**Community Partnership in Croydon South West**

**8 February 2024 Meeting Notes**

Dear South-West Colleagues,

It was so good to see so many of you in attendance and enthusiastic about continuing the good work that has already been achieved in this locality. The Local Community Partnerships are the place where we discover what is going on in our area and form new partnerships. We are looking to discover the local priorities so that we can tackle them together and see funding go from the traditional top-down approach to a bottom-up, grassroots approach. We are taking commissioners with us on this journey with transparency to show that community-based support and initiatives take us further than services can and have a greater positive impact on our overall wellbeing.

Thank you to our co-chairs Ben Taylor and Patti Boyle and to the Tollers Community Centre for hosting us in their space. To find out more about the Tollers Community Centre and what activities they have for the community click [here.](https://communityattollers.co.uk/) To volunteer for any of their projects please get in touch on their Contact Us page via the same link.

We want to really celebrate the people and gifts that were in the room that lend themselves to stronger partnership working. It’s hard to fully know what is happening in your local area but a great place to start is to make use of **‘Simply Connect Croydon’** our central directory of services. We currently have over a thousand services across Croydon listed there. Please register your service if you haven’t already under ‘Sign up’ and to amend or add to existing services/ activities do so under the ‘Log in’ section [here.](https://croydon.simplyconnect.uk/) To change organizational information please email: connectwellcroydon@cvalive.org.uk

We were wonderfully reminded of key initiatives that align with our previously defined local priorities such as ‘Heat and Eat’ and Mental Health, information on those services and how to get in touch are below.

**Croydon Cares -**Food banks are in more demand now than during the pandemic as well as other needs linked to the rising cost of living. As a response to this Croydon Cares was formed as a way of linking local businesses with a corporate social responsibility and local volunteers to collect goods such a clothes and toys as well as food items to distribute through drop off and collection points across Croydon. For more information ror to get involved please email: ben.taylor@cvalive.org.uk

* **Energy bill support-**For support, zoom training and emergency referrals should you run into trouble with heating please contact: Jayesh.patel@croydon.gov.uk
* **Green Space**- has proven to have a great impact on our Mental Health for more information on your local green space the downlands, email: joanne.porter@surreycc.gov.uk
* **Reedhams Trust**- Provide support projects for vulnerable children and young people, for more information email: sarah@reehamchildrenstrust.org.uk
* **Age UK Croydon**- If you know of any activity Polish Communities or activities that engage the Polish Community. Please email: shahana.kalam@ageukcroydon.org.uk
* **Croydon Drop-In -** Mental Health Support aimed at young people but they don’t turn people away, find out more information/timetable of the ‘Talk Bus’  [here.](https://croydondropin.org.uk/)
* **Death Literacy -**St Christophers are opening the conversation around end of life and partnering with various groups across Croydon. To link into their work email: J.whiteley@stchristophers.org.uk

**Community News**

The Coulsdon Community Partnership, who are behind The Hive community garden have been expanding into other community activities such as Yoga to engage the community and improve wellbeing. They are looking to open officially after Easter, [here](https://coulsdonpartnership.org/) for more information and their upcoming events.

Purley Cross Centre - is fully operational providing support in the areas of legal advice, digital skills for senior residents, links into training opportunities via CALAT and ESOL classes for those where English is a second language. the flyer attached to share with your communities.

We want to take this opportunity to shout about Purley’s best kept secret: **The South East Cancer Help Centre.**They do amazing work supporting those newly diagnosed with cancer and their families with counselling, alternative therapies and treatments. Andrew Slegg shared with us his own experience when his sister was diagnosed with cancer how he was personally supported through counselling by them for a year and a half and what an invaluable service it was for him. [Here f](https://www.sechc.org.uk/)or more information.

**Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy**

Shifa from Public Health in the council lead us on some group work to capture our views on the health and wellbeing strategy. This is a strategy that forms every five years to inform the overall Health and Care plan for the borough. This is the commitment to support the wellbeing of residence from early years to end of life through every stage of life.

Thankfully, our local community plans, resulting from the local community partnerships meetings, aligned with the health and wellbeing strategy's priorities so far. We split into three groups to give feedback to the three main areas that the strategy is formed around; vision, guiding principles and priority areas. As a strategy that will directly impact those who live, work and study in Croydon, we need your say. Please assist us in this with your anonymized feedback by completing the consultation [here](https://www.getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/joint-local-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-consultation) the deadline is Monday 26th February.

See pictures attached capturing the feedback you gave on those three areas in the meeting.

**Community Developer -** We heard from Dawn Bennett, our newly in post Community Developer based at Old Lodge Lane Baptist church. Dawn previously attended the Old Lodge Lane job fair after a redundancy and volunteering there for a while, she secured the position of Community Developer when the vacancy came about. She has since assisted in the most recent Job Fair held there which saw 178 people attend, 78 of whom had interviews and 4 of which went straight to Timpson in Sutton for a trial. Following this, she will arrange another job fair for the North of the Borough soon. She holds a warm space at Tollers Community Centre on a Tuesday and has just started a ‘Silent’ book club in the community. For more information or to get involved email: dawn.bennett@ollbc.org.uk

**Mental Health Action Group***(Update after the meeting)*

Themembers of the South-West Locality Mental Health Action Group have identified as their first task to create a list of all the known groups/organisations that provide opportunities that maintain good mental health and help people who have started to worry or become anxious or sad to regain good mental health. The list will be split in to two areas: groups/organisations that are available/based in the locality and those that are available to residents, visiting from outside the locality.

**ACTION –**

* All Local Community Partnership members to send any information about new opportunities to Dawn, Community Developer, so she can make sure that they are added to the list – dawn.bennett@ollbc.org.uk
* Mental Health Action Group members to feed back on progress on this list at the next LCP meeting.

Thank you so much for joining us today. We loved seeing and hearing from the increasing numbers of residents that attend these meetings. We look forward to future updates and events to celebrate when we meet again.

We took on board the feedback you gave about trying a different time to meet to enable more people to attend. So, please note the change of time for our next meeting will be in the **evening** from **6-8 pm** on **Thursday 9th May**.

To book [Eventbrite Local Community Partnerships, Croydon South West](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/local-community-partnerships-croydon-south-west-tickets-799768026697?aff=oddtdtcreator)

Warm wishes, Andrew, Sarah, Ben and Patti.

*With thanks to Chloe Smith for the notes.*

c/oSarah Burns, Director of Communities

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