Dear Colleagues and friends of the South East,

Thank you for coming to the first evening meeting of our Local Community Partnership. It was wonderful to come together and be encouraged by the updates and talents of music and poetry in the room. There was great community spirit, stories and much work to celebrate. Thank you to the Family Centre for hosting and catering for us. To learn more about the activities and venue hire of the Family Centre click [here.](https://www.facebook.com/p/The-Family-Centre-100079880419952/)

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

The work of ‘Healthy Communities Together’, part of One Croydon Alliance, is about devolving power and resources to people and communities. Local Community Partnerships started in 2020 to provide a structure to integrate/join up with social care, primary care, wellbeing services, mental health, hospitals and all stakeholders. Local Community Partnerships are how we collectively work on our local priorities and create our Community Plan.

One Croydon created six geographical areas to provide wrap around support for people close to home with prevention and self-management a key part of the plan. Using Asset Based Community Development our partnership is focused on ‘*what’s strong instead of what’s wrong’*, we start with the gifts and talents we have, inviting people to co-create local solutions. For more on ABCD click [here.](https://www.nurturedevelopment.org/)

**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. Organisations 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/Mary. Karen.chillman@cvalive.org.uk  or mary.lawrence@cvalive.org.uk

Our Local Community Partnerships are growing and we are seeing more active and passionate residents at the fore of change in the community. With the funding available, each locality was encouraged to form a partnership to apply for funding to address and tackle the priority issues within our Community Plan. Each of the six localities in Croydon had a successful bid which won funding. For this locality ‘Stronger Together’ partnership formed which consists of The Family Centre, Pathfinders, Centre of Change, Selsdon Contact, Good Food Matters and the Good Samaritans Pop-in day Centre for the elderly.

**What has ‘Stronger Together’ achieved so far?**

The partnerships' main goal was to save the Good Samaritans Pop-in day centre for the elderly who have had their funding cut. This centre is a lifeline of socialisation and community for many in the local area and has been a treasured part of the community for decades. Efforts to save the Good Samaritans Pop-in has inspired intergenerational efforts with local schools raising money to aid the cause, watch the video [here.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0p1Xtxa54uQ)  The elderly who use the Pop-in shared their need for day trips / outings and more local trips to ASDA, the Family Centre and Good Food Matters for local provisions. Selsdon Contact have offered a minibus and driver to meet this need resulting in local trips and day trips to Brighton and Hastings. Centre of Change has trained 16 people this week in mental health first aid to assist with the increased need of Mental Health support, as well as regular coffee [mornings.](https://centreofchange.org.uk/)  The Family Centre The Family Centre host weekly Coffee Mornings for the over 60’s called the Birchwood Club and launched the Birchwood Brunch Club for the over 60’s in March 2024 .email: thefamilycentre@hotmail.co.uk

 Key issues to address for this partnership are; saving the Good Samaritans Pop-in, increasing social connection and alleviating poverty with access to local provisions, day trips for the elderly, tackling mental health and supporting those presenting with addiction.

Stronger Together as a partnership can’t speak to all the issues presenting in an area which is where the more focused work of the ‘Action Groups’ comes in. The idea behind these groups is to focus on a particular issue marrying passionate residents and local services together to strategize ways for better support. Mental Health has been one of the focused action groups for this locality.

**Mental Health Action Group update**

This action group has met twice with the support of Active Minds, Mind in Croydon, the Mental health Personal Independent Care Coordinators, Family Centre Fieldway, CVA's Community Facilitator and passionate residents. As a result, the following actions have taken place.

* Active minds are going to expand their services to New Addington and a new staff role has been made available for a few hours a week for outreach into the area
* Active Minds will be joining Croydon Drop In's Talk bus in New Addington
* Mindfulness sessions are set to take place in September
* Conversations with professionals such as Dr Anna Clarke, Valarie and her team at Mind in Croydon are taking place to join up provision

In just two meetings we've put in place some good partnership activity to better serve people to keep in good mental health with community-based support. To join this action group please email: James.moore@cvalive.org.uk.

The ABCD way is about nurturing gifts and talents that often lend themselves to stories of change. We want to thank and acknowledge the beautiful singing of Deborah and the heart felt poetry from Mo’s creative writing group which continues to bloom in the community. We were moved by your contributions. Mary told her story of how as a full-time carer with her own health struggles how she had no community and didn’t leave the house until joining the writing group. Since then, Mary has found community and support and has been writing regularly and even performing locally on open mic nights that are new to Croydon. We want to celebrate and share in those local change stories. If you have one you would like to share, we would love to hear it, please email. Chloe.smith@cvalive.org.uk

**Community Plans – Where are we at?**

Thank you for your support in helping us to draft the Community Plans for your locality. These plans are currently under a refresh and with your fresh insights we will be on our way to finalising and sharing them soon. These plans are worked up by you and for you to act, share intelligence and make recommendations on the things that matter to you. These plans are then shared at a borough wide level with the view that your resident voice captured in them has influence on shaping policies and commitments that serve the wider residents of Croydon. We asked you to add to the themes of the Community Plan and these are the additional insights captured:

**Access to Health Care**

* Bereavement support run for and by residents
* Digital skills and confidence to manage health online
* EMHIP and MH Pics to visit people in healthcare settings
* 10 min GP appointments and access to appointments are a barrier
* Free training for frontline staff and volunteers
* The BME cancer forum

**Young People**

* Spoken word for young people
* Funding local youth groups
* Compassion and time needed from healthcare providers to residents

**Mental Health**

* Language barriers, tech support, benefit support and GP waiting times

**Hubs/ Residents Voice**

* Methodist Church as a Hub
* Selsdon Centre for the retired and center of change as resources

We value and seek your voice and views to help us with the LCP meetings and Community Plans. As you can see, our approach is ‘You said’ so ‘we did’. Your views are vital in shaping our next course of action. We would love your input. Please click the [link](https://app.upshot.org.uk/survey/68921d53/5966/0762ced1/) to complete a short survey helping us do that.

**Community News**

There are many opportunities to connect to community with associations such as [NARA](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ournara/?locale=en_GB)  and [RENA.](https://croydon.simplyconnect.uk/activities/e8b20ae0-9d9b-11ed-ab67-45be8cf69478/renew-addington-rena-community) The hubs at [Pathfinders](https://croydon.simplyconnect.uk/activities/e877d7d0-13da-11ed-a5dd-0940f6d66a4f/new-addington-pathfinders) every Wednesday and the [Family Centre](https://croydon.simplyconnect.uk/providers/2ca15a00-442f-11ea-9ea4-9d3094f33fc3/family-centre-fieldway) The Fieldway Community Hub has run weekly session as of February 2024 we are no longer the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month.

We also heard from Sonia on her desire to start two groups that support women who have been affected by Domestic Abuse. One of those groups is aimed at supporting women with a Learning disability who are facing domestic abuse. To get in touch and join in this work or if you have an idea for community spaces where this could be held, please email Sonia on: freedom@every3seconds.com

Thank you for joining us for a productive and celebratory meeting. We look forward to seeing you again with more updates on progress to share at our next meeting on the **19th September**, booking information to follow.

Warmest Wishes Marion, Julia and Roy.

*With thanks to Chloe Smith for the notes.*

c/o Sarah Burns