

**CROYDON COUNCIL**

**“Better Outcomes for Local People”**

**COMMUNITY FUND PROGRESS REPORT 2017/2018**

## CONTENT

<b>Foreword</b>	Councillor Hamida Ali Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety and Justice	
<b>Executive Summary</b>	Introduction to the Community Fund Programme	
<b>Theme 1</b>	Vibrant, responsible & connected communities	
<b>Theme 2</b>	A connected Borough where no one is isolated	
<b>Theme 3</b>	Supporting residents towards better times	
<b>Theme 4</b>	Leaving no child behind	
<b>Theme 5</b>	Finding homes for all	
<b>Appendix 1</b>	Additional sources for information on the Community Fund Programme	

## Foreword – Cllr Hamida Ali, Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety and Justice

[DN: insert picture]

Croydon is one of London's most wonderfully diverse boroughs and a place where inspirational residents and communities live and work. In 2016, the Opportunity and Fairness Commission (OFC) gathered views from across the borough to understand the issues and challenges faced by the people of Croydon in order to build and create a fairer and better place to live for all. In meeting the key inequality and poverty challenges residents face, the OFC advocated for strong neighbourhoods where citizen activism and participation in the local community, faith and sports groups are well embedded and healthier vibrant communities are reinforced. The Council was asked to show leadership in this area by promoting community involvement, supporting asset based development approaches and devolving power to local communities.

This is why, we created the Community Fund. By reshaping the grant support to the Voluntary Sector around OFC themes and including support for asset based community development, we were able to secure circa £6m of funding for 3 years. This report takes you through the progress that has been made and the outcomes that have been delivered through the Community Fund in year one.

In providing this update, on behalf of the Administration, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude towards the Voluntary and Community Sector. The Council would not be able to achieve its objective of a fairer and better place to live for all without the contribution that the VCSE sector makes. They play a key role in delivering services that rebalance and address inequality, improve cohesion and increase community leadership. The Community Fund Programme is one of the ways we are supporting local action and initiatives. We are working with communities to develop their potential and to support them to deliver services that we may not be at the best position to provide. We seek better ways of delivering the earliest help, prevention and intervention through community partnerships.

I know through my experience of working with the sector and visits to the partner organisations, that the Community Fund programme harnesses a culture of putting people at the heart of the solution to these challenges, as we all move from dependence on traditional services towards enabling greater independence, self-reliance and resilience and putting in place preventative measures.

There are several case study examples in this programme which demonstrate the power of community solutions in helping to prevent social isolation and the associated health risks and care needs of people.

Furthermore, these services are real examples of vibrant and responsible communities and it gives me confidence to see how well the sector is demonstrating the real difference that is being made for our residents and communities. The year ahead looks positive, with structures and improvements in place, or those that are being developed, to allow us to continue enhancing and securing the outcomes. Of course, we could not continue to make the difference that we do without our committed staff, volunteers, hardworking partners and our gratitude goes out to you all.



## **Executive Summary**

The Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector makes a significant and essential contribution to the social, economic and health and wellbeing of communities. The VCSE sector has a strong history of innovation and has continued to strive and play a crucial role in providing a wide range of services. They are the gateway to our diverse communities, widening the reach of residents who sometimes feel excluded from mainstream services.

Public services are under increasing pressure as a result of both increasing demand and reducing resources. The Third Sector remains key to helping the Council and its partners to respond to this challenge. To support the required changes the Council has reviewed its Third Sector investment and commissioning arrangements to ensure they are delivering the desired outcomes, driving maximum value for money, meeting community need and effectively supporting the Sector to improve and thrive.

In October 2016, the Council adopted a new approach to supporting and investing in the VCSE sector. Its focus was on unlocking and recognising the need to focus on outcomes for our residents and to harness the social value of the voluntary sector as equal partners. It is well understood the purpose of funding is to deliver outcomes to local residents and communities. The Programme also provides transparency and clarity in the delivery of desired outcomes along with cost of providing those outcomes, to facilitate more of a better understanding of the community. Moreover, the relationship is nurtured so that organisations are more accountable for the funding and diversifying their income which all supports a commercial and entrepreneurial approach and transforms our relationships with our communities.

In November 2016, the Council led the way by becoming a Living Wage Friendly Funder.



The London Living Wage Friendly Funders support charities to pay the real living wage through their grant-making. We are working to end low pay in the VCSE sector as well as the wider community. This action continues to show our commitment and leadership to increase income of residents and community sector.

The real living wage is key to the sector's pursuit for social justice. By ensuring that all posts are paid the real living wage, we are supporting a higher standard of living for individuals employed within the VCSE sector and their families. By

supporting those out of in-work poverty this commitment helps address the wage inequalities in the borough.

This report sets out the current funding arrangements and themes and outcomes delivered so far. It presents the emerging findings, key achievements and a selection of case studies to illustrate the difference the Community Fund is making to people's lives.

These include enabling communities to look after themselves to a greater degree, reducing demand on statutory services and providing mitigations against some of the cuts in public services. It is also proving to be an effective way of improving our relationships and our understanding of communities.

There is a recognised need for the right type of capacity building support to the VCSE, including:

- “Skilling up” VCS organisations in bidding for and taking on commissioned services;
- Embedding business planning to ensure that VCSE services are resilient and less reliant on funding from the council; and
- Encouraging VCSE organisations to innovate on how they generate income and supporting the sector to retain premises and resources in a difficult financial climate.

The Council will be seeking to review the Community Fund programme and ensure that the sector is appropriately supported to build greater financial resilience and is self-sustaining.

## **Background**

During 2015, the Council commissioned the Opportunity and Fairness Commission (OFC) to recommend ways to reduce inequity and advance equality and diversity. The work of the Commission was one of the widest conversations with the community of any London Borough. The findings from the Commission, reported to Cabinet in January 2016, have influenced the outcomes the Council is seeking to achieve through the new Community Fund programme 2016-19.

Croydon OFC published its final report on 28th January 2016. The report highlighted the key inequality and fairness challenges for the borough and presented recommendations on how these could be addressed by the Council in partnership with the VCSE sector.

Croydon’s VCSE sector has a strong history of providing imaginative and community based solutions. The Council, like other public sector organisations, are keen to work in partnership with our local VCSE to ensure that we collectively deliver better outcomes for the residents of Croydon.

**The Community Fund programme** adopted the OFC key themes and built a dynamic approach to supporting and investing in the VCSE sector to deliver improved outcomes. The proposal was developed in collaboration with the sector through a range of meetings and discussions.

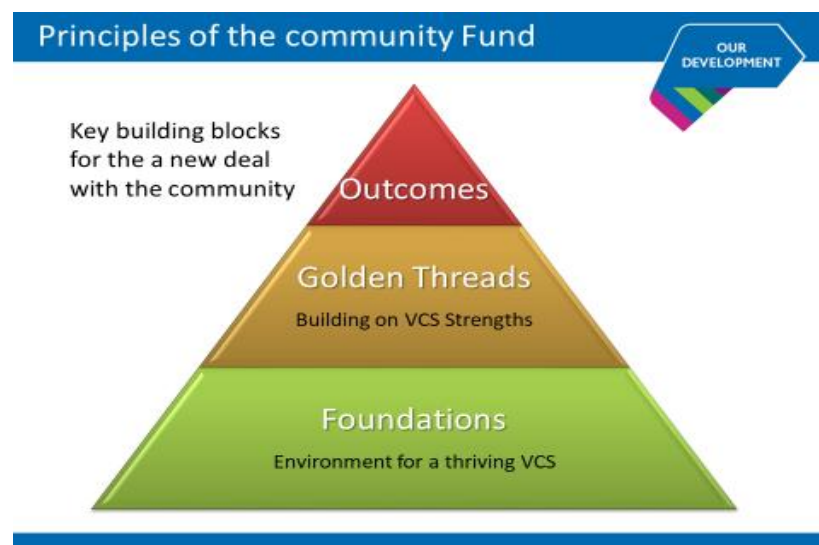
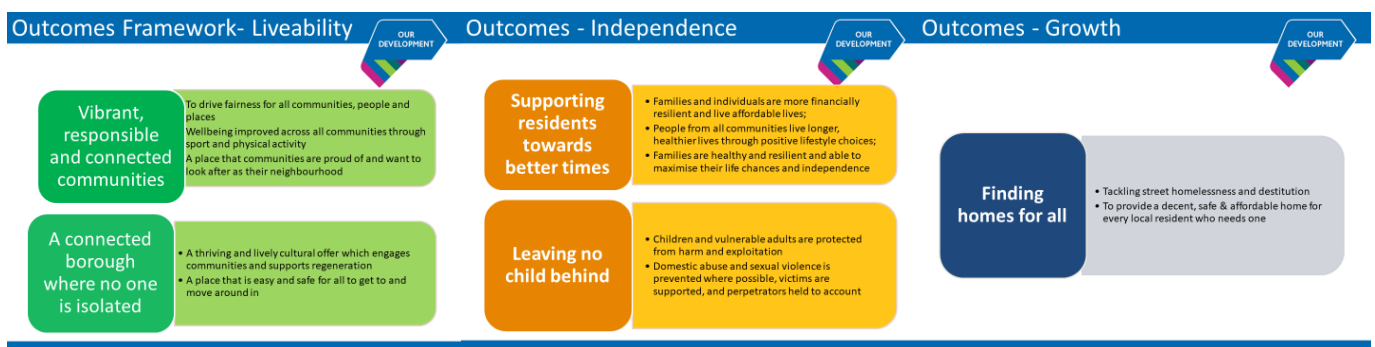
The programme was established on a number of important principles:

- A focus on key outcomes that needed to be influenced and changed across the borough. This meant that we moved away from funding organisations and instead funded programmes and activities which would achieve the intended outcomes;

- Alignment to the Council’s Corporate Plan, Ambitious for Croydon, and the borough’s Community Strategy;
- Shaped and influenced by the recommendations of the Opportunities and Fairness Commission;
- Support community empowerment by helping residents to live independent lives; and
- Support VCSE strengths in developing community responses to the identified key outcomes while building the capabilities of the sector to adapt to the difficult financial climate and become more sustainable.

The programme design principles are about nurturing a stronger business relationship, building an enterprising economy that continues to play a crucial role in delivering public services and demonstrating value for money. The Community Fund supports a vibrant and creative place where local people have a better quality of life and flourish.

In doing this, it was vital that the Community Fund prospectus policy and approach were aligned to the Opportunities and Fairness Commission’s recommendations



In October 2016, the three year funding arrangements for the Council’s new programme were implemented. Overall, nearly £6m has been invested in the programme delivery over three years. A detailed breakdown has been provided in appendix 1.

The programme has 35 delivery partners, see appendix for a The partners have been commissioned to deliver outcomes that focus on early prevention and intervention

The below sections of the report aim to provide an overview of the programme's scope as well as examples of the emerging outcomes and achievements.

## **THEME 1: VIBRANT, RESPONSIBLE & CONNECTED COMMUNITIES**

£2.2 million was committed to the Vibrant, Responsible and Connected Communities theme over 3 years. With this funding we wanted the VCSE sector to work with us to create an environment which engenders responsibility and nurtures the positive things which people are willing to do to make their locality a better place to live.

The Ambitious for Croydon outcomes for this theme are:

1. To drive fairness for all communities, people and places;
2. To improve wellbeing across all communities through sport and physical activity; and
3. To create a place that communities are proud of and want to look after as their neighbourhood.

The key outcomes to date include:

- More than 200 instances of peer to peer capacity building support provided to the VCSE sector;
- 90% of faith VCSE's feeling that they are enabling greater community cohesion by working collaboratively through interfaith activities;
- Greater partnerships within the VCSE sector resulting in sharing best practice, resources and joint bids for funding; and
- Nearly 1000 people encouraged and supported to volunteer in their community.

The case studies below demonstrate the difference that this funding is making.

### **Case Study – Eunice's Story**





Eunice came to the Volunteer Centre a little over 18 months ago, although working was unhappy in her job and wanted to change her career path. After spending time with our volunteer advisors she was given a choice of three organisations she could apply to volunteer at.

Eunice's Story in her own words.

*I was determined to get back into the office, but because of the job I was already doing, getting back into the office was a No No as I didn't have the experience organisations required of you to work on Reception or in Admin, so I decided to sign myself up for Voluntary work at the volunteer centre in Centrale and take it from there.*

*I was still applying for Admin/Reception vacancies, (although a lot of them you needed 1yrs experience) I never gave up. I got signed up to work at the Resource Centre on reception with some administration, where I have been for 14 months.*

*As a Volunteer at the Resource Centre my weekly task were:*

- Distribution of the mail.*
- Topping up Tea, Coffee and Sugar jars.*
- Filling the printer with paper.*
- Keeping the Reception area tidy and sorting the leaflets and Posters.*
- Answering the phone and dealing with any queries.*
- Face to Face queries.*
- Any other additional work or tasks, were entirely down to me.*

*After months of persevering, I have landed myself a full-time job working in admin for a Courtesy Car company.*

*I am so pleased that I chose Volunteering as this has helped me with my chosen route of career. Helped me gain the experience I needed to for the career I so wanted to get back into. It may not be paid work but the outcome is much better and rewarding.*



The Asian Resource Centre Croydon deliver a dynamic partnership with 15 community grass roots organisations.

### Case study – Sonia’s Story



*“These are the best results you have had in 10 years so whatever you are doing – keep doing it.”*

- Sonia’s GP at her quarterly check-up for diabetes, high blood pressure and asthma.

Sonia’s story is a living example of the impact Health & Wellbeing services can have on preventing ill health, isolation and depression. Sonia lives in Thornton Heath and at 61 years old, she is one of the youngest in the group of people that attend the ARCC Dance Movement classes.

Three years ago, Sonia’s husband passed away and shortly after that her son had to undergo a triple bypass. The great bunch of people that she met at the ARCC were instrumental in getting her through a very difficult time. Through dance and yoga, she and others are able to develop a positive mental attitude which helps them to help each other through everyday ups and downs.

Without the intervention of ARCC, Sonia may have descended into ill health but instead she has thrived and is well and has a strong support structure around her to face future life difficulties if they arise. Photo above shows Sonia performing at the Community Fund Showcase Event at Croydon Park Hotel in February 2018.

There is a need for capacity building support to the VCSE, including:

- “Skilling up” VCS organisations in bidding for and taking on commissioned services;
- Embedding business planning to ensure that VCSE services are resilient and less reliant on funding from the council; and
- Encouraging VCSE organisations to innovate on how they generate income and supporting the sector to retain premises and resources in a difficult financial climate.

The Council will be seeking to review the Community Fund programme and ensure that the sector is appropriately supported to build greater financial resilience and is self-sustaining.

**CASE STUDY – Supporting a resident in financial hardship (Croydon Advice Services)**

A 55 year old resident, separated from his partner, with 2 dependent children and a mortgaged house fell on hard times. He had been on sick leave from his job for nine months and was awaiting the date of an operation on his left foot. His sick pay had finished and he was just receiving the basic amount of Universal Credit. He also received Personal Independent Payment for daily living and mobility issues. He had accrued council tax arrears of £1,400.4k and mortgage arrears of £1,800. He had an agreement with the mortgage company that it would be put on hold until he started work again. The council was taking court action in respect of the council tax arrears. He sought help from the Croydon Advice Service and was advised to claim the 'New Style' Employment and Support Allowance contribution based as it was outside of Universal Credit. This was because he was unable to work due his disability.

He was also not receiving any council tax support or claiming the single adult discount as he was the only adult living in the property. He would receive help with his mortgage interest after he had been on Universal Credit for nine assessment periods which based on current government assistance rates would be £174 per month.

After checking his Universal Credit award it was found that he was not receiving the child responsibility payment and he should apply for this. As a result of this advice and support, he received the single adult discount for his council tax of £476.34 and Council Tax Support of £27.48 per week. This resulted in having a credit in his council tax account. He also received the Child Responsibility payment of £508.75 in his Universal Credit.

**Overall his income increased by £627.83 per month.**

## **THEME 2: A CONNECTED BOROUGH WHERE NO ONE IS ISOLATED**

£1.8 million was committed to the Connected Borough Where No One Is Isolated theme over 3 years.

Carers across Croydon provide significant support to our health and social care system. A range of factors have contributed to an increase in the incidence of social isolation and loneliness and being a carer significantly increases the risk of social isolation. In this theme there is a strong provision of carers support. Supporting carers can reduce their stress and anxiety, and can enable them to increase their social networks, as caring can sometimes feel quite isolating. Initiatives such as peer support groups, activity groups, exercise groups, one-to-one support, and information, advice and guidance can be hugely supportive to carers, which is why in Croydon we are committed to funding these initiatives.

The Ambitious for Croydon outcomes for this theme are:

1. A thriving and lively cultural offer which engages communities and supports regeneration;
2. A place that is easy and safe for all to get to and move around in;
3. A supportive network for carers that enables them to sustain relationships whilst continuing their caring role.

The key outcomes to date include:

- Bringing together the four key partners to deliver services to carers through the Carers Support partnership;
- The provision of social activities and interventions including pilates, book clubs, carers choir, dancing, massage and carers café'; and
- Almost 34,000 carers supported over the course of the year.

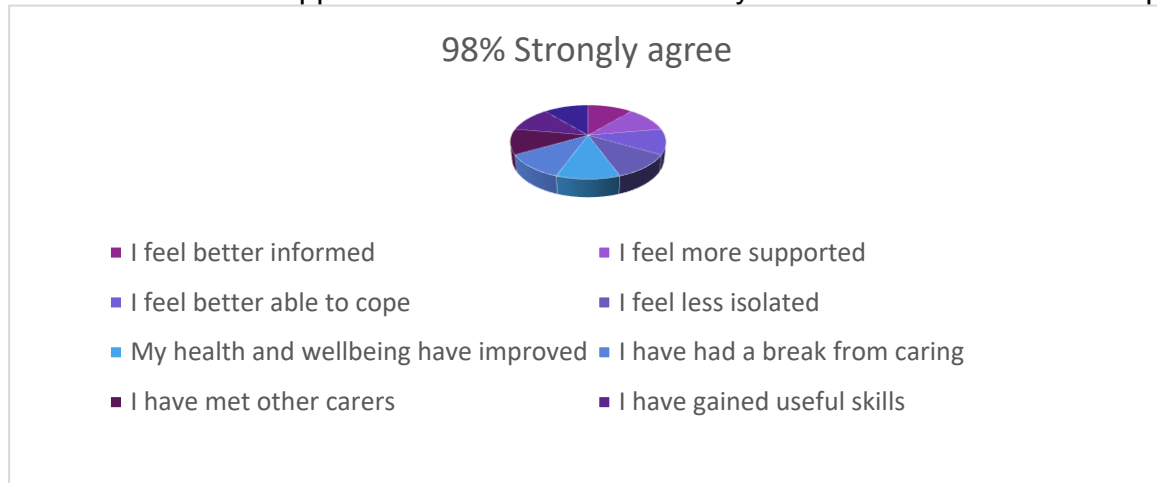
The case study below demonstrates the difference that this funding is making.

### Case study – The Carers Support Partnership

The Carers Support Partnership have delivered a well-respected and exceptional hub for various services which bring together four key partners: The Whitgift Foundation’s Carers’ Information Service (**lead**), Mind in Croydon, Parents in Partnership and Croydon Mencap. They are well regarded and have a high impact in the borough.



Loneliness and isolation have a profound effect on health and wellbeing. The centre provides a range of social activities and interventions including Pilates, Book Club, Carers Choir, dancing, massage, and Carers Café. Almost 34,000 carers have been supported over the course of the year at the Carers Partnership.



The figure shows the results from an “I” statements survey. This was carried out with service users and shows majority strongly agree that the Community Fund Carers Support programme is a positive service.

### **THEME 3: SUPPORTING RESIDENTS TOWARDS BETTER TIMES**

£610k has been committed to the Supporting Residents Towards Better Times theme over 3 years. Delivery in this theme focuses on achieving positive outcomes in two broad areas:

- Supporting flexible and inclusive employment opportunities
- Supporting health and wellbeing in the communities

#### **Flexible & Inclusive Employment**

Residents told the Opportunity and Fairness Commission that they would like to see local employers doing more to recruit disabled people and those from BME backgrounds. The Commission also found that female workers wanted better support with childcare and caring responsibilities to access the jobs market. Through this funding we wanted to work with VCSE sector to address some of what we had heard.

The key outcomes to date include:

- The Empowering Mothers, a transformational partnership project between My OutSpace and All Inclusive Training that has been set up by mothers of Croydon for mothers/carers to support those the most at risk of exclusion and disadvantage with a complex range of barriers that local mothers face particularly women from ethnic minorities communities; and
- Reduced social isolation, increased digital inclusion, training for mothers/carers, access to employment or self-employment opportunities and the provision of support with childcare for women from BME background.

The case study below demonstrates the difference that this funding is making.



### Case study – Nadia’s story

From raising 4 children, 2 with disabilities and being unemployed for 18 years to getting a job, helping and inspiring other mothers.

Nadia Ali had a challenging motherhood, raising her four children, 2 of whom are disabled. She experienced depression, denial, bipolar syndrome and financial challenges, however she never gave up. When she contacted My OutSpace she was looking for volunteering opportunities to help other mothers.

Nadia received mentoring support to run peer to peer support groups in local libraries and always thought she could do more to help other mothers. Nadia is now running Budgeting courses for mothers across the whole borough. She has put together a fantastic workbook to help other mothers to build their financial capabilities providing tools and techniques families can use to do family budgeting.

She continues to run peer to peer support groups currently on average 20 mothers in Selsdon, Ashburton and Thornton Heath libraries have benefited from these. Nadia has had fantastic feedback from her courses so far and aims to run at least one each month.

Nadia is now inspiring other mothers when they are feeling low, losing their self-esteem to gain support and feel proud of what they have achieved as a parent.



*Quote: ‘My OutSpace’ has been great support in my career journey, it helped me to build my confidence, get access to further training and find employment. My advice to any mother out there who feel they are not able to be at their best – never give up! It is usually mothers who struggle the most. I kept the courageous of Never Giving up on personal goals and the future for my children which gave me extra strengths. I would highly recommend My OutSpace for their support and will encourage mothers to get in touch’. - Nadia Ali*

## Health & wellbeing

The Annual Report of the Director of Public Health for 2017 identified a number of significant inequalities in health outcomes in the borough. The causes of these inequalities are multi-factorial and deep rooted. The Community Fund contributes to

mitigating those inequalities by supporting services aimed at improving health and wellbeing of residents.

The key outcomes to date include:

- Improved access to outdoor leisure opportunities to promote physical activity and mental wellbeing in the most deprived areas of the borough particularly one that is responsive to the diverse community.

The case studies below demonstrate the difference that this funding is making.

### **Case Study – Mind in Croydon Active Minds**

Mind in Croydon is working to promote good mental health. It seeks to empower people to lead a full life as part of their local community.

Through the Active Life Programme the service supports people with mental health problems to improve their social networks, wellbeing and recovery through various healthy lifestyle group activities and one to one support. The service is available to anyone with a mental health problem or who is isolated and would like to improve their wellbeing by developing a healthier lifestyle. Groups are led by volunteers to ensure the ongoing sustainability of each group. The service supports people with mental health problems to improve their social networks, wellbeing and recovery through various healthy lifestyle group activities and one to one support.

The service is available to anyone with a mental health problem or who is isolated and would like to improve their wellbeing by developing a healthier lifestyle.

Groups are led by volunteers to ensure the ongoing sustainability of each group.

The service mainly targets adults with mental health problems with a particular focus on supporting people who are isolated in the community and those with severe and enduring mental health problems. They are also delivering under the Carers support partnership.

**Quote from service user** *“The computer classes at the Mind centre have been extremely useful as I have been doing free online internet training courses which have taught me very useful things. These skills include: learning how to use computer equipment, learning how to set up an email and Facebook account, as well as how to search for jobs and upload a C.V. I have also learnt how to access online G.P. services, how to set up Internet Security and undertake online shopping or online banking.*

*Additionally I have learnt how to access Public Services online.*

*All the information that I have been taught is very important to know in order for us to manage our day to day affairs on the computer.”*

93% who have tried a new activity

90% who feel stronger (more resilient) as an individual

70% people increasing engagement in one year



**Case Study – The Croydon Natural Health Service is a consortium consisting of the following five organisations:**



[www.naturalhealthservice.london](http://www.naturalhealthservice.london)



**1. Good Food Matters** is a Croydon based charity dedicated to supporting people in the community to build healthier lifestyles. They do this through teaching students about food growing, cooking and nutrition.

**2. Good Gym** is a charity where volunteers can take part in the following activities run groups to take part in manual labour for community organisations and also make social visits to isolated older people whom they call coaches because they motivate the runner to keep going. Run missions for vulnerable people; clearing gardens, changing lightbulbs and doing odd-jobs for people who struggle to do them alone.

**3. The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)** is a community volunteering charity. They run a programme called the Green Gym which is their health offer. The Green Gym is a weekly 3 hour outdoor activity session. Volunteers complete practical conservation tasks such as planting seeds, cleaning ponds and litter picking.

**4. Wheels for Wellbeing** is a charity running drop-in inclusive cycling sessions for disabled people and their families, carers or friends, from three bases in South London.

**5. Wild in the City** is a Croydon based supporting health and wellbeing through connection to nature. They work from parks and woods offering bushcraft, forest school children, families, adults and nature-based psychotherapy training for professionals. Their services support the development of positive relationships in and with nature, helping people to create healthier lives.



The Natural Health Service is an excellent addition to the thriving voluntary and community sector, creating many volunteering opportunities, new partnerships, and long lasting impacts on people’s lives. *Wellbeing improved across all communities through sport and physical activity across the whole borough,*

## Natural Health Service

- Social activity in nature supports wellbeing and resilience
- Good relationships with nature and people are important to our health

### Outcomes:

- Increased time spent in nature
- Increased connection to nature
- Improved sense of wellbeing
- Increased number of volunteers
- More visits to natural spaces
- Included in BBC flagship series on nature in cities
- Invited to present at City Hall and London Sport, sharing model of Green Prescribing





**Good Food Matters project –Food Skills for Life with Revivify initiative based in the learning centre in New Addington** enable everyone to cook and grow, healthy and nutritious balanced meals that include a fundamental understanding of what a balanced diet involves – tailored to the individual so that over the long term they can enjoy better health and wellbeing and reduce the likelihood of developing serious chronic conditions. Many of the participants that have engaged in the programme are of low income, poor diet, negative behaviour patterns, drug and alcohol problems, social isolation, and low self-esteem. They provide targeted support to people with physical disabilities, and people with barriers to their development. Volunteering is an integral element of the program, developing our collective approach to harness local assets to tackle local issues.

The outcome of this work programme has been:

- over 100 food packages have been delivered, 40 people in poverty have reported positively benefit from participating in the program
- 70 food bank clients
- I have improved access to fresh locally grown organic food produce
- 30 socially isolated or incapacitated residents have improved socialisation after engaging with this project

The Family Centre in Fieldway New Addington has been instrumental in supporting residents towards better times by helping local people from all communities' live longer, healthier lives and through positive lifestyle choices. Families are healthy resilient and able to maximise their life chances and independence. The impact of loneliness on our health and wellbeing. Loneliness is a bigger problem than simply an emotional experience. Research shows that loneliness and social isolation are harmful to our health: lacking social connections is a comparable risk factor for early death. Living alone can also sometimes increase risks to their health, wellbeing and

mental state however, having community groups and social activities can be a lifesaver for some.

### **Case Study – Mrs A's Story**

Mrs A has been attending the Birchwood club since it first started back in November 2015. She is 69 years old and is a resident of Fieldway and New Addington.

Mrs A is a widow, and has two grown up daughters that no longer live at home. Mrs Anna has taken part in all the events that have been run through the Birchwood club such as, arts and crafts, card making, digital workshops and community Café.

Mrs A has a growing group of friends that she attends with. On one occasion Mrs Anna did not arrive at the local shops where she meets up with other attendees. Her friends informed the staff at Birchwood Club. The staff tried calling Mrs Anna but was unable to get any answer. As she was a regular beneficiary and had made arrangements to meet up with her peers, it was decided that a home visit was needed. Staff went to home and found Mrs Anna on the kitchen floor. Staff called an ambulance and her emergency contact, and waited with her until they had both arrived.

Mrs A was taken to hospital where she was diagnosed with having suffered a stroke. The Community Café friends were remarkable in keeping Mrs Anna safe and well. The team has found her in time, they were able to medicate accordingly. Mrs Anna spent about one month in hospital and then returned home when she was able to see her friends and they carried a lunch for her from the Birchwood Club on a weekly basis until she was well enough to return to the Café. This provided Mrs A with the right care and support for her to remain safely in her own home. Mrs A and her family visited the centre to show their appreciation for the support that they had been given and to show their gratitude for their quick response to her situation.

Mrs A has now returned to Birchwood club but is assisted by another member to travel to and from the Centre, and walks with a frame. Mrs Anna is having regular physio therapy, and is making good progress.



## **THEME 4: Leaving No Child Behind**

£830k was committed to the Leaving No Child Behind theme over 3 years. A key objective for this theme is to support the outcome of reducing child poverty in the most deprived wards and to support well established youth providers to help young people make positive life choices.

The Ambitious for Croydon outcomes for this theme are:

1. Children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm and exploitation
2. Youth community provision is supported
3. Domestic abuse and sexual violence is prevented where possible, victims are supported and perpetrators held to account.

There are approximately 93,000 young people living in Croydon – more than anywhere else in London. The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) 2015 has shown that areas of Fieldway and Heathfield (Shrublands) have a higher proportion of children and young people 0 – 19 who experience child poverty at over 40%. In Fieldway 70% of the population is recorded as White, high levels of unemployment and people claiming benefits. In addition 50% of households have dependent children and there is a high proportion of lone parent families.

To ensure there is a good diverse youth provision in the borough youth partners are delivering excellent services to the most disadvantaged.

In Croydon, communities are changing fast with the borough having one of the fastest growing BME populations in London. More than 50% of children and young people are from a BME background and approximately 47% of adults. More than 100 languages are spoken across the borough. Croydon also has the largest number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and our residents speak more than 100 languages. Croydon has a great sense of community pride but social cohesion is challenged when there are poor community relations and people from different backgrounds do get on and live isolated from each other.

The Opportunity and Fairness Commission said that residents told them that too often there was a lack of respect amongst people living in their area and insufficient shared ownership of problems. Many residents mentioned people from different backgrounds moving into their local area and their struggle to create strong integrated communities especially at times when national or international activity can cause concern locally.



Croydon's youth providers work in partnership with the Council and other key agencies on Choose Your Future campaign, which aims to raise young people's awareness of knife crime and encourages them to make positive choices.

Croydon Drop in (CDI) provides advice and counselling to young people. They recently championed the Choose your Future campaign events. The aim was to raise awareness of knife crime and the negative impact it can have on young people. Their advice and counselling sessions help young people to talk and seek help with the emotional issues.

The case studies below demonstrate the difference that this funding is making.

### **Case Study – Play Place**

Play Place is a boosting example of a social enterprise delivering an essential. Youth and Community Fun programme and having greater impact on the local community. Play Place business model provides core activities for youth and Community Fun and at the same time delivers capacity building to other youth providers in the borough, amongst the 30 Partners the organisation provides capacity building support to Purley Youth organisation, which has received a small grant and essential support with governance policy and procedures. Recruited volunteers 40 - Achieving AQA's 20 at a cost to the council of £70k a year. Play Place has a good trading of hiring equipment for events and festivals and the profit from this income is then generated back into the social mission and the re-invested into communities. Income has been generated and a forecast of funds approximately 90K in return of investment.

Social enterprises invest some of the profit from a contract into communities; the councils and government organisations recognise this extra value therefore providing social enterprises the advantage.

Community Fund supports the work Palace for Life Foundation delivers to young people in South London, by funding the 'Develop through Sport community programme'. This programme allows young people to receive term and holiday time sporting activities to improve physical health and educate on issue based work. Young people accessing the Community Fund through the foundation, then have the opportunity to be involved in the multitude of activities the Foundation delivers in areas such as employment, health and social inclusion.

There is evidence emerging that Community Programme has been highly effective in addressing inequality, as well as supporting innovation and strengthening of capacity and capability. There is also very strong testimonials from residents.

Develop through Sport Community Programme (DTSC Programme) is another good example of youth provision where young people are engaged and supported into positive activities.

350 young people engaged through football and sport

70% said they felt more confident & supported to make better choices

69 % of total participants indicate an improvement in their own self confidence and

### Case Study – Ben’s Story



#### Tailored support for Ben Bracken to choose a positive pathway

“I have learned so much from the coaches and the support I have been given has been amazing. I have seen my confidence increase, now able to communicate with other young people and also in the work place. I never knew the foundation supported so much and I have been given different opportunities, they have supported me in college through a 4 week placement, a residential trip through its youth forum and its partners. Without programmes like these I would have found it difficult to know my own pathway and Organisations like Palace open so many doors for young people.”

Through mentoring and supporting Ben on his journey we was able to unravel his story and his experiences with the volunteering being an outlet for him to get away from bad influences. Ben began to open up after his time at the Foundation and we learned that a lot of the people ben was associating himself with were involved in anti-social behaviour and theft. Ben said this about the group “The whole group of people that I was hanging around with are all in prison, thanks to Michael and Palace for Life foundation I got away from them”.





## FULL CIRCLE SUMMER BLITZ

### Case Study – REACHING HIGHER

Since 2011 as a response to the riots in Croydon, Reaching Higher have been running a 4-week summer scheme called Summer Blitz. Now supported by Community Fund the aim is to engage disadvantaged young people aged 12-16 in positive activities. These include a range of performing arts (dance, music and drama), sports, activities (cooking, arts and crafts), life skill workshops (financial management) and day trips. We create a coaching environment, where volunteer mentors work with the young people to build their self-esteem, confidence and are able to develop problem solving, communication, teamwork and leadership.

Reaching Higher has reported a team of over 50 volunteers who work across all our projects with a range of backgrounds and skills. Over half of the volunteers are past beneficiaries demonstrating our “Full Circle” approach. They reinvest in the next generation offering the same support that Reaching Higher was able to give them. The social value and impact is certainly high. They work and nurture young people with limitless amounts of potential, talent and ability and facilitate to unlock it. Through well-respected relational approach to work, the result has been a generation of young adults willing and excited to reinvest in other young people.

The Community Fund also supports the Full Circle project run by Reaching Higher that supports young people as they transition out of care into independence. Young people are paired with a mentor who helps them navigate the leaving care pathway plan and build up their confidence as they think about their career, managing a household and managing their finances. The impact of this project can be reflected through the story of Emma\*

Emma\* is a 17 year old girl who has been in foster care from the age of 2. To help Emma build her self-confidence we paired her with a mentor who at the time was studying for a Masters in Theatre Studies. The intention was to choose someone who had an immediate common area of interest with Emma. With ongoing support from her mentor Emma began to attend drama workshops confident enough to speak up in groups and share her thoughts and. She was also able to make friends with some of the other young people in the group.

By participating in the Full Circle programme, Emma was able to meet other young people in the same position as her facing the same challenges helped Emma feel less isolated. Full Circle also offered her a new support network that she could have on going access to if needed.

More recently, Emma was encouraged by her mentor to become a volunteer as a way to stay within the Reaching Higher network. She has since been offered a role as part of the drama workshop team once she turns 18.

**The Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (RASASC)** ensures that that fewer women suffering from domestic violence are isolated and that they and their children are protected from harm and exploitation and that perpetrators are brought to justice to prevent further domestic crimes being perpetrated.

RASASC is an organisation that has been supporting female survivors of sexual violence for over 30 years and our ethos is that survivors deserve the highest standard of professional support in order to recover.

RASAC provide essential support to establish the risk to the woman and any dependents. If a high risk is demonstrated she support will encapsulate many different elements; it is factual, practical and very emotional.

## **THEME 5: Finding Homes for All**

£381k has been committed to the Finding Homes for All theme over 3 years. How homelessness occurs is complex and there is no one factor that can trigger it or is necessary for it to occur. Factors relating to an individual, their relationships, housing and employment all play a part. The affordability of homes to rent or buy, as well as housing and welfare policies have a direct impact. Individual factors including vulnerability, mental and physical health, support needs, addiction and substance misuse can play a part, and may be exacerbated by poverty and disadvantage.

Through this funding we wanted to work with the VCSE sector to prevent homelessness, provide advice and information to those people in housing need and at risk of homelessness, and engage with and support people sleeping rough with a view to helping them “move off” the streets.

The Ambitious for Croydon outcomes for this theme are:

1. To provide a decent, safe and affordable home for every local resident who needs one; and
2. To tackle street homelessness and destitution.

The key outcomes to date include:

- 171 homeless people have been supported by a Housing Coach and/or a Progression Coach; and
- 53 people have improved their housing situation, for example moving from rough sleeping to a night shelter or from a night shelter to a homeless hostel.

The case study below demonstrates the difference that this funding is making.

### **Case Study – Neville’s story**

“It never occurred to me that I could end up homeless”

Neville is 62 years old. He was mostly educated in Jamaica and came to London when I was 15 years old. He attended school for one year before needing to go to work to support his parents. Neville took on variety of jobs and eventually became a taxi driver where he worked hard and at the age of 35 had he had his own house and a wife and four children to support.

At 40 years old Neville decided that he wanted to give his children a better education so he decided to go into the hotel business and bought a hotel in Llandudno in North Wales. He lived there with my family and had a very successful business.

During the recession and his business and marriage broke down. Suddenly he found myself with no business, no home and no family. Neville decided come back to London and ended up in Croydon. He was unable to get the support directly from the Council as he had not been living in Croydon for a year. Neville ended up

walking to the park in front of the council office and there was a gentleman sitting on a bench. They started talking and the remaining part in Neville's own words.

"The man asked if I had heard of Crisis in Surrey street, I thought he was joking and saying that there was a crisis on Surrey Street. He then gave me a card and I phoned the number and made an appointment to see someone the next day"

Neville arrived at the Crisis office

"I was made to feel welcome with a nice cup of coffee and was given a timetable of all the things to do and how Crisis could help me. Through support of Crisis I have now a nice place to live, and have attended classes that have helped improve my IT skills and well as improving my confidences and self -esteem.

One of the exciting things I was involved with at Crisis was that I took part in a singing group that went on to link with Ralph Mc Tell and sing his famous song Streets of London. This was recorded and hit the charts over the Christmas period. I was one of the people to be starred in the video and was in the choir that was on at the London Palladium and on Chanel 4 news.

I started volunteering for Crisis a about a year ago and this have given me confidence to come out and talk in front of groups of people that I didn't think I would be able in the past but now it is something I really enjoy doing.

I am currently searching for a job in driving where I can meet and greet people and am working with a Work Coach in Crisis to achieve this aim.

SKYLIGHT CROYDON



## Showcase event

An annual showcase and exhibition event was held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February at Croydon Park Hotel. The aim of the event was to come together and celebrate the key achievements with range of partners and invite local people to share their stories.

The celebratory programme was designed to highlight the community impact. Residents, service users and volunteers shared their stories and experiences and articulated how the Community Fund programme has made a difference to their lives.

The event brought together around 100 people, including VCSE sector, residents, and service users.

The aim of the event was to highlight the dedication, share good practice and innovation emerging from the programme. The guest speaker at the event was Peter Holbrook, CEO of Social Enterprise UK.

The occasion was welcomed by all as an excellent opportunity to come together and hear how the programme is changing lives and delivering better outcomes for local people.

### Appendix 1 - Total Community Fund investment broken down into themes

Theme	Total Funding
Vibrant & Responsible Communities	£2,216,860
A Connected Borough Where No One Is Isolated	£1,809,588
Supporting Residents Towards Better Times	£609,504
Leaving No Child Behind	£829,918
Homes For All	£381,000
Total	<b>£5,846,870</b>

