**Local Community Partnership, Croydon Central East**

**Meeting Notes 31 January 2024**

Dear Central East Colleagues,

Thank you to Celestina and Lynda for Co-chairing the meeting and to Oasis Academy in Shirley for being such good hosts. It’s good to see a variety of community spaces that are open to hire for events and to familiarise ourselves with their activities. For more information on Oasis Academy [here.](https://www.oasisacademyshirleypark.org/community/community-hub)

Last November’s LCP Partnership Showcase event was a well-attended, informative celebration of the organisations that were successful in their applications for funding from the new Localities Commissioning Fund. Their exciting plans were outlined and Commissioners voiced their commitment to these new ways of community-led commissioning.

For this locality, the local priorities identified are: **Transport, Digital Inclusion, Mental Health and ‘Heating/Eating’.**These key elements of the Central East Locality’s Community Plan will be linked in with public health data and will also inform Croydon’s new Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024-29. With the general election coming-up this year, a Community Manifesto based on the six LCP’s Community Plans will give residents a stronger voice, identify the most important local issues and will help highlight the excellent partnership working that is taking place in Croydon.

It was good that we were able to secure some ‘Ageing well’ funding that has been used to sustain some of the good work that is already happening in this locality through Addiscombe Neighbourhood Care Association.

**Community Hubs in the Central East Locality**

·      **Ashburton Park Hub** - Oasis Academy schools have a commitment that, wherever there is a cluster of schools, they need to set up a Community Hub. Andrew Gill is the Lead for the Shirley Park site. Andrew helpfully told LCP members that the school tragically lost two of their students to knife crime in a short space of time. Part of the work to change and positively impact the community around this is to redesign the nearby Ashburton Park through a Heritage grant and to work closely with the community in the process. The work will focus on developing the currently vacant Lodge in the park and also look to set up at a food growing project with Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners such as South Norwood Community Kitchen and Reaching Higher, together with racing driver, Lewis Hamilton’s mentoring project ‘Mission 44’ to provide an initiative with 360 wrap-around support. This area has also been selected as one of the sites that will benefit from a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), as part of the play zone funding that has been made available through the council.

**ACTION**: To be connected to this exciting work and explore potential partnership opportunities please contact: andrew.gill@oasisuk.org / 07917 243 665

·     **Woodside Community Hub – part of** **Croydon East Wellness Support Network- ‘CrESNT’**- The winning bid for this locality last year was CrESENT an alliance that is made up of five partners in the locality: Floating Counselling, ‘Welderlies’, Woodside Community Pop-In, Clear Community Web and ‘Mandem Medley’, who are supporting 120 men. The Hub has been running for a month in November last year and has started again in the last two weeks. It is being held at Woodside Baptist Church on Spring Lane from 1.30- 3.30

**ACTION**: LCP members to help publicize the Hub to maximize engagement. For more information, please see the flyer attached and the website [link.](https://www.floatingcounselling.co.uk/events)

**ACTION:**Nasreen and Mariah, (Community Facilitator), Celestina and Lynda to keep LCP members informed of progress, sharing Change Stories whenever possible.

**Strengthening Community Plans**: **Befriending** (as part of the work on Mental Health) and **Communication**. With the extensive knowledge and expertise of those LCP members in attendance, it was also agreed that the area of **Youth-related opportunities**would be discussed.

**Befriending**- Lynda our Co-chair and Social Prescribing Link Worker has highlighted the need for face-to-face befriending schemes to tackle loneliness and isolation. We were reminded of the Street Champions network which discussed in previous meetings and that there was an outstanding need for training for potential Champions before they go door-to-door and do informal welfare checks with light signposting. This could be a way of befriending and supporting residents to make initial connections with new community-based activities.

It was also mentioned that activities should have a ‘Welcome’ person to assist new residents with engagement. CNCA have a befriending and home service. We heard a wonderful story about a gentleman who had been very nervous and isolated, but through meeting with his befriender he was now going with them to a lunch club for the first time. CNCA are taking referrals for this service and they even support with transport to get the resident engaging with community. For more information please email: Amanda@cnca.org.uk

The need for more Volunteers was raised. We have looked at promoting this opportunity through Ross at Emmaus SOC and the Croydon Cares initiative. We spoke about collecting and promoting stories of volunteers to show it as an opportunity.  The concept of a Timebank was mentioned, if we could pledge an hour of our time each, we could collectively help cover the volunteering needs in the area. This would need to be effectively coordinated to work.

**ACTION**: A **Befriending Action Group** of Celestina, Amanda Esparon from Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association (CNCA), Norman Till from Addiscombe Neighbourhood Care Association (ANCA) and Andrew Slegg, with the support of the Volunteer via Lynda Graham, will meet to discuss and plan these issues more fully. They will feed back to LCP members at the next meeting.

**ACTION**: Andrew to contact Ben Taylor and Paul Voden about training for Community Champions

**ACTION**: LCP members to contact Amanda Esperon at CNCA about potential befriending support for local residents - Amanda@cnca.org.uk

**Communication:** £5000 is available from the King’s Fund’s ‘Healthy Communities Together’ budget to increase engagement by improving the promotion and publicity of LCP meetings and Community Hubs. Avenues for such communication mentioned were, residents' associations, Link Workers, hubs, the excellent CNCA fortnightly bulletin, faith forums and church networks, as well as school networks. A localized Facebook page was mentioned and a website specific to this locality

**ACTION**: An **Action Group for Communication** was set up, with Celestina and Neil Chamaroo from See way Youth being the initial members. The group will explore these ideas in more detail and update LCP members at our next meeting.

**Youth -**The importance of engaging parents of young people to reach / support young people was raised. How do we effectively do this? What are the issues that young people are facing in this locality? We need to hear from them on this. Neil shared with us the success of providing value-driven activities as a possibility to be explored. Parental Army, an initiative that has been successful in the South-East LCP, where there is a booklet of listed services that support parents accessible to them. This has been a great help. Could this work in this locality? Connecting with Reaching Higher, Addiscombe Boys and Girls and Sir Phillip Gain club were suggested.

Floating Counselling have a holiday camp that supports young people during the school holidays. For more information on that holiday camp [here.](https://www.floatingcounselling.co.uk/holidayschool)

**ACTION**: An **Action Group for** **Youth**was set up, with Celestina, Neil, Andrew Gill, Norman and Arlene being the initial members. The group will explore these ideas in more detail and update LCP members at our next meeting.

**THE ACTION GROUPS WILL ALWAYS BENEFIT FROM HAVING A SOLID MEMBERSHIP, SO IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE BEFRIENDING, YOUTH OR COMMUNUICATION ACTION GROUPS THEN PLEASE CONTACT THE CO-CHAIRS, CELESTINA AND LYNDA, OR SARAH OR ANDREW. THANK YOU.**

**Croydon’s Health and Wellbeing strategy 2024-29** - Your views on the new Health and Wellbeing draft strategy were much appreciated.

Acting upon suggestions from LCP members about how to reach new participants, the next Central East LCP meeting will be take place on **Wednesday 24th April, in the EVENING, between 6-8 pm**. Please promote this far and wide so we can get as many new voices joining the conversation as possible. Please book your place [here.](https://cvalive.org.uk/calendar/item/51092380)

To see previous meeting notes OR the Community Plans for your locality [here.](https://cvalive.org.uk/empowering-the-community/networks/local-community-partnerships/)

Thank you for your continued support and engagement in this great work

Warm wishes,

Lynda, Celestina., Sarah and Andrew

*With thanks to Chloe Smith for the notes.*

C/O Sarah Burns

Director of Communities

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