

REFUGEE WEEK 2021 REPORT

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**Refugee
Week**




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2021 REFUGEE WEEK REPORT

For the second year, Croydon Voluntary Action and Croydon Refugee and New Communities Forum drew community partners together from across Croydon for Refugee Week to celebrate the contribution of refugees to the borough.

The theme of Refugee Week 2021 is 'We cannot walk alone', which was reflected in the 24 community partners who came together to provide 18 different activities across 10 different venues in Croydon, from Ashburton Hall, Centrale Shopping Centre to Norbury Park and South Norwood Lakes. Partners included sports partners, such as Communities First, Aim High Dance, Croydon Sailing Club, Yoga and the Mind and Teach Sport and community organisations including Shpresa Programme, Hillsong and the Refugee Council.

Croydon Met Police were heavily involved as part of their involvement in MyEnds Violence Reduction programme, playing football, cricket, basketball and volleyball across the week, winning hearts and minds of many young refugees who's experience of police in their countries of origin can affect their understanding and reaction to being approached.

The young people also helped the police officers to understand why they may respond in a way that officers may find initially suspicious. This started a conversation that both the Police and community organisations have been keen to continue.

**WE
CANNOT
WALK
ALONE**

MANY ACTIVITIES

were designed and run by CVA's volunteer activators and those who originally arrived in Croydon as refugees but have now made their home here and now make a huge contribution to community life.



WORLD REFUGEE DAY

on Sunday, culminated in a wonderful Cricket Festival at Norbury Park, with approximately 70 children attending. Dynamos and All Stars coaching with Surrey Cricket Foundation and the ECB, led by Australian Cricket Star Nathan Sowter who will be appearing in the new Hundred tournament for The Oval Invincibles. Thornton Heath CC then ran a 4 team cricket tournament, won by The Blue Tigers, in an exciting winning last over including 3 sixes from new arrival Sultan.

THE HUGELY POSITIVE RESPONSE

we received from community sports partners means that refugees feel more able to move into mainstream activities as part of the Croydon Welcomes Campaign which aims to portray Croydon as a welcoming, hospitable place for all. Becoming a place of Sanctuary is the main aim of Croydon Refugee and New Communities Forum working closely with CVA, LB Croydon, Croydon Churches and the Met Police.



CHRISTINE DOUBLE

Head of Operations at Croydon Voluntary Action said:

“Refugees and people from new communities have made an enormous contribution to Croydon life. Refugee Week was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate and recognise all that they have done to make Croydon a more diverse and vibrant place to live.

The engagement of so many local organisations in Refugee Week activities who were willing to welcome refugees into their communities reflects positively on Croydon as a welcoming place of sanctuary and safety for all’.

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