



HEAR US CROYDON

**ANNUAL REPORT
2023/24**



**CROYDON'S MENTAL HEALTH
SERVICE USER GROUP
CHARITY # 1135535
COMPANY # 06891337**



Our Mission: to promote, educate, communicate and empower, for the benefit and interest of people affected by mental health issues

Structure, governance and management

Hear Us developed from a service user run community group established in 1992. Since 4th October 2001 Hear Us has been running as a not for profit organisation in Croydon and on 15th April 2010 the Management Committee registered Hear Us with the Charity Commission for charity status (No. 1135535) to give Hear Us a more independent and stronger voice in the community.

Management

The constitution in the original form was adopted by resolution at the AGM held on the 27th May 2004. Amendments to the constitution were adopted by resolution at the EGM held on 1st July 2008.

The Management Committee are the Board of Trustees. They include a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and the Chief Executive Officer, Tim Oldham. The Committee has the power to co-opt members, as and when they deem it necessary. The Board of Trustees are responsible for the day to day running of Hear Us and have a responsibility to report to the funders, charity commission and other stakeholders whenever the need arises.

Reserves Policy

Hear Us endeavours to maintain reserves equivalent to a minimum of 6 months costs at all times. For the financial year 2023/24 this will be approximately £140,000. This is held in bank accounts with easy withdrawal facilities.

All Hear Us financial statements can be accessed on our website:
www.hear-us.org/annual-report

Statement of compliance

Financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Charities Act 2011.

Objectives and activities

To relieve the needs of people living in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas who have mental health problems by provision of services and advice.

To advance education about mental health for public benefit in the London Borough of Croydon and surrounding areas with the object of creating awareness and reducing the stigma attached to mental health.

HEAR US ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

CHARITY NUMBER 1135535

COMPANY NUMBER 06891337

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FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR



MINDFUL
EMPLOYER



CHAIR OF HEAR US STATEMENT



Abeline Greene
Chair

As we look back on a year of compassion in action, I am humbled and inspired by the incredible impact our charity has made in the lives of those we serve, thanks to the unwavering support of our donors, funders, volunteers, and dedicated staff. In a world faced with unprecedented challenges, your generosity and commitment have been the driving force behind our mission to create positive change, promote, educate, communicate and empower, for the benefit and interest of people affected by mental health issues.

This past year has been a testament to the power of collective kindness and the resilience of the human spirit. Despite the obstacles we encountered, our organisation not only persevered but thrived, we have been able to expand the workforce of existing projects and start a new Campaigning project, allowing Hear Us to become a more effective, inclusive and sustainable campaigning organisation. Our projects have reached more individuals and communities, continuing to provide practical support and regular activities which help service users to cope better with daily living and help to address their social, emotional and physical needs, which are needed more than ever before.

This year we embarked on a 2-year project to focus on developing our fundraising and income stream generation, trustee recruitment and stronger governance, building on our strengths and addressing the things we do less well but want to do better. Strengthening our board and workforce is enabling us to more effectively represent the mental health community within Croydon and to work in partnership with statutory and voluntary sector organisations to influence the debate and improve the life chances of our beneficiaries and service users.

Thank you to Southwest London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB), Lloyds Bank Foundation, City Bridge, Trust for London and the National Lottery for continuing to fund us to deliver much needed services.

It has been an honour and pleasure to support Hear Us and the Board of Trustee board for another year as Chair and on behalf of the Board of Trustees, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to members, donors, funders, volunteers and staff whose generosity, commitment and hard work have enabled Hear Us to continue to make sure that the voice of service users is heard loud and proud in Croydon. Your compassion is the cornerstone of our work, and together, we will continue to build a brighter, more equitable future for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals in our community.

Abeline Greene, Chair of the Board of Trustees

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT



Tim Oldham
CEO

I am incredibly proud of our staff team and volunteers and honoured to work alongside them.

Hear Us is a Croydon charity that is the only project for people with mental ill health that is run by people with lived experience. This gives us a unique insight into the barriers our service users face. We provide specialist peer support for people with complex mental health issues living or working in the London Borough of Croydon. Our practical, regular activities help people cope better with daily living and relieve their

social, emotional and physical needs.

Hear Us has been built by a highly passionate team dedicated to helping people with mental illness access financial, health, and social inclusion support in Croydon. We actively challenge restrictive and coercive healthcare practices and negative perceptions associated with mental illness. This helps to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Our small charity supports people in regaining their confidence and wellbeing so that they can stand on their own feet. Our goal is not to make people dependent upon a service but to make them strong and well. We believe that each person who comes to the project has the potential to recover from their mental health relapse or crisis. Our approach supports them to do this.

Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP):

David is the manager of our WRAP, leading a team that includes Shellie and Barbra. They have developed the Welfare Rights Advice Project and delivered the service to support people and inform them how to apply for and maintain their own welfare and disability benefits. This includes understanding what the claim form questions mean and how to answer those questions based on their own ill health, daily needs and struggles.

A significant part of the project involves regular support and reassurance, particularly for those who struggle with anxiety and depression. The majority of claims we support are Personal Independence Payments (PIP). In the coming months, we expect an increased need for support because of the migration to Universal Credit for people on ESA and Housing Benefit. Our Welfare Rights Advice Project aims to coach a person on making and maintaining their benefit claims.

HEAR US CROYDON

We provide support to people with access to immediate support through access to food banks and discretionary payments. We have continued to support people with mobility problems in successfully applying for mobility schemes such as Freedom Passes and Blue Badges.

We would like to thank the National Lottery Community Fund and the City Bridge Foundation for funding the WRAP service. Their funding has enabled us to continue delivering this much-needed project.

Linkworking Project:

We have been running the Linkworking Project since 2007 to engage and support people with mental ill health in Croydon's inpatient wards at the Royal Bethlem Hospital (RBH) and Croydon's mental health community services, Jeanette Wallace House (JWH) and Queens Resource Centre (QRC).

In January, we appointed Betty as the new manager of the Linkworking Project. She has taken over from Barbra, who moved to join our WRAP project to strengthen the team. We appointed Abby as a senior support worker to support our Linkworkers on site.

We enable people in crisis to have their voices heard and express their concerns about the treatment and care they receive. We enable greater access to available services on the wards and improve services to ensure a better chance of recovery from severe mental illness.

Our goal is to support people to develop confidence and self-belief, feel empowered through positive discussion, and reduce stigma and discrimination of mental ill health.

Open Forum:

Amy, our Open Forum Coordinator, invites new guest speakers to our Open Forum, which brings together the mental health community, particularly people who are currently in receipt of SLAM services, to discuss Croydon's mental health and wellbeing services and their accessibility, quality, and development.

They can meet, network, and discover new opportunities that aid positive mental health and well-being, help to prevent dependency on clinical services and support people in regaining self-esteem, confidence, and empowerment. For many, expressing their voice in the forum empowers and aids in raising self-esteem and confidence.

Over the coming year, we will redevelop the Open Forum to enable more people to access this project.

Campaigns Project: A Voice for Change

In January, we were pleased to announce that we have won funding from Trust for London for three years to run a Campaigning Project, and we appointed May as the Campaigns Coordinator. She is building a movement run and led by people with lived experience of mental ill health representing all communities initially in Croydon. This movement will educate, inform and influence change to improve the lives of some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable in our communities through awareness-raising and campaigning for change in our public services and in the broader community.

Reachout Challenge:

Barbra had been the figurehead of the Reachout Challenge for many years, and has stepped aside to focus on WRAP. May has become the Reachout lead and has taken over this project to help raise awareness of mental ill health and share lived experiences of crisis and relapse with police from the UK and worldwide at Leatherhead Police College on the Negotiation and Crisis Course. Our volunteers gain confidence and improved self-esteem from sharing their experiences. We have also won some new funding, which we will announce in more detail shortly. Please visit our website for updates about this funding and all our projects.

April 2025:

Hear Us will celebrate 15 years of charity status. We believe that people receiving care and treatment for mental health services can help improve services based on their experiences and needs. This conviction can be traced back to 1992 when a small group came together to build a project that would enable them to have their voices heard and included in the design and development of Croydon's Mental Health Services.

Historically, Hear Us has been a voice for people with severe and enduring mental illness who receive care and treatment from secondary mental health services. In recent years, we have been helping people struggling with mental ill health who have been surviving outside of services, including those who have no access to GP surgeries.

We report all our project outcomes to all funders and share our findings with the South West London Integrated Care Board (SWL ICB) and senior stakeholders across Croydon. We have continued to contribute and represent the voice of Croydon's mental health community in the development, planning and commissioning of mental health services.

Tim Oldham, Chief Executive, Email: tim@hear-us.org

DEPUTY CEO'S STATEMENT



Claire Hawkes
Deputy CEO

In my role as Deputy CEO I have the privilege of working across all of the projects that Hear Us deliver, and working with all the teams. I am always struck by the passion and dedication the staff team have, that enables Hear Us to function and provide quality services to our community.

We have been able to recruit three new members of staff this year and are so excited to welcome Abby, Betty and May to Hear Us. They have brought their enthusiasm, ideas and new ways of thinking to Hear Us, and have already made valuable contributions to the projects they work on.

As a result of the Together for London grant we received from London Community Foundation, we were able to support members of our community by helping to improve financial security, by addressing and resolving immediate financial distress by providing supermarket vouchers and organising supermarket deliveries for those unable to leave their homes. We were able to give out 127 individual grants to clients (including families) for food, fuel and other essential items resulting from the cost of living pressures. The additional resources also enabled us to reach out to our whole community, reaching marginalised groups by promoting our services proactively and more widely. With increased resources, Hear Us were able to attend a number of events over the summer, to reach out to our community including Croydon Pride and Croydon Mela.

Having refreshed our Volunteering Handbook and some of the associated policies, we are looking forward to recruiting some new volunteers this year. We aim to provide a supportive environment for volunteers to grow, develop and contribute in a meaningful way. I started as a volunteer in Hear Us, as did many of our staff, so we truly understand the difference it can make and positive impact this can have. Volunteers are invaluable to us and I would like to thank our existing team of very dedicated volunteers!



Claire Hawkes, Deputy CEO, Email: claire@hear-us.org

WELFARE ADVICE RIGHTS PROJECT



David Ashton
Welfare Manager

This past year, Hear Us's Welfare Rights advice Project has faced contrasting challenges that we have done our best to meet. On one hand, we have had the familiar issues that we have worked hard to support our clients with: people being denied PIP whether as part of a new claim or at review and needing support to follow through the long and difficult process of challenging decisions through to tribunal. Those who are unable to work facing work related obligations when claiming

Universal Credit or people just generally having difficulty navigating a complicated benefits system.

On the other hand, we have had proposed changes to the work capability assessment used in both Universal Credit and Employment Support Allowance. These changes are a cause of considerable concern creating a stricter, harsher work capability assessment that would see many who are too unwell to work, especially those with mental health difficulties, face work related obligations.

Hear Us engaged with a consultation process voicing our concerns about the proposed changes as risky, discriminatory and harmful and especially their impact upon those with mental health conditions. Following the consultation process, some proposed changes were abandoned because of the concerns voiced by Hear Us and many other organisations and individuals but unfortunately, other changes are planned to be implemented in the future. Many consider the procedure taken by the DWP during the consultation process; not giving people enough time to respond and not providing enough information about the changes or the reasons behind them, as unfair and possibly unlawful.

These challenges both new and the more familiar, have shown the need and the value of our Project; our unique understanding of the challenges faced by those with mental health difficulties as a service user run organisation and the hard work of a dedicated and conscientious team. Though we are a small team we have made a huge difference obtaining close to 2 million pounds in benefit arrears and ongoing payments that help our clients to stay in their homes, keep their lights on, put food on their tables and help them not just survive but thrive.

There is no doubt in my mind that the need for our project will continue and likely grow long into the future but I also have no doubt that we will continue to make a huge difference to those living with mental health

difficulties

A Big thank you to my wonderful staff, Shellie and Barbra and to our Senior Management team, Claire, Eleanor and Tim, without all of you this project would not be the success that it is.

Thank you, also to our funders The National Lottery and The City Bridge Foundation who enable us to undertake this valuable work.

David Ashton, Welfare Rights Advice Project Manager



Hi my name is Shellie I have been working for hear us for 11 years and I enjoy my job. Hear Us has been running for a number of years now. We are a small charity who have a big heart towards people suffering from mental health illness in Croydon, who are looking for support and help to navigate the welfare system. This year has been even harder due to all the changes from the DWP, people who suffer from mental health are more isolated, and we support those vulnerable people from the start right to the end. Our aim is to not

only support services users but also encourage and empower them to become more financially independent by giving them the knowledge and understanding to feel more confident about managing their benefits claims and then we can become a more resilient community.

Shellie Wilfred, Senior Welfare Rights Advisor

A DAY IN THE DIARY OF A WELFARE RIGHTS ADVISOR

I arrive at work and turn on my devices; while they are waking up, I make myself a cuppa before trawling through my many emails and forthcoming appointments. It is safe to say no two days are the same and I greet each one with gusto and determination.

I joined the Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP) team back in July 2021, but due to my other commitments within Hear Us, initially, it was only for one day a week. Due to the ever-growing demand for the need to support people securing what they are entitle to, in Oct 2023, I moved from Linkwork Management to Welfare Rights Advisor, now covering four days a week.

During the last financial year, I have seen more than 120 people spread over 300+ appointments. Their needs vary from Personal Independence Payment (PIP) related issues through to securing Mobility Cars under the DWP 'run' Mobility Scheme. I have spread my wings into other areas of benefits. Since attending several training sessions around Tribunals, I now feel more confident to take a person

from first application of PIP through to Tribunal, when required. I still need support to manage my own benefits journeys as they scare me as much as they do others.

With the amazing support from both Shellie and David, I have now ventured into the realms of Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Universal Credit (UC) matters and other areas of benefits but I still need to check-in with one or both of them to make sure I am getting 'it' right.

At Hear Us, we are encouraged in not only 'growing' in our roles but also 'growing' as individuals. During a particularly hard time recently, I felt the outpouring of love, care and support from everyone at Hear Us towards my recovery and got on with the tasks to hand - gaining what people are rightfully entitled to within the realms of benefits.

Navigating through the world of benefits, bureaucracy and red tape is a minefield for anyone to manage but when you have the dream team that is the WRAP Pack, we help towards making these processes more manageable.

THAT'S WHAT A DAY IN THE DIARY OF A WELFARE RIGHTS ADVISOR LOOKS LIKE

Barbra Davison, Welfare Rights Advisor

Come join our little happy family at Hear Us. We have started to take on volunteers to join our WRAP - Welfare Rights Advice Project

We are looking for people who are kind and interested in learning to assist with benefit forms and other benefit issues and who can communicate with people from a wide range of backgrounds including mental health service users and experience of working within an office environment and basic computer skills would be valuable.

We will train you on the benefits system and support you to undertake a rewarding volunteering role where you will make a huge difference in people's lives.

Referrals to the Welfare Rights Advice Project can be made via our website www.hear-us.org/referral or by phone

Telephone: 020 8681 6888 Website: www.hear-us.org/welfare-rights

Email: welfarerights@hear-us.org



Barbra Davison
Welfare Advisor

LINKWORKING PROJECT

Before I say little about me, I want to talk about the project itself. The Linkworking project has been going for nearly 20 years (running since 2007). It is unmatched [literally and figuratively] since there is no other project like it in Croydon. It is run by people who have the lived experience of those they are offering support to. To say the project is unique would be an understatement. So first, I would like to say thank you to my predecessors (Barbra and Claire) who have made it what it is today; Tim Oldham who has championed for its funding and everyone and anyone who has poured blood, sweat and tears to keep it going.



Betty Nassiwa
Peer Support
Coordinator

When I initially received the job offer of Peer Support Coordinator (Linkwork project manager) I thought, ‘what have I got myself into?’ Fast forward a couple of months in the role and well...my initial assessment was right – sort of. What I got right was how rewarding and challenging managing the project would be. However, I underestimated the impact that saying to someone ‘I’ve been there’ can have. I underestimated the toll it can take to hold space for some emotionally difficult conversations. And finally, I underestimated the difference the project makes to many people’s lives who then later on are so moved, they also want to become Linkworkers. This is a transformative project and I am glad to be the newest edition to the team!

This year 11 Linkworkers have had conversations with 1546 service users who raised 2063 comments with SLaM. There were 348 Linkworking sessions across five acute wards and two resource centres. Linkworkers were able to signpost to 529 services, as well as allowing time and space for simply sharing and listening. Some service users have had little or no contact with family and friends and found comfort in talking to someone that is not clinical staff.

Many SLaM staff also appreciate the Linkworking Project and can see the value it brings to their service “They are invaluable for our ward! ♥”
“The team are lovely to work with!”

As well as providing a listening ear and signposting, Linkworkers also help to escalate issues that run across wards and services, affecting

countless service users. They do this by attending meetings with different SLaM management staff and helping to amplify the voice of service users. Linkworkers attend the monthly Croydon Service User Advisory Group along with other service users on the SLaM Involvement Register, and different SLaM staff. Linkworkers have representation at other forums and groups, including the Croydon Reducing Restrictive Practice Forum, where important issues are raised and solutions discussed.

Although not everything changes as quickly as we might like, positive things have been happening, such as a boiler finally being installed on one Bethlem ward, after many years of campaigning and advocating for this. Service users have been saying for years that they would like to be able to make their own drinks, and now they finally can!

Last summer we were sad to say goodbye to Jane Lyons, who retired from her role as Croydon and Lewisham Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Lead. Jane was a great support to the Linkworking Project, helping us get a seat at many vital SLaM meetings, and facilitating some of the quality improvement changes Linkworkers have championed.

At the end of last year, we welcomed Lucy Hamer to the role and have quickly built a great relationship, as she navigates the complex world of mental health services in Croydon and Lewisham. Linkworkers were asked by Croydon's Head of Nursing, to facilitate Lucy's induction and she came along to a couple of Linkworking sessions in her first week. This demonstrates the confidence that SLaM have in our Linkworkers and the importance of our project.

As we look forward to the year ahead, we are hoping to increase our Linkworking sessions across our existing wards and maybe even start on some new ones. We are planning on returning to Psych Liaison at Croydon University Hospital this summer, after many requests from the staff there. We weren't able to conduct our virtual sessions there, so we are pleased to be going back after a long four years.

Betty Nassiwa
Peer Support Coordinator
Linkworking Project
Email: linkworking@hear-us.org
Website www.hear-us.org/linkworking

HEAR US CROYDON

MENTAL HEALTH OPEN FORUM



The Hear Us Mental Health Open Forum is a place for service users to come together and discuss services that they access and other issues that affect them. The Forum is primarily aimed at service users, but we welcome carers, volunteers, staff and anyone with an interest in mental health to discuss the issues that affect us all. The Open Forum is a place where the mental health community can come together and voice their views and concerns.

We have recently launched a new regular segment on the Open Forum called Voice of Change led by Hear Us Campaigns Coordinator May. Voice of Change is a chance to get involved in the Hear Us campaign project and to hear the latest project updates. As well as the Voice of Change segment we have had guests come talk to us about campaigning such as Citizen's UK and Inclusion Barnet.

The Your Shout segment is a chance for members to share mental health news and events and other relevant information about mental health services. Our members like to share a wealth of information to help others members.

We have been running a Hybrid open forum, currently we are assessing how best to deliver the open forum by consulting our members. We want the Open Forum to be accessible to all.

The Open Forum aims to feature guest speakers to talk about services and topics relevant to mental health service users. Open forum

members have input on topics and mental health services they want to hear about. We strive to cover a range of topics, including some which have not been featured before.

This year we have heard from organisations and charities to give awareness talks on topics such on domestic abuse and brain injury. We have highlighted the work of different organisations such as a forum focusing on activities and the benefits keeping active can have on your mental health. We were also joined by Croydon Council



Amy Kirksmith
Open Forum
Coordinator

to talk about free Mental Health First Aid Training.

Part of the Open Forum aims to enable service users to improve and shape mental health services. We have had a number of SLaM services and departments come to talk to us such as Croydon's Borderline Personality Disorder Service. Some SLaM services SLaM lead discussions to get service user feedback and experiences on their services and projects. This has included SLaM's Mental Health Act Reduction Project and Slam's Patient and Public Involvement lead.

Amy Kirksmith, Open Forum Coordinator

Email: forum@hear-us.org

Webpage: www.hear-us.org/forum/

Help us redesign our image, mission, vision and values

During 2025 we will be seeking support from our members to help us redesign our image, mission, vision and values. It is important to us to have involvement from people that use our services.

We will be holding creative workshops during 2025 - please do get involved as your views are important to us.



HEAR US CROYDON

THE REACHOUT CHALLENGE



May Elroubi
Reachout Lead

The Reachout Challenge Project raises awareness about living with mental 'ill' health for staff in organisations and institutions who might interact with people in crisis or who need support. ROC volunteers challenge stigmas around mental health by sharing their personal accounts of being in crisis and providing a safe space for participants to share their own personal experiences with mental health. This year, we held quarterly sessions with members of police forces from the UK and all over the world at the Police Federation in Leatherhead on the

esteemed Hostage and Crisis Negotiation Course. After supervising countless sessions, one course leader has applied to become a Hear Us Trustee! We would like to thank our volunteers who extend their time, energy, and vulnerability to make this project possible, and we hope they will continue with us as we re-expand the project to other services in 2024-25.



Decrease Stigma

To fight stigma, prejudice and discrimination about mental illness: More than half of people with mental illness do not receive help for their mental health. Social stigma and discrimination can make mental health problems worse and stop a person from getting the help they need.



Raise Awareness

To raise awareness about Mental Health through education and sharing lived experiences. Raise awareness about the negative use of language and its effect on mental health; judging, labelling or discriminating can have devastating effects on people with mental ill health. Treating people with respect and dignity supports people in their recovery, positively affecting their own self-worth, self-esteem and confidence.



To Encourage

To encourage the staff in the organisations we work with

to have a more 'open policy' towards mental health that enables them to be able to talk about their own mental wellbeing without shame, embarrassment or stigma. People avoid seeking treatment due to concerns about being stigmatised, fears of losing their jobs and fear of being shunned by friends, colleagues and family.

Anyone interested in learning more about getting involved, or would like us to deliver a training session to your organisation, please contact me.

May Elroubi, Project Lead

Mobile: 07743931871

Email: reachout.challenge@hear-us.org

Webpage: <https://www.hear-us.org/reachout/donate-support-reachout-challenge/>



THANK YOU

HEAR US CROYDON



May Elroubi
Campaigns
Coordinator

CAMPAIGNING PROJECT

The Campaigns project was awarded funding from Trust for London's Disability Justice Fund in November 2023.

The proposal for this project was the result of several working groups involving Hear Us Staff, trustees, and volunteers. Trust for London provided support and guidance to construct a learning framework for the project duration of three years. The aims that came out of this co-produced theory of change are:

1. Build Hear Us capacity to transform our campaigning capacity to achieve strategic, systemic change in services
2. Co-produce campaigning activity with people with lived experience
3. Improve diversity of staff, volunteers and members
4. Work in partnership with other groups/organisations to produce campaigning activity
5. Use monitoring and evaluation to learn and improve

The first year will be focused on constructing a detailed project plan, identifying potential partnerships, connecting to other voluntary organisations, and understanding how we can support our members to lead campaigns. I was recruited by Hear Us as the Campaigns Coordinator in February 2023 as part of the Year 1 aims. In 2024-25, I will oversee the project planning and development and work with Hear Us staff, volunteers, trustees, members, and the Croydon Community to devise a campaigns strategy that meets our community's needs.

In Quarter 4 of the 2023 financial year, I attended a learning session with the funder to connect to representatives of other Deaf and Disabled Peoples Organisations. I made valuable connections there, as well as in the local working group meetings I attended. From these, I could gauge which issues were more frequently discussed within the voluntary sector, and what work was already being done around them. Along with Betty, the Linkwork Manager, we began analysing the Linkworking data for common issues. This process will continue into 2024-25, as we identify collate themes and patterns in service users'

comments that can be used as evidence for changes people want to see in statutory mental health services.

In 2024-25, the project aims to:

- Collaborate with Inclusion London on Free Our People Now campaign activities
- Expand the Voice of Change campaigns segment into a concept for a co-led campaigns forum
- Co-produce a communications strategy for campaigns
- Develop training for our Linkworkers and volunteers that incorporates campaigns capacity building
- Hear from our community about what they want our campaigns to look like, and how they want to be involved in making them, and how we can support them to feel confident doing so.

May Elroubi

Campaigns Coordinator

Mobile: 07743931871

Website: www.hear-us.org/campaigning-project

Email: campaignsproject@hear-us.org



HEAR US CROYDON

DEVELOPMENT & FUNDRAISING

Fundraising has been focused on attaining grants from grant funders for three main areas: 1) funding for the Welfare Rights Advice Project (WRAP) to meet increasing demands 2) obtaining funding for a new Campaigns Project and 3) Funding the development and fundraising activities in the medium term. The table below shows the grant funders who have enabled us to continue to support our service users during 2023-2024. We are very grateful to all our grant funders who make it possible for us to support people with mental health challenges in Croydon. This included funding for a 3rd advisor for the WRAP project from National Lottery until March 2024, funding for the Campaigns Project from Trust for London Disability Justice Fund until October 2026 and funding for the Development and Fundraising Manager from Lloyds Foundation until December 2026.

We received some regular and one-off donations from the public. We would like to encourage more donations and will be working to increase our visibility to expand our income which can be used to support growth of the charity and meet the needs of our members more effectively.

We have received free consultancy and training through our grant funders to improve the services we provide and develop our staff skills and expertise. Notable are support from Cranfield Trust via City Bridge Foundation to develop our Vision, Mission and Values and training and coaching opportunities through Lloyds Foundation.

Alongside the development support we have received via our funders, we will be reviewing the most effective ways to work to ensure our service users have the right support at the right time in the right way. More development work is planned during 2024-2025 to undertake an organisation health check, develop our vision, mission and values, obtain funding to develop a sustainability strategy and continue the employment of the 3rd WRAP advisor and obtain continuation funding from City Bridge for part funding of the WRAP project.

AQS accreditation continues to act as a catalyst to improve the way we work and the services we provide making them more effective for people who use our services. We were focused on maintaining our AQS accreditation through quarterly and annual reviews of our WRAP. This continues to be a significant overhead but we believe it is worth

it as it ensures that we continually learn lessons from monitoring and feedback from our service users and implement changes where appropriate to make our services more effective for those using them.

We have continued to develop our relationship with Inclusion London, London's pan-disability forum, to address issues around disability equality, equity and inclusion, and a campaign to inform and encourage voting at the recent general election. We will be working with Inclusion London to ensure that we are in practice a disability friendly organisation, accessible to all, rooted in the mental health community, providing a mechanism for all those with mental health challenges to have their say and change services for the better.

Our work in 2024-2025 will focus on maintaining our AQS accreditation, developing our vision for the future and partnership working and identifying and obtaining funding sources to support Hear Us in the next phase of our development.

Eleanor Yates, Development and Fundraising Manager



Funder	Service	Grant Period
South West London ICB	Core & Linkworking	Apr 2022-Mar 2027
City Bridge Connecting Capital	Welfare Rights Advice Project	April 2021-March 2024 extended to March 2026
National Lottery Reaching Communities	Welfare Rights Advice Project	Jan 2022-Mar 2025
Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales.	Development and Fundraising	Dec 2023-Dec 2026
The London Community Foundation	Welfare Rights Advice Project	Apr 2023-Mar 2024
Trust for London	Campaigns	Apr 2023-Mar 2026

Extracts of Hear Us Annual Accounts 23-24

Current assets	2024	2023
Debtors	£244	£244
Cash at bank and in hand	£281,079	£219,889
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	£1,796	£1,796
Net assets	£279,527	£218,337
Restricted funds	£63,519	£34,686
Unrestricted funds	£216,008	£183,651
Total Charity funds	£279,527	£218,337

HEAR US Croydon FUNDERS 2023/24

**The London
Community
Foundation**



**LLOYDS BANK
FOUNDATION**
England & Wales



**CITY BRIDGE
FOUNDATION**



**South West
London
Integrated
Care System**

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY MONITORING

These tables show the number of people that Hear Us have supported over period April 2023 to March 2024

The sections marked 'Linkwork Project & Open Forum' were not asked to provide us with data. We are currently looking at a number of options to gather this data

ETHNICITY	Total	%
African	157	3.7%
Any other Asian background	58	1.3%
Any other Black background	9	0.2%
Any other Black, African or Caribbean background	36	0.8%
Any Other Ethnic Group	23	0.5%
Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background	53	1.2%
Any other White background	102	2.4%
Arab	3	0.1%
Asian	3	0.1%
Asian British	35	0.8%
Bangladeshi	2	0.0%
Black British	318	7.4%
Caribbean	215	5.0%
Chinese	34	0.8%
White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	796	18.5%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	4	0.1%
Indian	46	1.1%
Irish	22	0.5%
Pakistani	32	0.7%
White & Asian	24	0.6%
White & Black African	10	0.2%
White & Black Caribbean	81	1.9%
Not Disclosed	360	8.4%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

Age Goup	Total	%
- 16	6	0.1%
16 - 20	36	0.8%
21 - 30	277	6.4%
31 - 40	447	10.4%
41 - 50	428	10.0%
51 - 60	552	12.8%
61 - 70	303	7.0%
71 - 80	35	0.8%
80+	25	0.6%
Not Disclosed	314	7.3%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

HEAR US CROYDON

Ward	Total	%
Addiscombe East	62	1.4%
Addiscombe West	132	3.1%
Bensham Manor	62	1.4%
Broad Green	104	2.4%
Coulsdon Town	90	2.1%
Croydon	83	1.9%
Crystal Palace & Upper Norwood	60	1.4%
Fairfield	112	2.6%
Homeless	1	0.0%
Kenley	43	1.0%
London	1	0.0%
Mitcham	13	0.3%
New Addington North	59	1.4%
New Addington South	71	1.7%
Norbury & Pollards Hill	54	1.3%
Norbury Park	22	0.5%
Old Coulsdon	62	1.4%
Park Hill & Whitgift	17	0.4%
Purley & Woodcote	91	2.1%
Purley Oaks & Riddlesdown	54	1.3%
Sanderstead	24	0.6%
Selhurst	69	1.6%
Selsdon & Addington Village	21	0.5%
Selsdon Vale & Forestdale	35	0.8%
Shirley North	82	1.9%
Shirley South	38	0.9%
South Croydon	88	2.0%
South Norwood	87	2.0%
Thornton Heath	125	2.9%
Waddon	141	3.3%
West Thornton	179	4.2%
Woodside	79	1.8%
Out of Area	100	2.3%
Not Disclosed	162	3.8%
Linkworking Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

GENDER	Total	%
Female	1315	30.6%
Male	964	22.4%
Non-binary	8	0.2%
Transgender	6	0.1%
Not Disclosed	130	3.0%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

Age Group	Total	%
- 16	6	0.1%
16 - 20	36	0.8%
21 - 30	277	6.4%
31 - 40	447	10.4%
41 - 50	428	10.0%
51 - 60	552	12.8%
61 - 70	303	7.0%
71 - 80	35	0.8%
80+	25	0.6%
Not Disclosed	314	7.3%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%

SEXUALITY	Total	%
Asexual	17	0.4%
Bisexual	54	1.3%
Gay	54	1.3%
Heterosexual	1686	39.2%
Lesbian	17	0.4%
Other	17	0.4%
Not Disclosed	578	13.4%
Linkwork Project	1546	36.0%
Open Forum	331	7.7%
Grand Total	4300	100%



BECOME A MEMBER OF HEAR US

We represent the views of people that use mental health services in Croydon to service providers and commissioners.

We contribute to the local mental health promotion agenda, and promote positive mental health within the local community.

We promote mutual respect and equality of rights and opportunities, regardless of disability, with particular reference to local mental health service users and service survivors.

We actively campaign with users on issues raised by users themselves and actively oppose discrimination against service users in Croydon for improvements in local mental health services.

We reach out to all service users to encourage and support participation in the Open Forum.

We offer service users a communication platform for the constructive exchange of ideas on issues affecting them.

We provide a wide range of information about local and national services and up and coming issues that concern users of mental health services in Croydon. Support Hear Us and get involved in the work Hear Us does in all sorts of ways. There's no pressure to do anything, but if you are keen to take action we'll support you every step of the way. Potential opportunities include:

Becoming a Peer Support Worker with the Linkworking Project and supporting other service users whilst helping to improve our mental health services.

Coming along to our monthly Open Forums to join our campaigns to have your voice heard.

Joining our Reachout Challenge Volunteers and help fight stigma and discrimination.

Helping to fundraise to support the work of Hear Us.

Supporting Hear Us is suitable for people with a mental illness, parents or carers and professionals living or working in the London Borough of Croydon. You'll receive regular invites to our events exactly how you wish to receive them, either through regular mail or email.... You choose.

HEAR US CROYDON

BECOME A MEMBER OF HEAR US

I am a resident in London Borough of Croydon

Have a recognisable interest in mental health service user issues in Croydon

Have had emotional, or psychological problems, or, some form of mental illness

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Email:

Age & DOB:

Gender:

Marital Status:

Sexuality:

Ethnicity:

Religion:

Disability:

Please tick how you wish to receive correspondence

Post

Email

Phone

Mobile

Text

Hear Us will not use the information you provide for anything other than distribution of invitations to meetings.

I would like to become a member of Hear Us, and to receive information about local mental health services Please read the form thoroughly and check that the information you have provided is correct before signing.

Signature:



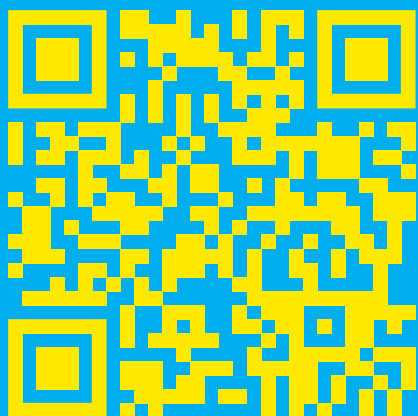
SUPPORT THE
GOOD WORK HEAR US
DOES BY DONATING AS
LITTLE AS

£5 OR MORE!
A MONTH
AND HELP US PROVIDE
ACCESS TO FINANCIAL,
HEALTH AND SOCIAL
INCLUSION SUPPORT



HEAR US
CROYDON

www.hear-us.org/donate



**SCAN QR CODE
TO DONATE &
SUPPORT**

Our Mission: to promote, educate, communicate and empower, for the benefit and interest of people affected by mental health issues



**Hear Us
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15a Purley Road
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CR2 6EZ**



020 8681 6888



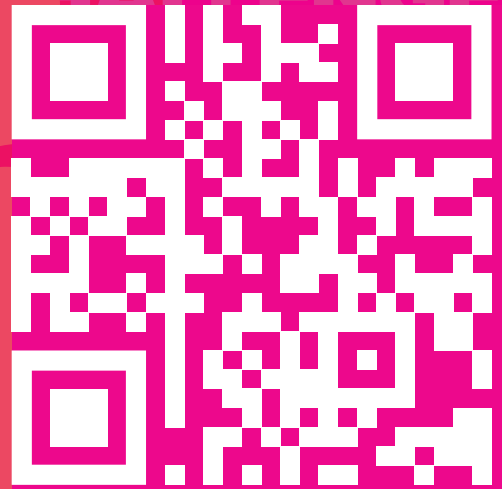
info@hear-us.org



www.hear-us.org



www.guide-hear-us.org



Hear Us supports adults with mental ill health to access financial, health and social inclusion support in Croydon. We challenge restrictive and coercive healthcare practices, and negative perceptions associated with mental illness, helping to reduce stigma and discrimination.