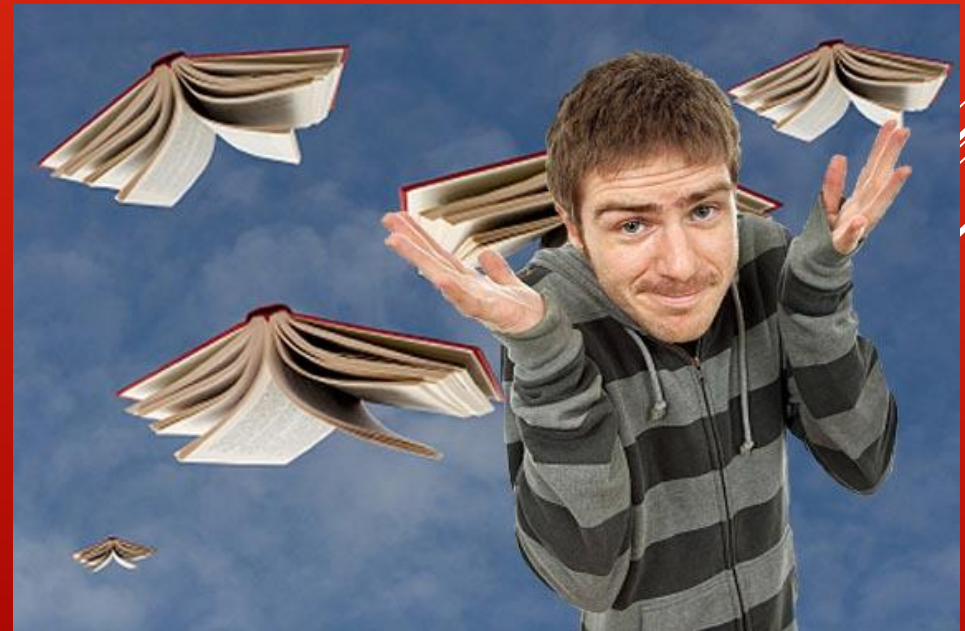
Local People were asked to suggest the stories of women who had changed the world. The Unlock worker found a Bible Woman who had a comparable story and illustrated them all with cartoons. Everyone joined in with colouring them all in. These cartoon women with their stories are now available to visit your church. Contact the Unlock Office for details.





**PLEASE *DON'T*
ASSUME THAT . .**

- ▶ Just because people are able to read that they like to, or that it's the best way for them to learn.
- ▶ Those who are not confident readers are not smart.
- ▶ What works for you works for everyone else.





**PLEASE *DON'T*
ASSUME THAT . .**

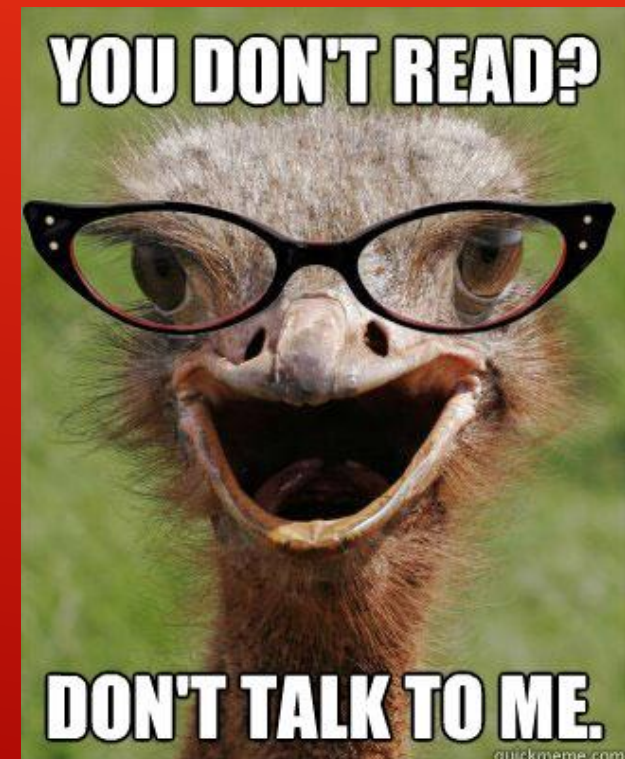
- ▶ Everyone who wants to learn will find a way.
- ▶ 'It didn't do *me* any harm, did it?' is actually true!
- ▶ If church doesn't do it, it isn't holy.
- ▶ If it isn't in a book it doesn't have any authority





Please *don't* assume that . .

- ▶ **People who are not attracted by formal courses are not interested in learning about their faith.**
- ▶ **Those with no qualifications have nothing to teach.**





THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID . . .

From Unlock Glasgow:-

There has been a weekly Unlock Group running, and Billy wrote to us:

"The group went very well. We had 10 people there and out of those 10 only 3 were regulars at the church." "We are on week 5 of our Unlock sessions and it's going very well. Our group has lost a few folk but those left have said "It has changed my life" and "it has helped restore my faith in God's people" so we must be doing something right!!



PARTNERSHIPS . . .

Unlock has a rewarding partnership with The Saltley Trust in Birmingham which funds annual training events at **Queen's Foundation**

Unlock is exploring new relationships with Urban Expression and CUF and has also provided training events for Christians Against Poverty



Unlock also connects with the **Urban Theology Union, Church Army, Trussell Trust, CURBS, the National Estate Churches Network, and the Estates Evangelism Task Group and The Bible Society**



How is Unlock funded?

- ▶ **Unlock is entirely funded on a voluntary basis** by those who believe in our work
- ▶ We rely heavily on our **Annual London walk**, which attracts around 600 people each April, and raises about one third of our annual budget through sponsorship and donations.
- ▶ Other funds are provided by gifts from supporters and Christian charitable trusts.



Unlock would cease to function without the money raised by the Unlock London walks

Unlock London Walks

- ▶ **Have been going for 40 years now**
- ▶ **Help people from outside inner London meet with the people and churches ministering there**
- ▶ **Sponsorship & donations from the walk provide the funds for Unlock to operate nationwide.**





The COVID Impact on funding

- ▶ **In 2020 and 2021 we had no choice but to take our Unlock London Walks online and run virtual events.**
- ▶ **Over the two years impacted by COVID our walk income was down by around £15k overall**
- ▶ **We are very thankful that the 2022 walk combined with an appeal has made up what we lost**
- ▶ **Now we need additional funding to allow us to generate new work in new places going forward.**



The aims of the Unlock London Walk are:-

- *Primarily to raise money for Unlock's crucial work in deprived urban areas across the UK*
- ▶ To raise awareness of the issues of exclusion that Unlock exists to address
- ▶ To showcase the ministry of churches in urban areas – *'Come and see what God is doing in the city'.*





The aims of the Unlock London Walk are:-

- ▶ To encourage churches in more affluent parts of the country to support the work of their fellow Christians in the inner city.
- ▶ To give 100s of people an opportunity for an unusual and inspiring day out in London in return for their donations to Unlock's work.





REALLY EASY WALK SPONSORSHIP

Now you can seek and collect and manage your Unlock sponsorship and donations on line via Give as You Live Donate.

This means you can:-

- ▶ **Be sponsored by people who live far away, or who you do not regularly meet up with**
- ▶ **Not have to chase sponsors for payment**
- ▶ **Not have to collect cash**
- ▶ **Not have to write a cheque and mail it to Unlock**

Give as You Live Donate will collect your sponsorship direct from your sponsors, claim gift aid where appropriate, and pass the Funds raised direct to Unlock.

This saves Unlock time and money, as well as you!



For details go to:

www.unlock-urban.org.uk/pdf/give_as_you_live_donate_instructions.pdf



WALK INCOME HAS STILL NOT RETURNED TO IT'S 2014 PEAK

We need the income from the walk more than ever before

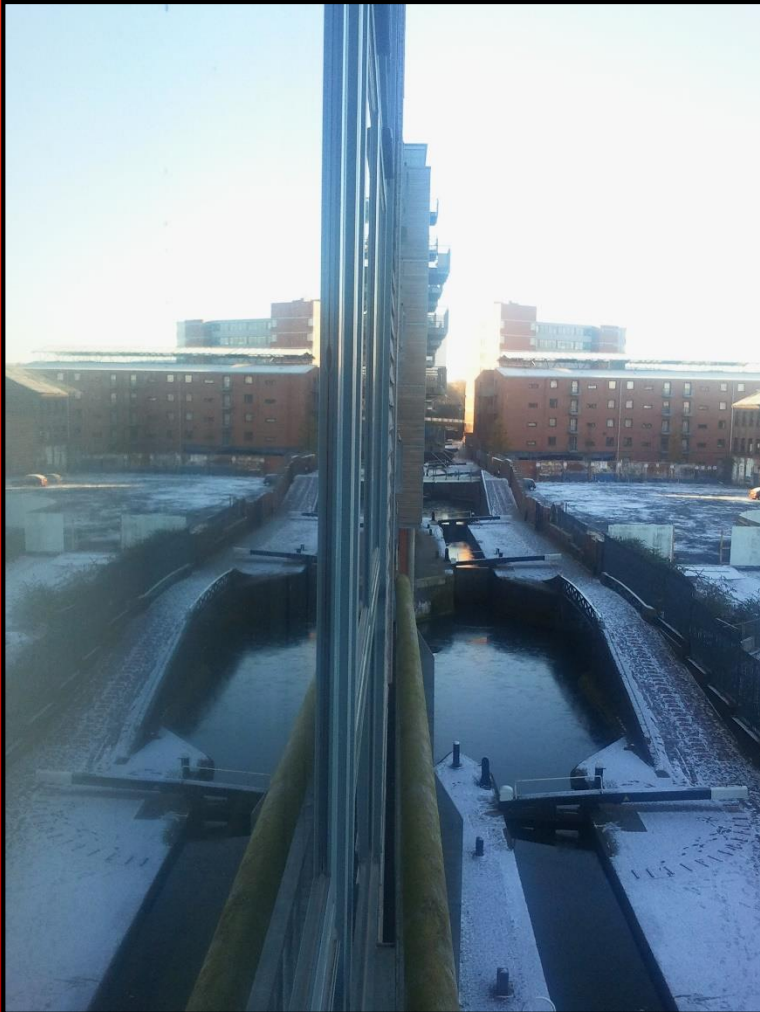
- We are aware of how fortunate we are to have so many deeply committed and faithful supporters but we need you to keep it up!.
- The 2019 walk raised **£23,628**, in 2018 it was **£26,214**, in 2017 it was **£22,885** in 2016 it was **£24,994** and it was **£26,596** in 2015.
- These are all very generous amounts, but lower than 2014.
- We need to get London Walk income back to at least the 2014 level to secure Unlock's future.
- Falling income levels are forcing us to cut back on the frontline work we can deliver.
- Unlock are extremely grateful for the finance that Unlock walkers continue to generate for our frontline work.

Thank You!





Unlock's work is about Christian Mission



It is urgently focussed on bringing ***God's Good News*** to those who have often been ignored as unimportant, here, on our own doorsteps, in our own UK cities.



Unlock Some Money -

Will you donate to secure the future of Unlock's work?

- Unlock local projects achieve great things, bringing the gospel to people that the churches are not able to reach; and we really want to do more of that!
- Unlock relies heavily on income from the Unlock London walk to fund our frontline work.
- We try hard but, because we are **directly engaged in Christian Mission**, it is very difficult to secure any other types of funding.
- We always need your financial support in order to go on doing our work.

Thank you.



**If you are interested in
supporting Unlock's work -**

**Please work with us to ensure that in 2023 & 2024
we have sufficient income to fund Unlock's work. You
can do this by:-**

- ▶ **Donations** – you can make a personal donation to Unlock's work, either on a one off basis, or better yet, at regular intervals,
- ▶ **Through your Church** – persuade your church to give funds to support Unlock as part of its regular missionary giving.
- ▶ **Supporting our annual London Walks, and getting sponsorship – the 2024 walk will be on April 27th.**
Details will be on the Unlock website from January 2024.



Stay in Touch

If you want to know more about our work you can: -

- ▶ Contact the Unlock National Office
- ▶ Visit the Unlock website –
- ▶ **Follow Unlock News on Facebook**
- ▶ Add your name to our mailing list by completing the contact form on the Unlock website



www.unlock-urban.org.uk



How to Contact Unlock

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