

I Love Thornton Heath ABCD Pilot Project

Progress Report March 2012

*‘Actually I like my area, just because people put it down doesn’t make it true. I have family, friends, things to do ...if we try we can make it even better’
Franklyn – aged 15*

**Paul Macey
Croydon Voluntary Action**

Table of Contents

1. BACKGROUND

2. ABCD IN THORNTON HEATH

3. IMPLEMENTING THE PROCESS

4. PARTNER FEEDBACK

5. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

6. APPENDICES



Background

The aim of the **I Love Thornton Heath** pilot project was to harness individual and community assets to promote healthy ageing in the Thornton Heath area of Croydon. Thornton Heath is an area where many people have a poorer quality of life in a number of areas from high infant mortality rates to underemployment and high unemployment and where life expectancy is lower than average. The project aimed to mobilise the assets of the whole community in order to promote participation in social networks and strengthen social connectedness among people aged 50-70 to improve their health and well being.

The initial pilot project, which ran from April 2011 to January 2012, was part of a wider project to 'prepare people for a healthy, later life' in Croydon. It was known that people aged 50+ in Croydon had much knowledge and experience which could be built upon to connect people better to benefit their community. The project was funded by NHS Croydon and supported by Nurture Development and the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute.

The pilot adopted and ABCD approach to its work, building a process of identifying the human, material, financial, entrepreneurial and other resources in the Thornton Heath community. The process aimed to reveal community assets and create a map of them to help local people grow these assets for the benefit of their area. It built on the premise of viewing a community from its assets, rather than deficits, in order to use and manifest existing resources to improve the identified neighbourhood.

Asset Based Community Development is an approach developed by Professor John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann of Northwestern University. Central to the ABCD approach is the belief that sustainable community development is driven by the local community and that the best way to develop communities is from the inside out. Furthermore, the ABCD approach views the residents of an area as the community's 'assets', all of whom have individual 'gifts' that they can bring to their community and its development.

The ABCD approach adopted in Thornton Heath emphasised the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in the community. It did not focus on needs, problems and deficiencies of a community adopted as a traditional approach by many services working with communities such as Thornton Heath - especially those seen as 'hard to reach'. In an asset based approach, the glass is reconceptualised as half-full rather than half empty.

The ABCD approach started by asking questions about, and reflecting on, what is already present: What makes this a good place to live? What does the community do to improve things around here? What do community members do for each other? What helps us feel independent and in control? What helps us feel connected and socially useful?

In practice, this meant:

- ✚ finding out what was already working and generating more of it;
- ✚ promoting the project based on 'what we are trying to achieve', not 'what the problems are' e.g. 'Thornton Heath as a great place to live' rather than 'reduce the number of dependent people in Thornton Heath';
- ✚ cherishing assets – as soon as people are talking to each other they are working on the solutions;
- ✚ actively build capacity and confidence among communities and organisational staff;
- ✚ involving the 'whole system' from the beginning – those left out will be left behind;
- ✚ designing in what is needed to achieve the desired future;
- ✚ designing out the structures, processes and systems that are stopping this future being achieved;
- ✚ ensuring the long-term sustainability of the solutions and the project.



Connectors at The Thornton Heath Festival, Sept. 2011

ABCD in Thornton Heath

The pilot project was hosted by the Croydon Voluntary Action Community Involvement Team, with Paul Macey working as lead Community Builder on a one day a week basis for the duration of the project. This work was carried out in partnership with Thornton Heath based organisations; Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association, Asian Resource Centre of Croydon and the Parchmore Community Centre.

A crucial indicator of success for the project was that more local people would be connected to each other than when the pilot began and that subsequent initiatives were sustainable and bespoke to the area. This would be achieved by utilising the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) principles and practice.

As the ABCD is 'a process of self-mobilisation and organising for change' and that this process has happened spontaneously in many communities within Thornton Heath the challenge for an external agency, such as NHS Croydon and partners, was to stimulate this process within Thornton Heath without having the effect of creating dependency or a top down approach.

The process began in April 2011, when CVA held a two day practical training course on the methodology of ABCD, facilitated by Cormac Russell of Nurture Development, for a range of community members and voluntary, community and statutory sector practitioners. Attendees were given the task of supporting the identification of those in the Thornton Heath who could be involved in the pilot.

At this training ABCD principles and practice were shared and the subsequent pilot focused on the following ABCD methods. It is important to stress that this sequencing was adapted to ensure that the Thornton Heath pilot was bespoke and relevant to the area.

- 1) Identifying Community Connectors and collecting stories of activity;
- 2) Organising a core group of Community Connectors;
- 3) Mapping the capacities and assets of individuals, associations and local institutions;
- 4) Mobilising and linking assets;
- 5) Building a community vision and plan and leveraging activities, investments and resources from outside the community;

Implementing the Process

1. Identifying Community Connectors and Collecting Stories

'To begin building confidence in the community, informal discussions and interviews that draw out people's experience of successful activities and projects will help to uncover the gifts, skills, talents and assets people have. Not only does this uncover assets that people have not recognised before, but it also strengthens people's pride in their achievements. This celebration of achievement and realisation of what they have to contribute builds confidence in their abilities to be producers, not recipients, of development'.

Following the training event Community Builder Paul Macey worked with Nicky Torode of ARC, Mark Justice of CNCA and Pauline Dawkins of the Older Peoples Network to identify and approach potential Community Connectors to participate in the project.

Community Builders from the partner bodies identified individuals who they saw as Community Connectors from the Thornton Heath area. Community Connectors were **not** required to have any previous academic or work experience and were local people who can bring and get the most out of this experience.

It was understood that the invitation to work in Thornton Heath was not initially from the community. This meant that the Community Builders and Connectors had to build up an understanding of ABCD through their own experience of the approach. For that reason it was a deliberate decision to progress at a pace that reflected the understanding and capacity of those involved.

At the initial meetings the lead Community Builder began to find out what the connectors and members of the community hoped to achieve throughout the pilot explaining how the project could work and the principles underpinning the approach. It was important to keep the process small and manageable. Key themes emerged at an early stage and these included: - making the area safe, connecting older and younger people and offering support to younger people, creating a community response to older people and celebrating the positives in the area.

The Connectors were in essence people who were interested in developing a connected and caring community and who were good at networking and making connections between people, and cared passionately about older people's well being and ageing well in Thornton Heath.







Connector at celebratory event in Dec. 20

The following essential requirements were set to make sure that selected Community Connectors were committed and have the basic skills and attitudes to be successful:

1. Able to demonstrate a connection to people over 50 years old in Thornton Heath.
2. A strong communicator who enjoys finding out about others.
3. A good listener you can identify and record key points.
4. Willing to learn in a group setting and contribute to group work.
5. Willing to work on your own and undertake tasks assigned.
6. Have a respect for diversity and equality.
7. Willing and available to commit to the programme.
8. Willing and able to travel in and around Thornton Heath.
9. Have a commitment to Thornton Heath and are willing to develop your skills so that you can:
 - ✚ Identify assets
 - ✚ bring the voices of your community to the decision making table





10. Have a commitment to using the skills you gain on this programme to benefit Thornton Heath.

This stage of the work was carried out over a three week period. Connectors were identified mainly through the local knowledge of Community Builders who:

-  Approached people they saw developing ideas in the area;
-  Talked to people they knew who were active in the area;
-  Contacted individuals they were recommended to talk to by voluntary organisations and statutory bodies – such as the library - in the area;
-  Contacting CVA Health Champions operating in Thornton Heath

In total 32 initial connectors were identified. Not all became core connectors but all stayed involved in the project throughout playing a role in supporting the initiatives being developed. The core connectors numbered 23 in total and were predominantly women across ages from 16 to 65 years of age including a range of ethnicities living within Thornton Heath. (Appendices 1)

Two familiarisation workshops were held and connectors began to make contacts in their area and sphere of influence to develop connections. They undertook a method of deliberate enquiry which saw them ask the following initial questions:

-  **What do you care about enough to act upon?**
-  **What gifts, skills and knowledge can you bring to address what you care about?**
-  **What would it take for you to work with others who share your concern?**
-  **Do you know anybody whose assets you can tap into?**

The purpose was to gather stories of activity in the area and identify opportunities to encourage the development of activity. A total of 161 questionnaires were completed, with various ideas developed and information uploaded on the Talk 2 site with support of Thornton Heath based volunteer.

Stories and contacts were collected throughout the project and continue to this day to promote ABCD and develop ideas for future activity. Connectors were present at specifically arranged times at community based events. These included an Open Day at Thornton Heath leisure centre in July outreach at the Thornton Heath festival in September and the 'I Love Thornton Heath' celebratory event in December.



Community Builders: Nicky Torode and Paul Macey

The event in December was held at the local Darby and Joan Club. It showcased and celebrated some of the inspirational work that had been started in Thornton Heath and encouraged more people to connect and share their stories and talents. Cormac Russell facilitated the event with support from Community Connectors and partners.

Throughout the process Connectors were in regular contact with the lead Community Builder and supported not only to gather stories but develop the initiatives they saw as a way of involving others in 'real' activities in the area that would make a difference. Many Connectors did not see themselves as such as they felt that the 'connecting' they did was part of their family, community, faith responsibility.

Connectors identified a range of stories showing how people in Thornton Heath were connecting and using and sharing their assets. Below is a cross section of stories:

B's story

'I live next to a large park in the centre of Thornton Heath. Down the years it has had its problems but I have always liked it. Over the last year a group of young men have played football regularly in the park on a Saturday evening during the summer months.

They are lively, loud and fun and add to the vibrancy of the park. Unfortunately after their game they gather in the off licence next to my house for a drink or listen to music

and have a drink. Unfortunately their boisterous behaviour impacts n many of the neighbours as the music is loud and they do litter up the place and on occasion have used the park to relieve themselves.

While I knew that they were genuinely nice guys and I wanted them to stay in the park as they actually made it feel safer it was also clear to me that there after game behaviour wasn't fair on local people.

I knew that the local PCSO's had talked to him and some of my neighbours and I thought that this was the best approach. I spent time with them chatting, giving them bin bags to collect bottles and rubbish and telling them of the good things about having them in the park but some of the issues causing concern and that put them in a bad light.

It seems that this approach is working as there has been less noise, less disruption and fewer complaints. Through other connections I have made I want to introduce the players to a local football coach who wants to develop raining for local young people and the schools. This could add value to the park in many ways.

I think that it is important to fill our space with activity and fun for all and find ways to compromise and take account of others. Talking it through certainly helps!

K's story

'Talking to neighbours and people you usually don't see brings lots of benefits. My husband is a mechanic and fell into conversation with a neighbour from across the road who is a painter and decorator. Before long they had agreed to do work for each other. Through 'word of mouth' another neighbour then offered to help us with a computer problem. It has taught me that it is really beneficial to make the conscious effort to engage with people around us'.

A's story

'Twenty years ago I decided to set an example to my children by setting up my own After School project. I did it with no official financial help and independently developed a service that many have used down the years. Because of my experience, contacts in the area and numbers of children - and now young adults I think we can offer real opportunities to other young children in Thornton Heath. We have a lot of talent and expertise in the area and I want to harness that to help young people to stay in education and to help them make their environment more secure and safe'.



Connector filming the celebratory event, Dec. 2011








L's story

"Connecting is rally simple. At my church we have a lunch club for elders and recently bought some computers. The organiser wanted to get a tutor in to help them teach the members how to use them. A friend put me in touch with a local school that said they would be happy to send some Year 10 pupils as part of their IT curriculum to help. This will be great, the members will learn about computers, the young people will get great experience and a nice lunch!!'

N's story

"I am at school and during the riots over the summer a lot of my friends were sending messages to each other through Facebook and Blackberry. We know that a lot of people said that social media helped cause the riots but most of us think that it helped keep us in touch and persuade some not to go out and watch and get caught up in the trouble. Without being able to contact each other we would not have known who was okay, who needed to talk to someone because they were scared and where not to go to avoid trouble. I think that we should talk more about how we can use social media to help us out'.

From this work it was also clear that there was a range of skills and expertise in the area and a willingness to share and contribute assets. These included;

-  Photography, English, Maths Art tuition;
-  Law;
-  Sports fitness;
-  Event management;
-  Languages, from Russian to Lithuanian
-  Business;
-  Time and transport

2. Organising a Core Group

'In the process of collecting stories, particular people will emerge as leaders in the community -- people who have shown commitment and leadership in the past or who are currently taking a leadership role. The next step is to organise a group of such committed individuals who are interested in exploring further the community's assets and acting on the opportunities identified. Each of these individuals will have a network of relationships inside the community whom they can draw in to the process. Each of these individuals will have a personal interest -- something that motivates him or her to act'.

During the initial work a core group of connectors emerged around specific ideas and initiatives. Connectors felt that their role would grow if they actively built on these ideas involving others who had expressed an interest in taking initiatives further. PM met regularly with the connectors in small groups and put individuals in touch with others and with associations in the area. This developed an energy around initiatives and strengthened relationships between connectors and others in the area.

Due to time and capacity it was not possible to bring all connectors together until the end of the pilot although this would have been of benefit.

It was an objective to meet with the connectors to think about starting an initiating group of connectors. This developed on a smaller scale in order to group Connectors around specific initiatives and allow connections to grow over time. As we worked through this process the Community Builder helped to put individuals in contact with each other to work together on a particular issue. The ways of working together to find local solutions were varied and as Connectors started to see their success they were likely to be inspired to find more solutions.

The Connectors met regularly during the initial stages of initiating a connected and caring community. The Community Builder spent time with the connectors helping them to develop their role and supporting them in their work. Over time the Community Builder gradually pulled out providing support from a distance.



Planning at the celebratory event, Dec. 2011

3. Mapping Completely the Capacities and Assets of Associations and local organisations

'Mapping is more than gathering data. It is very important that citizens and their associations do the asset mapping themselves so that they themselves build new relationships, learn more about the contributions and talents of community members, and identify potential linkages between different assets'.

From June Connectors and the Community Builders developed 'Streets Ahead' a Thornton Heath association map.

This had two aims:

- ✚ To find out about the interests, talents and skills of residents, groups and associations in the community.
- ✚ To give the community an opportunity to share and develop these skills.

Connectors undertook a short survey (Appendix 2) to find out what activities and projects different groups, networks, associations, clubs and organisations were already doing and how they contributed to the good of the community.

For example, Connectors belonged to resident groups, lunch clubs, sports and faith groups and a walking group and voluntary organisations and the pilot sought to build on these connections.

Connectors began to develop a map of activities, associations and initiatives, formal and informal in the area. This was not initially as strong as hoped as Community Builders aimed to build up stories and initiatives and did not want to overburden Connectors.

The Community Builder met with Associations to explain the pilot, encourage input to the Association map and look to connect with the Connectors initiatives and connect with each other.

The following associations were approached and asked to fill in the short survey below on <http://www.talk2croydon.co.uk/ClubsandGroups>

-  South Norwood Chess Club
-  Russian Community Centre
-  Parchmore Community Centre
-  Downsview Community Centre
-  Thornton Heath Business Partnership
-  Thai Boxing Community Centre
-  Caribbean Credit Union
-  Thornton Heath Library Over 60's club
-  Kicks Project, Crystal Palace Football Club
-  39th Croydon Scout Group
-  67th Croydon Scout Group
-  Croydon African Caribbean Families Organisation
-  All Tamil Benevolent Association
-  Asian Resource Centre
-  CNCA
-  OASIS Foyer at Croydon
-  Shree Shree Radha Krishna Cultural Centre
-  Croydon Green Party
-  PJ Services

An online asset map was made available as an interactive tool via Croydon's online community, www.talk2croydon.co.uk.

The mapping exercise aimed to produce an inventory of the resources, skills and talents of associations and organisations in the area. It was planned that the organisations would bring their expertise and local knowledge to assist in the development of the initiatives by the 'Community Connectors' with the next stage aiming to mobilise those assets.

This work can be seen to have been successful through the involvement of associations such as the Thornton Heath Business Partnership, library, Beulah School, Tesco's, Age UK and Parchmore Community Centre Good Neighbour scheme in the pilot. Indeed the Parchmore project is currently facilitating a meeting of associations across Thornton Heath who offer home care to elders through volunteering.

4. Mobilising Assets for Community Development

'During this part of the process, assets are matched with opportunities around an "organising theme" -- a vision for community development. An activity is selected within that organising theme for the community to begin working on right away. It needs to be concrete (people know what to do to succeed, and what success will look like), immediate, achievable with community resources, unifying (it brings people together), and strengthening (people's skills are used and valued). How is this process managed? It is important that the representative group that is convened reflects the energy that has been identified at the associational level. Institutions take a back seat role, leaving decision-making to those who have been identified as leaders in the community with key links to associational network's.

The work to date has produced 'actioning of ideas' that can be placed into four key categories all of which contribute to the 'growing older well in Thornton Heath' agenda and offer local people real opportunities to contribute to a community plan regarding health and well being in Thornton Heath.

The four categories are:

a) Intergenerational:

There was a great desire from all sections of the community to develop initiatives for young people for a variety of reasons including:

'They are our future, our grandchildren and we must offer them support to achieve their ambitions and see this area in a positive light and not look to leave.'

'There are too many negative stereotypes about us young people engaging with older people will help break this down.'

'We have so much knowledge and experience we should be passing on, it is good for our health and well being if we do and of course it is good for young people too through the help they will receive'.

b) Healthy lifestyle activities developed by and for older people

Older people who were connectors, respondents to the project and commentators at the three events were keen to ensure that older people played a part in their own health and well being.

'It is very important that we look at ways to improve our own health and well being and get used to working with organisations to make this happen'.

'Too many older people have things done to or for them. Sometimes this is ok but sometimes this works against us because it can just make us feel older and useless.'

'The sight of older people taking control of public spaces is inspiring and makes our area feel safer.'



Connecting at Thornton Heath Festival Dec. 2011

c) Coming together to celebrate Thornton Heath

There was a strong belief expressed by many throughout the project that Thornton Heath would be a healthier, safer and happier place to live if its own people created more opportunities to socialise, celebrate and share space with each other. Out of this it was felt that opportunities to articulate concerns, find solutions and access associations would increase.

'Through this project I have met many, many talented people who are my neighbours and share the same space as me. We need to create more opportunities for this to happen.'

'There are loads of great resources in this area, the festival, places of worship, parks, leisure centre, shops. We need to tell each other about them and get used to sharing things.'

'The festival is great and we should make more of it. '

'I enjoyed the celebration day. It is great to just hear about positive things in our area it can only do us all good.'

d) Strategic intervention

Increasingly Connectors saw the opportunity to become involved in consultation and community engagement events aimed at improving service delivery around social and health care. They did this as individuals and through joining groups such as the Older Peoples Network and Croydon Shadow HealthWatch.

‘It is important to find ways to develop skills to becoming involved in the improvement of services. Being involved as an individual and as part of a wider community is very important as many decisions are being made that effect our lives and the services we receive’.

Under these categories the following ideas are currently being actioned.

a) Intergenerational

Parents support project

A number of connectors – themselves parents – identified through appreciative enquiry that there was a growing need to develop activities and support networks for other parents with young children in the area.

Many felt that this had increased as services shut down. A typical comment was ‘I used to go the Children’s Centre but its activities have decreased, it would just be good to have a network where you knew someone who could look after your little one for a couple of hours and you could do the same for them or just arranged with a group of mums to go for a picnic in the park. Often people do not know others especially out of school’.

Connectors in talking to others had also become aware of the desire not too burden grandparents or older relatives with care responsibilities.

Through this work a number of people talked of how they would like to extend the informal support they had with neighbours and friends, three connectors are now meeting to discuss how they may develop this idea and extend it out across the area to those who have been ‘connected’ with through the ABCD approach.

Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College School magazine - 'Developing consideration for elders'

Connectors have met with journalists from the Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College magazine for an interview that will play a part in an article on how young people can be 'more considerate to' and 'supportive of' elders in Thornton Heath.

The article will be written and then circulated within the school and across schools in the area to develop dialogue and future initiatives. As a result of this work Year 11 girls have already held an intergenerational lunch bringing pupils and older members of the community together.

The College are also working with the Downsvie Methodist church to develop computer training for elders provided by students. It also held an Intergenerational event organised by Year 11 pupils and attended by Year 7 pupils and members of the local community, including Connectors.





Employment and Education for young people in Thornton Heath

Connectors are working to offer skills, knowledge and gifts to support young people in the local area to develop events that offer opportunities in conflict resolution, mentoring, work experience and educational and training advice. The initiative will bring together the Thornton Heath Business Partnership and local schools.

The work will also allow for practitioners across trades and professions who live in the area to network and create opportunities for themselves, young people and the locality. Young people are being involved in the planning of the initiative.

b) Strategic interventions

Connectors working with:

-  Health Champions information events;
-  Croydon Shadow HealthWatch Pathfinder signposting;
-  Croydon Shadow HealthWatch Pathfinder Community Pharmacy Mystery Shopper programme;
-  NHS Croydon Equality Delivery system

c) Healthy lifestyle activities developed by and for older people:

Thornton Heath Rec Cricket Coaching Initiative

Connectors liaising with councillors, council officers, Surrey County Cricket Club, elders projects in the area and the local Afghan Boys group to set up coaching, umpiring and friendly matches on the newly laid all weather pitch in the Rec. This will start in the spring.

Thornton Heath Rec Active Walking Group






Connectors have liaised with the Council's Active Lifestyle team Group of elders to scope out Thornton Heath Rec as an official venue for an active walking site starting in the spring. The park will be particularly attractive to older people and those with limited mobility as it is flatter than most parks in the area.

A number of elders have already expressed an interest in joining. Contact will be made with Bensham Manor Bowling Club to open up access to the hall and toilet facilities. It is intended that links are made with the Croydon University Hospital outpatients departments to assist individuals in their rehabilitation.

E.T.H.O.S exercise group

The ETHOS project has been developed by Connectors and aims to:

Offer a pilot programme of events based at the St Stephens church community hall. The programme will run weekly initially for a 10 week period. The activities will:






-  Develop healthy living initiatives for people in Thornton Heath particularly those older people in the area;
-  Promote healthy living and lifestyle;
-  Identify areas in which health, social care and educational services can provide bespoke services on a localised basis;
-  Liaise, meet and work with other practitioners, services and organisations in order to achieve the best results for the community;
-  Keep health and social care services informed of areas/issues of concern.

Each session will be run by professionals through a mixture of volunteer time and through existing provision such as the Active Lifestyle team at Croydon Council. Ideas for delivery and provision of sessions for the future will come through the collection by the Management group of information via questionnaire. Each three hour session will start with an exercise class and then lead into the main agenda for the day.

It is anticipated that the work will be publicised through networks developed through the Health Champions and Asset Mapping projects in Thornton Heath and managed by a group of local residents who have been meeting to develop the project thus far. Future funding is being sought through the Age UK healthy lifestyle programme and the CVA administered Communities First Fund.

Making Tesco Thornton Heath 'elder' friendly



Six connectors met with the Tesco Thornton Heath manager. As a result of the work undertaken and proposals put forward the following initiatives are to be developed.

-  From Monday to Thursday between 10 and 12pm it is planned that volunteers will assist older shoppers to do their shopping. Two tills will be made available. Volunteers will be supported by specially assigned members of staff.
-  Seated rest areas will be made available.
-  Wheelchairs are to be made available to use if needed to push anyone around.
-  One morning per week the Connectors will be able to staff a table to offer Healthy Living leaflets and posters etc.
-  Connectors have been offered use of the stores training room to have their meetings and the notice board to advertise events.

d) Coming together to celebrate Thornton Heath

Thornton Heath Festival

Connectors are working with Thornton Heath Festival committee to develop a number of community activities in the build up to the Festival in September 2013. The events will include:

-  A Thornton Heath history tour;
-  Thornton Heath Big Clean Up

Giant Book of Thornton Heath

Connectors are working with Beulah Infant school pupils to develop an art project that will create a giant book of Thornton Heath to illustrate and promote the positives of Thornton Heath. The book will be created in the accordion format which means it can be opened out into one long artwork to be used for display purposes.

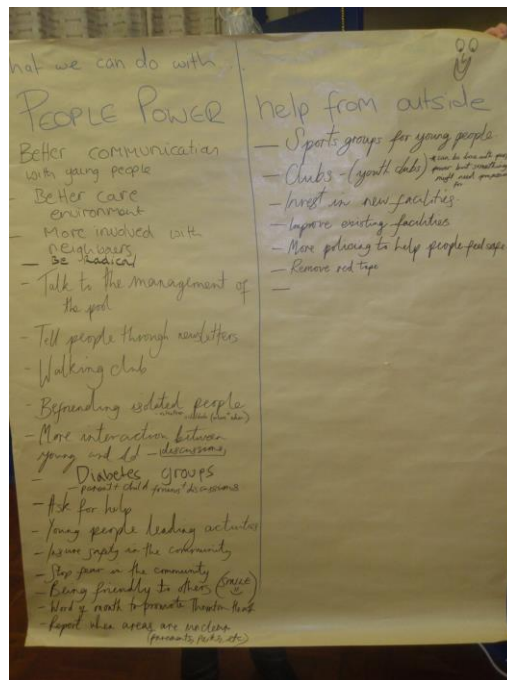
Working together with children from Beulah Infants School we will use collage, paint, pencil and printing techniques to create a colourful and imaginative response to the results of the asset mapping. We will talk about books and illustrations and the different mark-making techniques we can use to make pictures and text. We will also talk about the list of activities, people and places that are brought together in the asset map. All the images created by the children will be compiled into the giant book and the children will be asked to decide on a good name for it.

5. Convening a Broad Representative Group to Build a Community Vision and Plan

'The process continues as an ongoing mobilisation of community assets for economic development and information sharing purposes, initiated by the associational base. Associations are encouraged to engage by appealing to their interests, finding common ground and ensuring that they are contributing on their own terms. Eventually, an "association of associations" emerges'.

It is anticipated that a group of individuals – some from Associations, others from the Core Connector pool - will look to meet around a key area of policy development in the coming months. The Community Builder will continue to work toward this and it is clear that there is a desire to begin to focus on an issue – such as regenerating economic activity in Thornton Heath - as a community.

Part of this process will be the leveraging in of activities, investments and resources from outside the community to 'support Asset-Based, locally defined development'.



What can be done with People Power in Thornton Heath!

PARTNERS EVALUATION

Partners met in January and outlined some key thoughts on the successes and challenges of the Pilot

What were the critical factors for success?

- ✚ People and their willingness to be better involved in the area
- ✚ The invitation to take part
- ✚ Community Builders involvement working with Community Connectors
- ✚ Multi-skilled Community Development Workers
- ✚ Knowledge of the area
- ✚ Positive focus
- ✚ Hands off- hands on, respectful and motivating
- ✚ Hands on funder, vision and operationalising

What are you proud of?

- ✚ Community building rather than service provision.
- ✚ Knowing community
- ✚ Positive focus
- ✚ Willingness of citizens, community led and doing the graft
- ✚ Working with what's already happening
- ✚ Positive commissioning

What did we do to accelerate?

- ✚ Encouraged Community Connectors to be confident enough
- ✚ Needed to get practitioners to take on ABCD approach
- ✚ Telling the story to different audiences










Decelerates?

- ✚ Needed more Community Builder input
- ✚ External events
- ✚ Needed to have Thornton Heath people from the outset at training
- ✚ Some needed paper information to go away with
- ✚ Ownership took time to develop as the pilot was introduced by an outside agency
- ✚ Hearing from Community Connectors in a group, opportunities to meet together as a whole group were not provided due to capacity

In summary:

- ✚ There were challenges around people getting the methodology to different degrees.
- ✚ More steering group meetings required
- ✚ Partners to reach out and that was challenging
- ✚ Finding Community Connectors, what is a Community Connector?
- ✚ Ownership, CVA stewards of the process
- ✚ More time for Community Builder
- ✚ Community of practice is required to maintain the work

It is important that statutory bodies such as NHS Croydon are aware that an ABCD approach to develop bespoke health care commissioning and service delivery can deliver greater opportunities for:

-  Better quality of input from local people to health care service delivery;
-  Better understanding of how services should work and confidence in challenging bad provision;
-  More meaningful dialogue;
-  Better value for resources spent;
-  Ensuring that better health outcomes based on preventative measures;
-  Stronger working connections with local Associations;
-  Trust of Health Practitioners;
-  Challenging professional negativity about an area which leads to poor quality provision;
-  Understanding the real diversity of an area and in particular its strengths

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- ✚ Current initiatives to be developed involving increasing numbers of individuals and associations.
- ✚ Initiatives to tap into Youth Localities Fund for grass roots work and other sources of funding
- ✚ Connectors involved in Shadow Healthwatch work programme through the Community Pharmacy proposed community engagement pilot
- ✚ Initiatives to be further developed in conjunction with Croydon Small Sparks fund and Age UK 'Active lifestyle' project. Possible funding available for two years in Thornton Heath.
- ✚ Supporting set up of Thornton Heath Community First Panel to ensure 4 year funding available to small groups is embedded and accountable to the community.
- ✚ Develop initiatives with Thornton Heath Library
- ✚ Connectors involved with Health Champions cancer and diabetes awareness events to be held in March
- ✚ Develop a Community of Practice looking initially at local issues and inviting Community Connectors and Community Builders

It is important that at a Croydon wide strategic level the learning and adoption of ABCD approach in Thornton Heath is shared and disseminated. With the passing of the Health and Social Care Bill into law, service commissioners in particular will be required to undertake more in depth engagement within communities to ensure ever improving intelligence about the types of services required AND the effectiveness of services delivered.

The ABCD model allows for communities to identify issues of importance to them and how services should be shaped to respond. Indeed in a time of huge financial cutbacks initial discussions facilitated by Community Connectors show that Associations are often best placed to provide value for money and through ongoing informed discussion local communities can play a crucial role in shaping commissioning plans that make best use of resources available.

Appendix 1 - Core Community Connectors

-  Samreen Akhtar
-  Jennine Bailey
-  Verel Benjamin
-  Kim Esnard
-  Bolaji Ezra
-  Dionne Green
-  Laura Green
-  Patrick Harrison
-  Paula Hemmings
-  Shirley Jones
-  Nina Khan
-  Ellen Lawrence
-  Georgia Leاهر
-  Nia Samuel Macey
-  Neelam Shah
-  Bharat Shah
-  Hansaben Shah
-  Rawinder Shah
-  Cleo Solomon
-  Harshil Trevedi
-  Sylvia Wachuku- King
-  Gloria Williams

Appendix 2 - Streets Ahead in Thornton Heath

CLUBS AND GROUPS SURVEY

Streets Ahead in Thornton Heath is a community based project aiming to find out and celebrate what is happening in the area.

We are doing a short survey to find out what activities and projects different groups, networks, associations, clubs and organisations are already doing and how they contribute to the good of your community.

For example you may belong to a resident group, an lunch club, a sports group, a youth club, a book club, a faith group, a parent and toddler group, a walking group, be a constituted voluntary organisation or something completely different - whatever it does and however big or small we'd like to know about it!

The questions are very general and you are free to skip any that you'd rather not answer.

Name of the group, club or network?: *

In which area is your group based?:

Your name?:

Your phone number?:

Your email address?:

Your position within the club or group?:

What are the 3 main activities of your club or group?:

What was the main reason for starting your group?:

What do you think people get out of coming to your group?:

What do you think are the two greatest achievements of your group/club/network to date?:

Next I'd like to ask you about the membership and organisation of your group.

How many members does your group/club/network currently have?:

Out of 100%, what percentage of your group/club/network would you say lives in Thornton Heath?:

- ☐ 10%
- ☐ 25%
- ☐ 50%
- ☐ 100%

How often do you meet?:

Where do you meet?:

Do you have any paid staff?:

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

How many?:

Has your group/club/network ever worked with any other groups in Thornton Heath in the past?:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Which ones?:

What were the issues you worked on together?:

What happened as a result of your groups/clubs/networks working together?:

Is your group/club/network planning to work on any new community activities in Thornton Heath? :

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please name them?:

We're going to change the topic now and talk about different ways local people help each other. I'm going to mention a few different types of community projects, and ask about your group's involvement in them.

Have you been involved in any of these issues or activities in the past?:

- ☐ A. Neighbourhood clean up, physical improvements
- ☐ B. Working with children and young people
- ☐ C. Working with older people
- ☐ D. Working with people with disabilities
- ☐ E. Supporting and strengthening families
- ☐ F. Working with people with mental health problems
- ☐ G. working with people with learning disabilities
- ☐ H. Working with carers
- ☐ I. Working with people with drug or alcohol issues
- ☐ J. Promoting healthy living in Thornton Heath e.g. keeping fit, healthy eating, befriending
- ☐ K. Helping to organise street events, festival celebrations
- ☐ L. Odd jobs for older people or people not good at DIY
- ☐ M. Support for the school e.g. helping to organise a fun/sports day or a club
- ☐ N. Help young people link with employment or work experience
- ☐ O. Improve perception that outsiders have of the area
- ☐ P. Help establish a small local business or cooperative to deal with current economic crisis
- ☐ Q. Allow your facilities to be used for community activities that have no direct relevance to your group/club
- ☐ R. Help older people or other groups and clubs in Thornton Heath with transport issues
- ☐ S. Had input into community planning/strategy for Thornton Heath

You can select more than 1

Please describe what was done?:

Would you be willing to work with other groups/clubs/networks on any of these projects?:

- ☐ A. Neighbourhood clean up, physical improvements
- ☐ B. Working with children and young people
- ☐ C. Working with older people
- ☐ D. Working with people with disabilities
- ☐ E. Supporting and strengthening families
- ☐ F. Working with people with mental health problems
- ☐ G. working with people with learning disabilities
- ☐ H. Working with carers
- ☐ I. Working with people with drug or alcohol issues
- ☐ J. Promoting healthy living in Thornton Heath e.g. keeping fit, healthy eating, befriending
- ☐ K. Helping to organise street events, festival celebrations
- ☐ L. Odd jobs for older people or people not good at DIY
- ☐ M. Support for the school e.g. helping to organise a fun/sports day or a club
- ☐ N. Help young people link with employment or work experience
- ☐ O. Improve perception that outsiders have of the area
- ☐ P. Help establish a small local business or cooperative to deal with current economic crisis
- ☐ Q. Allow your facilities to be used for community activities that have no direct relevance to your group/club
- ☐ R. Help older people or other groups and clubs in Thornton Heath with transport issues
- ☐ S. Had input into community planning/strategy for Thornton Heath

You can select more than 1

What support would your group/club/network need from others to get involved?:

Are there any other clubs/groups/networks in Thornton Heath who might be interested that we should talk to?:

Is there anybody (individual resident) who would be interested in getting involved that we should talk to?:

We are establishing a steering group to agree criteria for a programme called a matching grants scheme where small amounts of money will be awarded to groups of local residents who have projects that they'd like to do to improve the local community.

Would your club/group/network be willing to nominate one person to join this group?:

Name? Contact details?

Thank you for helping us by completing our survey of clubs and groups. This information will only be used for the Thornton Heath project- but we will share the stories of the community coming together to make things better widely.

We would like to keep you up-to-date with the project, to find out more visit:
www.talk2croydon.co.uk/ABCD-Thornton-Heath and
www.twitter.com/#!/ThorntonHeathCR.

