

# **OURSPACE COMMUNITY HUB**

**THANK YOU FOR THE OPORTUNITY TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT  
OURSPACE COMMUNITY HUB**

**FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO MAY NOT BE AWARE OURSPACE IS  
BASED IN THE OLD MILLETS BUILDING ON THE HIGH STREET  
OPPOSITE SHIP PUB AND BACKING ON TO SURREY STREET  
MARKET**

**IT IS A SUBSTANTUAL BUILDING OF 4 FLOORS AND OVER 6000 SQ  
FEET WHICH WE ACQUIRED APPROX 3 YEARS AGO**

**IT WAS IN A TERRIBLE STATE OF DELAPIDATION -WITH NO  
RUNNING WATER , WORKING TOILETS AND LIGHTS THAT WORKED**

**WHEN SIGNING THE LEASE ON BEHALF OF DISABILITY CROYDON I  
ASKED MY ‘WHAT ON EARTH HAVE I DONE’**

**I WAS QUICKLY RE-ASSURED BY THE REACTION OF THE  
CROYDON COMMUNITY**

**WITHIN WEEKS AND OVER 3 COLD MONTHS – ABOUT 50  
INDIVIDUALS FROM ALL BACKGROUNDS AND AGES VOLUNTEERED  
THEIR TME , SKILLS AND ENERGY TO CLEAN , PAINT AND  
REFURBISH**

**SMALL CROYDON BUSINESSES DONATED MATERIALS SUCH AS  
PAINT AND TOOLS AND A CITY CENTER HOTEL DONATED ENOUGH  
CARPET TILES TO COVER MOST FLOOR**

**THE BUIDING BECAME HABITABLE**

## **WHAT TO DO WITH SUCH A BUILDING ???**

**- TO DISABILITY CROYDON IT WAS A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY**

- A VENUE THAT COULD FACILITATE PARTNERSHIP WORKING BETWEEN THE PUBLIC , PRIVATE AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR**
- A SPACE TO SHARE . A SPACE TO DEVELOP SERVICES THAT THE COMMUNITY ASKED FOR AND EXPLORE NEW WAYS OF WORKING AND DELIVERING SERVICES**
- AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP PEER SUPPORT GROUPS , TRY SOMETHING NEW , TO LISTEN, TO COLLABORATE**

**SOME OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR WHOM WE APPROACHED TO SHARE CONSIDERED IT A GAMBLE TO FAR**

**BEAR IN MIND THIS WAS DURING COVID AND THE EMERGING THREAT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY GRANTS ENDING**

**OTHERS SHARED OUR DREAM AND JOINED US**

## **FIRST STEPS**

- **WITH A SMALL GRANT WE BUILT A COMMERCIAL CAFÉ AND DROP -IN**
- **4 START UPS COMERCIAL VENTURES HIRED SPACE –**

**THIS WAS CRITICAL AS WE SEE THE LONG TERM VIABILITY OF OURSPACE BEING A MARRIAGE BETWEEN PRIVATE AND VOLUNTARY SECT**

- **A FULLY EQUIPPED GYM WAS SET UP ON FLOOR AND ATTRACTED PEOPLE**

**OVER TIME WE WERE JOINED BY Royal Mencap Autism Voice, Dignitate, the DWP AND A RANGE OF GROUPS LOOKING FOR A HOME OR SPACE TO DELIVER THEIR SERVICES**

**EVENTUALLY 17 DIFFERING GROUPS began USING OURSPACE**

**I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS THAT OURSPACE IS A WORK IN PROGRESS BOTH IN TERMS OF REFURBISHMENT AND IN DEVELOPING SERVICES**

**IF ANY BODY PRESENT HAS IDEAS OR PROJECTS THAT CAN BE SUPPORTED BY OURSPACE OR YOU Would LIKE TO EXPLORE OPTIONS Please drop in for a chat**

**In closing**

**I would like to briefly share with you how the gym began as simply that – a gym and became something much more**

**It became clear that attendance at gym for classes was not simply for exercise and getting fit as many as 80 % of attendees began to open up and discuss their concerns about their mental health particularly with young males from BAME background**

**With support from NHS CCG we adapted the gym service which now offers mental health support and outreach support using whats app -**

**An example of private , public and voluntary working in partnership to address a community need**