**Community Partnership in Croydon North East - Notes 29th November 2023**

Dear Croydon North East Colleagues,

Wonderful to see you at our last event and thank you to St Andrew's Church, [Home - St Andrew's RC Church - Thornton Heath (standrewsthorntonheath.org.uk)](https://standrewsthorntonheath.org.uk/), for hosting us. Our Co- Chairs Magdalene Adenaike and Nicole Godez led our discussions on: the new Local Commissioning Model, North East and young people and food poverty.

**New Locality Commissioning Model:**In June 2023, Age UK Croydon (AUKC) and Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) launched the new Locality Commissioning Fund supported by Croydon Council and Croydon NHS through The Kings Fund 'Healthy Communities Together' programme. We met at Braithwaite Halls in November to hear from all 6  successful partnerships across the borough and from Commissioners on their commitment to devolve further funds into local communities.

We heard full presentations from the successful partnership in Croydon North East:

**His Grace**

The funding is being used to expand activity and focus on the following areas:

Youth Program/ Youth Chill Zone from 11 am- 3pm every Saturday this is a place for young people to chill and be safe to do homework as well as engage with life skills such as CV support, work experience and practice interviews.

Safe Space Café a place of safety for young people especially concerning the growing demand of mental health support. Children as young as 6 are being referred to CAMHs. His Grace has seen the need to support and break the cycle of young people being recruited into gangs by providing a sanctuary. A place for community and vulnerable/ unaccompanied adults to go.

**Reaching Higher** supports young people from three angles community, school and home. They currently support 13 schools and 650 young people, they have 20 staff and 50% of the staff are previous service beneficiaries. The money won through the Local Commissioning Model has enabled them to activate the following:

A Youth Café on Mondays a pay what you can, it started in October with South Norwood Community Kitchen and teaches the transferable skills of cooking and café skills to young people and includes working with youth offenders. This work is supplemented by some funding won through Rothchild which pays for Oasis staff to be involved.

Leadership Academy of self-development teaches young people life skills that they don’t learn at school such as Financial Literacy.

Basketball Academy it became apparent the young people wanted to play basketball. There is now an academy set up with games and coaches to fully support this as an avenue of activity and involvement.

Youth Hub This is a drop-in service that allows meals and a safe space for the young people. The biggest investment for this area is the funding to invest in personal development for the youth workers that run it and clinical supervision is now provided for them. There is a keen focus on Safeguarding as the needs have shown there are roughly 1.5 safeguarding incidents raised every day on varying grounds including Mental health, neglect, bullying and substance use.

**Young people and their relationship with the police.**

We spoke about the need for young people to build a relationship with the police that enables them to break down stigmas and negative associations.

Cuppa with a Coppa an initiative trialed at His Grace church on the 6th December.

Other suggested solutions incl:

* Involving youth cadets and police around the language young people use, getting them to create the promotional material in a way that they want to be addressed.
* Stories of Change, through Clear Community Web / other digital partners, to upskill a young person/ group of young people. They will learn web skills to start a blog about positive engagement with the police.
* Police to go into schools and community spaces, to have a relational presence.
* Invisible reporting, knowing the signs when someone might be showing up to ‘report’ something but doesn’t feel safe enough to report through the traditional pathways such as directly to the police.
* Ward Panels that have school representatives, local councilors, young people to talk about what they want to address and engage, young people being on decision making panels when decisions concern them.

**Croydon Cares**[#Croydoncares winter campaign is asking residents to donate food items - Croydon Voluntary Action (cvalive.org.uk)](https://cvalive.org.uk/news/2022-news-items/croydoncares-winter-campaign/)is more than a campaign; it’s a testament to the power of community action. It's a reminder that when we come together, the impact we can have is profound and far-reaching. As we move forward, the drive sets a precedent for other communities, showcasing how collective action can bring about real change, one tin, one toy, one volunteer day at a time. Click the link above to find out where your nearest food re-distribution hub is and the many ways you can make a difference.

The app [OLIO](https://olioapp.com/en/) was suggested as a helpful way to respond to food poverty needs. It's an app set up to stop waste. You set up an account and take a photo of the food donations you have and people locally near to you will stop by your house to collect the food they need. All food that isn’t collected can then be taken to the nearest food bank.

**Active Listening** Is there a need for upskilling the community in active listening. We posed the question what does it look like to listen? The replies that followed.

* To make small goals that are time-tied
* Being present, repeating what we have heard, managing expectations
* Silence, allowing space for processing what’s been heard
* Asking questions to deepen understanding
* Using assets, accountability, reflective practice
* Creative and inclusive communication, the arts

**How do we let others know about the Local Community Partnership?** there could be a North-East networking event as a locality specific event to work up initiatives among local businesses and organisations. More suggestions on how we can actively continue to grow the engagement of the LCP events are welcomed please email your Co-Chairs with your ideas, [magdalene@music-relief.org](mailto:magdalene@music-relief.org) and [workingtogether@noothinking.co.uk](mailto:workingtogether@noothinking.co.uk).

**Community updates**

Trauma Informed Scrutiny has identified the need for trauma informed care.

Knife crime is a big issue for the borough, knife injury first aid being taught by doctors to young people through Croydon Neighborhood Watch.

Mental Health *Croydon Drop In* talk bus is a space for anyone to go and speak about their mental health and what's affecting them. *St Christopher's* are available for compassionate chats across Croydon. *Norwood Junk Action*, *Palace for Life* and *Harris Academy* are collaborating to provide activities that prevent mental ill health.

We noted the role that Covid has had to play in our mental health and young people, through key developmental stages. Young people are expressing themselves more through spoken-word, this is noted as an area where further work and action could develop to provide an outlet for that.

Thank you for attending, we look forward to seeing you at our next meeting. Please save the date **Wednesday, 28 February from 10:00 - 12:30.**To book [Eventbrite Local Community Partnership Croydon North East](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/local-community-partnerships-croydon-north-east-tickets-798822087367%5d)

Warm wishes- Nicole and Magdalene

*With thanks to Chloe for the notes.*

c/o Sarah Burns

Director of Communities

Mob: 07540 720106

Email: sarah.burns@cvalive.org.uk

CVA Resource Centre

82 London Road, CR0 2TB