Post Community Party Update

Dear Colleagues and friends of Central East,

Massive Thank you from Lynda and Celestina (co-chair) to you all for coming to our locality ‘Community Party’. We were absolutely stunned at how many of you came out to hear of the good things that are happening in our area. There is much work to do and much work to celebrate. We are thankful to have you on that journey with us. A huge thank you to St Mildreds for hosting us, for more information about St Mildreds click [here.](https://stmildredschurch.org.uk/)

**Local Community Partnerships – The Journey So Far**

Local Community Partnerships started to be outworked in 2020. The growing need for joint up forces and resources of social care, primary care, wellbeing services, mental health and hospitals was recognized. The work of healthy communities together under One Croydon alliance invited the council and Croydon Voluntary Action on a journey of devolving funds and localizing action for change, all lead by the resident voice. The result, the Local Community Partnership meetings.

We split Croydon into six geographical areas to localize the action needed as identified by the residents. The focus and funding of the health and wellbeing services is focused on the work of prevention and prevention works at its best in community. Croydon Voluntary Action has embraced the ways of Asset Based Community Development for the last decade and have seen the invaluable and sustainable results of that way of working. ABCD is looking at what’s strong instead of what’s wrong, it’s looking at what gifts and talents we possess to be the solution that is needed, to put people at the center of their change. For more on ABCD click [here.](https://www.nurturedevelopment.org/asset-based-community-development/)

From the Local Community Partnership meetings, we have managed to attain a wave of funding for each locality to forge a partnership and drive the change on local priorities. The bids were entered, and successful partnerships have been underway carrying out that work, as well as identifying further priorities to address. For this area ‘crESNT’ a partnership of five local groups merging, won the bid. Floating Counselling, the Woodside Community Pop-in, Clear Community Web, Wellbeing you and Mandem Medley have collaborated, bringing their areas of strength to support the community. Collectively they are tackling the issues of Digital Inclusion, Mental Health, Later Life and supporting Men’s Mental Health in the community. These were issues of importance as identified by the people of this locality.

**How do I find out what’s going on in my area?**

*Simply Connect Croydon* is the Google of up-to-date activities. You simply search by keywords the activity you are looking for. Organizations and groups can have their own profile where their organization will be listed and details of their services/activities. Groups/orgs can sign up to Simply Connect Croydon directly by using the link [here](https://croydon.simplyconnect.uk/auth/register/provider) which will provide them with the opportunity to take referrals to their services. Alternatively, to have the information listed on simply connect you can complete a registration form [here](https://croydon.simplyconnect.uk/auth/register/provider) .For trouble shooting concerning Simply Connect or 1-2-1 training sessions please email Karen or Mary.

Karen.chillman@cvalive.org.uk or mary.lawrence@cvalive.org.uk

**Who and What Are CrESNT?**

CrESNT is the name of the partnership that was funded under the Floating Counselling Community in this locality, which has banded together to create amazing projects for their locality. Floating Counselling has successfully created a partnership for this area, after winning the partnership bid; we now know that CrESNT is tackling key issues, but how? We heard from some of the partners at the community party about the actions taken so far.

**Heat & Eat -** All the projects under this partnership offer food (Floating Counselling foodbank, Wellbeing You - Welderlies event, The Woodside Community Pop in, Woodside Community Hub, HWH - Talk2ABrother) - **Flyers attached**

Main food project-

**Floating Counselling** Foodbank at Woodside memorial Park on Every Thursday 4-5pm

**Hub** – Woodside Baptist church, Warm light Lunch and foodbank 12.30 -2.30

**Welderlies** - Warm brunchette at Ashburton Café, Addiscombe, with desert fully paid by the project for the first 30 residents to register monthly .

**Elderly support** - All the project support Elderlies, the 2 that focus solely on Elderlies are **Welderlies and Woodside Pop In** - **Flyers attached**

**Mental Health** - Online and in-person Counselling is offered for all the projects under Floating Counselling**. Floating Counselling** just hired a Counsellor for this project 2 months ago; she currently holds 4 four clients (2 youth and two elderly). Once she finishes 4, more, will be given to her, all offered 12 week sessions each. To find out more please email Celestina at info@floatingcounselling.co.uk or inform one of the leads at any CrESNT project.

Monthly event for health and wellbeing at the Hub – Flyer attached

**Internet inclusion** - This support is at the **Hub** being delivered fortnightly by **Clear Community Web**

**Transportation**- All project leads support the residents with Dial-A-Ride plus Blue badge support offered at the Hub. Food delivery done for residents unable to attend food bank on Thursday is now at the Hub.

**Male Mentoring Support** - Holistic Wellbeing Hub (HWH) presents Talk2ABrother - A Face to Face Once a week Wednesday 8-10pm (2 hours) at Addiscombe boys & girls Club as well as WhatsApp group of over 100 men getting support and mentorship. – **Flyer attached**

**HWH** \*FREE\* men’s talk group \*“Talk2ABrother”\* is thriving with diverse talents from finance, mental health, food, tech, music to sports and more, including fitness buffs, experts and connoisseurs!

1. Join “Fitness & Training” and dive into accountable health and wellbeing activities and challenges!

2. Join “Business & Networking” sharing insightful links, equity and resourceful connections!

3. Join “Talk2ABrother” which remains our go-to safe chat space with no egos, no judgement - just like- minded conversations!

🔗 <https://chat.whatsapp.com/HqmZU1lIKd8KB4k2XjivbN>

👆🏿\*\_Click the link\_\*👆🏼Join our community and keep the conversations lively by inspiring each other, sharing experiences and supporting our brotherhood!

**Who did you meet and how will you connect further?**

After some partying we heard of new connections made in the room and how they will further connect on their works of mutual interest.

* Norman from Norwood Junk Action and Alice, a resident of the Pop-In will work together on a litter pick with elderly residents and then make art from the litter collected.
* Slyvia from ‘Welderlies’ and Ian Cordey are going to explore a partnership looking at how Long heath gardens capacity and space can come together to serve their residents as a potential hub/ gathering.
* Natalie Stevens from housing repairs will look to partner with Sylvia to explore the potential of housing repairs and social value opportunities. Further to this Natalie and Norman Mine will connect to look at the repairs needed on the library to resolve for the community.
* Sean from Croydon Council, social care and occupational health services will connect with Sylvia to look at later life support and access for the residents she is connected to.
* Norman Till from ANCA and Tracey from BME forum will look at linking energy saving services to their lunch clubs and a potential link to green spaces.

 **Our views, Our Actions -** This way of working that seeks to put the people at the center of change is only possible if we capture your views. Your views not only shape the strategies locally but are worked up through the relationship that Croydon Voluntary Action has with statutory services to influence the mayors plans for the borough. If you didn’t get a chance to fill out the survey, please click the link below, your feedback is vital.

<https://app.upshot.org.uk/survey/68921d53/5966/0762ced1/>

**Moving forward on Local issues.** We broke into groups and discussed the other priorities that have become part of the community plans for this locality to capture your ideas/ needs on those themes to move that work on.

**Mental Health**- The need to train Police and other professional bodies that are community-facing in Mental health so they can best support and positively impact the relationship to services/ authority. Example knowing how to approach someone without triggering their fight or flight responses. The need for professionals in the community to have Mental Health supervision and support for themselves to stay mentally well. There is a need for counsellors working in organizations to be embedded in the community themselves and be able to signpost to longer-term services so residents can continue support and recovery in the community. All these mentioned approaches start small at a local level, which Floating Counselling already does.

**Food Poverty-** Further to the initiatives that are already in place. It was suggested to attend School PTA fundraising events which the community can attend to share information. We could reach out to scout and girl guide groups to share this information/ volunteering opportunities in this area. The need to address refrigeration and storage as part of this work.

**Later Life-** Clearer knowledge on what befriending services are in the community. The need for digital skills and confidence to increase. The need for outreach services and dental care for the elderly community.

**Hubs-**  Shirley West Wickham Baptist church was identified as a potential hub that might not be known to the community. If you have an interest in starting a hub, space to host a hub in this locality, we would love to hear from you, please reach out to Celestina and Lynda (This Localities co-chairs)

**Resident Voice-** To reach the community with learning disabilities to share the Leisure link newsletter to inform the community of what support / social opportunities exist for those with a learning disability. Resident passionately expressed more funding for the Waterside Centre should be available for community use, which is in a different locality however, fully supported by Celestina as that is also where Floating Counselling office is situated. The need to strengthen the links to the libraries was raised.

**Young People-** The provisions exist, but we need to help young people increase their engagement with the provisions for them in the community. The need to accompany young people to the activities in the community and go with them was raised. There is a need for purpose-driven activities that engage young people's passions and more career guidance, employment and mentoring opportunities.

If you are interested in furthering the work of the topics mentioned above, please get in touch with your co-chairs Celestina Oniye-Thomas and Lynda Graham and they can bring you with them in that work.

A massive thank you to the wonderful Steve who did a brilliant job of entertaining us with his music and sharing his gift and passion with us. As well as a great testimony and feedback from him on how The Woodside Community Pop-in a par of the CrESNT project helped his mum engage more in the community. The energy in the room is exactly what we needed to bring us together. For more information on Steve as an artist see flyer attached.

Thank you for attending the party. Save the date for our locality next meeting, the 11th of September 2024. We will send out booking information in due course.

Warm wishes Sarah, Andrew, Celestina and Lynda.