

# Shared Prosperity Fund Crawley



Crawley Borough Council has been awarded a three-year grant from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

The aim of the funding is to decrease the gap in healthy life expectancy and increase opportunities. The SPF will concentrate on three neighbourhoods identified as experiencing deprivation and inequalities (Broadfield , Bewbush and West Green).

Citizens Advice West Sussex and Crawley Community Action have partnered with Crawley Borough Council to engage and consult with these communities. The purpose of this activity is to identify and prioritise local needs.

The following slides will describe the methods used during the project, and the findings of the sessions hosted in West Green, Bewbush and Broadfield.

# Promotion and Methodology

## Promotion

## Stakeholder World Café

## Community Consultation

## Survey

Stakeholders in the three neighbourhoods were invited to in-person or online sessions.

Resident sessions were promoted across social media platforms, flyers were distributed on the parades of shops, and through targeted leafleting in the neighbourhood.

Residents were given the option to share their views online via a survey or attend the session.

We welcomed local stakeholders, organisations and community representatives to share their views through “world café” style sessions in person and online.

These sessions included approaches from planning cells and consultations such as encouraging representatives to share ideas and offer solutions to the issues they feel need focus in the area.

Facilitators led and recorded structured group discussions.

Sessions were held at community centres with existing services, community cafés or general drop-in sessions in the evening.

The sessions were an open-house style so residents could drop-in between a timeframe to reduce pressure of sharing their views. The sessions varied in format, as residents had an option of filling surveys, post-it notes to share thoughts and opportunities to share thoughts through informal conversations with facilitators.

A survey was distributed amongst the community online, through leafletting in the neighbourhood, and stakeholders shared it with relevant clients.

The survey consisted of sharing satisfaction levels, with reasons based on the key themes of discussion, which were satisfaction as a place to live, volunteering opportunities, education and training opportunities, health and wellbeing, employment services, and crime levels

We held **4 in-person** stakeholder sessions and **1 online session**.

**118** stakeholders were invited from across the 3 neighbours were invited .



**42** stakeholders attended the sessions to share their views.

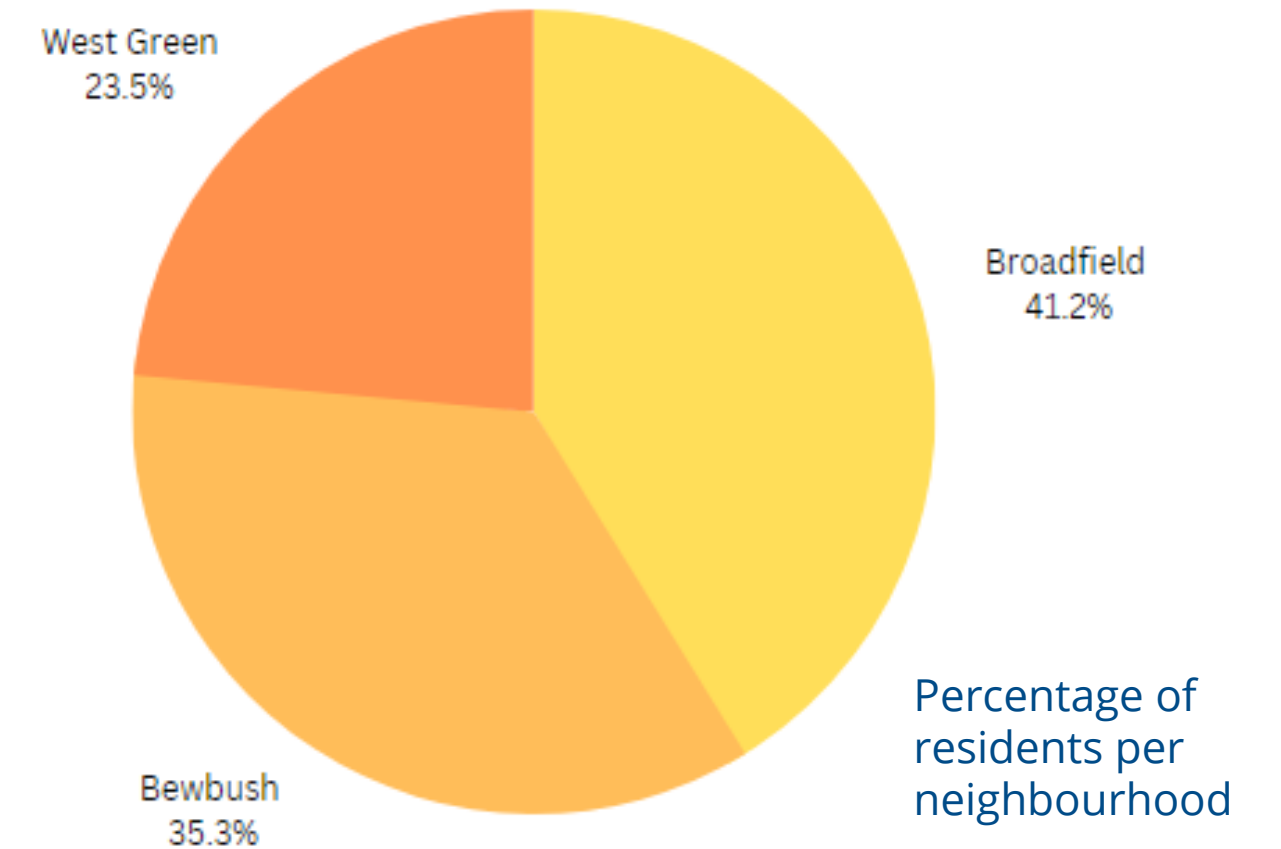
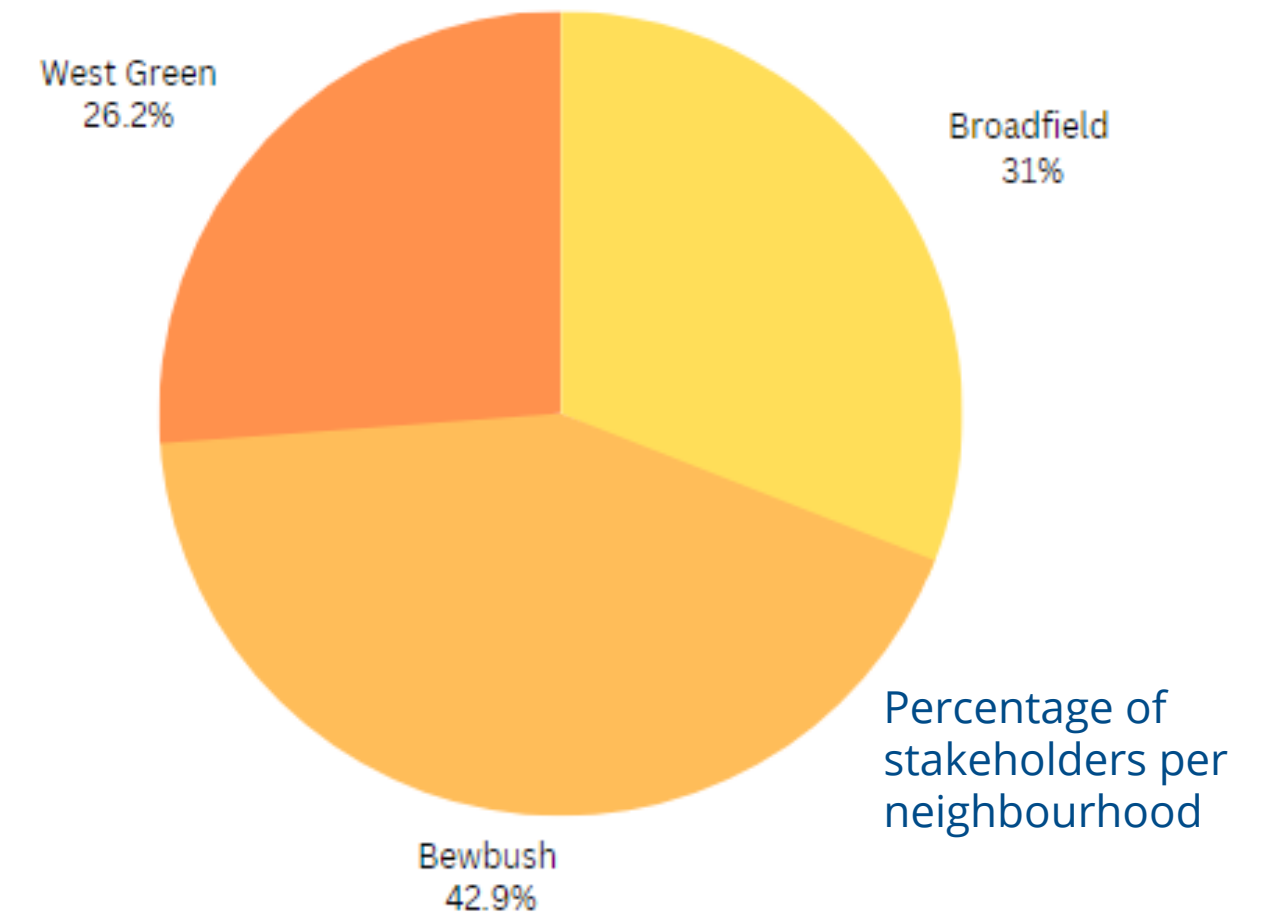


**44** online **surveys**.



**6 resident sessions** (3-day time and 3 evenings). The sessions held during the day attracted more residents than in the evening.

We had **17** attendees.



# Overview

Stakeholders and residents from the three neighbours shared their insights and comments through engagement sessions. Key themes that arose across the three areas were:

That **people who live and work in the areas are proud and enjoy living there**. Stakeholders shared that those they support who live, and work in Broadfield or Bewbush, feel there is a **stigma** and **reputation**. As a result, they believe that people who do not regularly visit the area associate it with negative connotations.

**Lack of knowledge of available services and activities was a barrier**. Stakeholders did not know about other services available in the area and that they did not always know how to refer individuals. It was also mentioned that individuals they work with found service navigation difficult, including how to access the support, if the service was free, and who to contact for more information.

Stakeholders feel there **is little for young people to do** and that something is needed to give them more **opportunities; build aspirations through activities and experiences** that help them **enhance** their **skills, and experiences**.

From stakeholders it was clear that **volunteering is at a low**, with organisations commenting on difficulties recruiting and maintaining quality volunteers and the impact this has on the services they can offer.

Concerns around **anti-social behaviour, theft** and **drug dealing** were raised in all three neighbourhoods.

# West Green Findings

## Satisfaction as a place to live :

Most residents are long-standing residents who have not moved out of the area. There is a **community feel**, but there is an increase in new houses with **little parking** and **green space for people to access**.

Service providers felt there is a **lack of knowledge on other services** in the West Green.

The community notice boards are not always kept up to date as well as they could be.

The Charis Centre is a hub of activity and offers a range of services, training and room hire to groups, as well as having a café that is well used as a meeting place.

**Residents** raised **concerns** over the **large amounts of litter** in the area, and how they are unable to report the litter.

Residents feel the shops on the parade do not look after the rubbish and it is becoming an issue. Concerns were also mentioned on recycling and issues on collection and sorting.

## Services and Volunteering:

Stakeholders in West Green are having trouble with recruitment and finding volunteer skills and commitment are **not as high as pre-covid**.

Organisations also stated that **DBS and safeguarding made recruitment harder** as individuals often do not want to go through these stages.

Smaller organisations **struggle to support volunteers and offer in-depth guidance and training**, as well as **meaningful experiences** when under-staffed. This makes it **difficult to maintain and sustain projects** beyond a certain time.

Residents said there was a good range of services and groups to attend for all ages, especially within the Charis centre, which is a good place to meet people or attend groups. **Advertising is not always the best** and some did not know about things going on.

The suggestion for more services was identified, such as fitness classes, groups for older people and a community centre. There could also be opportunities to get involved in planting of wildflowers to make the area look nicer.

## Education and Skills:

Education and training opportunities for younger people are available in the area via the YMCA and Charis Centre who outsource space for training events and conferences. Other courses are very "school like" with little freedom of subject area.

Stakeholders have found there is **not evening classes or holistic courses which are accessible for all.**

Residents think there should be **opportunities for young people** to be **trained in alternative subjects**, and to prepare them for work.

There was suggestions to provide a course for **older people** on **technology and understanding the modern world** with technology i.e., banking, tablet use and other new skills.

There was also suggestions around providing a **Cultural hub** to provide **training** and **skill development** through arts and heritage. The cultural hub would also provide a safe space for people to find out more about arts and culture and the employment pathways they could use.

## Health and Wellbeing:

Stakeholders emphasised the **barriers** faced by residents, due to the **GP services being closed in West Green.**

Although, there are good **transport links**, **prices are not affordable** and the distance some people have to walk to reach a bus stop may be difficult.

The **shift towards online services** for necessities such as accessing GP services can be a **major barrier for the older generation, those who speak English as a second language, or those who are digitally excluded.**

Furthermore, the **in person interaction** can have a **positive impact on mental health**, particularly after the effects of Covid.

It was emphasised that something **sustainable** needs to be put in place in order to **address the waiting period** for residents wanting an appointment for **mental health concerns.**

## Employment:

Worries around **low paid jobs** in Crawley, which **do not match the cost of rent and bills were emphasised**.

It was suggested that there is **fear** around the **security of employment** amongst residents, due to the **low wages**.

Consequently, this leads to people avoiding employment as their **universal credit** can be **worth more than their salary**, and there is a sense of **guarantee with benefits**.

The **lengthy process** and **requirements** for employment was raised, as it could **deter people from applying** to jobs.

Residents also stressed the importance of **improving employment support** services in West Green.

## Crime:

Service providers and residents are concerned about **Drug dealing**, it was highlighted as a crime that is prevalent in West Green.

Comments from stakeholders included "people are very open with it rather than attempting to hide the fact that they're doing it".

It was suggested that **street drinking**, which is common in the area, could lead to **anti social behaviour**. Furthermore, it can be intimidating to pedestrians walking by particularly those living in **Carey house**.

The idea of people committing **opportunistic crime**, such as shoplifting, was discussed by both residents and stakeholders.

The frequency of opportunist crime in comparison to other crimes suggests this could be a reason why residents explained that they **generally felt safe** living in West Green.





Sally is a resident of West Green and felt very positive about living in the area.

To illustrate, she commented:

"West Green is a nice place to live, and we've been here over 50 years. It's great for families"



"There are issues with the pavement being uneven in the area, particularly around the bus stops."



"The area looks tired and old and could do with a revamp to make it look nicer and more appealing."



"Parking is dangerous around the school area; this is making an unsafe environment for children."

# Bewbush Findings

## Satisfaction as a place to live :

The community centre has many great services to offer including the **Free Shop** and **Hairdressers**. Stakeholders said "individuals we support like the area" but felt that the **community feel** could be expanded and **showcased** to others through **events**.

There is a general **lack of awareness and knowledge of services** in Bewbush from stakeholders and their service users. Although many services are available, some require **out of area travel** which creates **barriers**.

Most residents are satisfied with Bewbush. They feel it is a **good, safe** place to live with lots of amenities. There were comments around the **litter around certain areas**, and how residents often pick this up. Residents also raised issues with groups and **anti-social behaviour**, including **littering, theft** and **drug dealing**.

It was suggested that there could be more **arts involved to revamp the area** and allow community engagement , i.e., litter picks could be made more inviting through an arts activity or project.

## Services and Volunteering:

Bewbush are **effective with volunteer recruitment** due to **flexible approaches** and **incentives** given to volunteers.

Organisations find offering **incentives** that mean something and can make their lives better i.e., a weekly bus ticket if volunteering 2/3 days so they can access other services and visit family members, or food packages. Some organisations found this difficult and weren't sure how to reward volunteers.

The eagerness **of people wanting to volunteer** has **dropped since COVID**. People sign up to volunteer but do not see it through, which creates challenges for local groups. The idea of **Young Volunteers** was mentioned, but many were nervous due to the complications or workload.

Residents are **satisfied** with the services at the community centre and in Bewbush, but there could be increased **outdoor activities** to get people active or into green space.

**Advertising** and knowing about services was a common barrier for residents – they were **unsure of what is on offer** and **how to access them**.

## Education and Skills:

People would like to **up-skill and train**, however, the courses are during the day when they are working; which is **a barrier**, as people choose to work to earn money.

More courses and support for those with English as an Additional Language is needed to support people navigating day to day life.

People choose not to attend sessions due to cost and confidence levels.

A lot of the **training is out of the area**, and **not well advertised**. It was explained that residents would not be aware of the available support unless they were at Employ Crawley or using a particular service.

There is a need for bespoke courses on non-typical subjects to encourage longer-term learning and to up-skill the community in a variety of ways.

Many residents gave positive feedback on the schools in Bewbush.

They explained that they are good and are happy that their children / grandchildren attend the schools.

## Health and Wellbeing:

**Issues around mental health services**, and there being a **lack of support** was raised by stakeholders.

As a result, this could lead to detrimental outcomes. For example, they explained it can be difficult to get a GP appointment and if residents do a self-referral, they may have to wait for 6 months.

The need for having **support between this period** was emphasised by stakeholders, as the individual may get worse over time.

**Financial barriers** may prevent people from accessing **Health and Wellbeing services**. For example, paying for memberships to continue fitness classes, as well as using public transport to access these services.

**Lack of information** around available support was emphasised.

## Employment:

Although the Bewbush centre was praised for creating jobs, **worries** around there being a **lack of employment opportunities** within Bewbush was highlighted by residents. Both stakeholders and residents emphasised there are more employment opportunities outside of Bewbush with easy transport links, however the **cost of transport** can **deter** people from applying to those roles.

Stakeholders shared that applications are lengthy and online interviews require different skills. It was suggested, people need training on how to effectively fill forms, as it was explained “applications are not easy, you need to learn how to do it as you either get it or you don’t.”

**Childcare barriers**, and the fact that people **cannot afford to work** even if they wanted to was emphasised. This is because **low paid jobs cannot support** with either childcare or paying rent and bills.

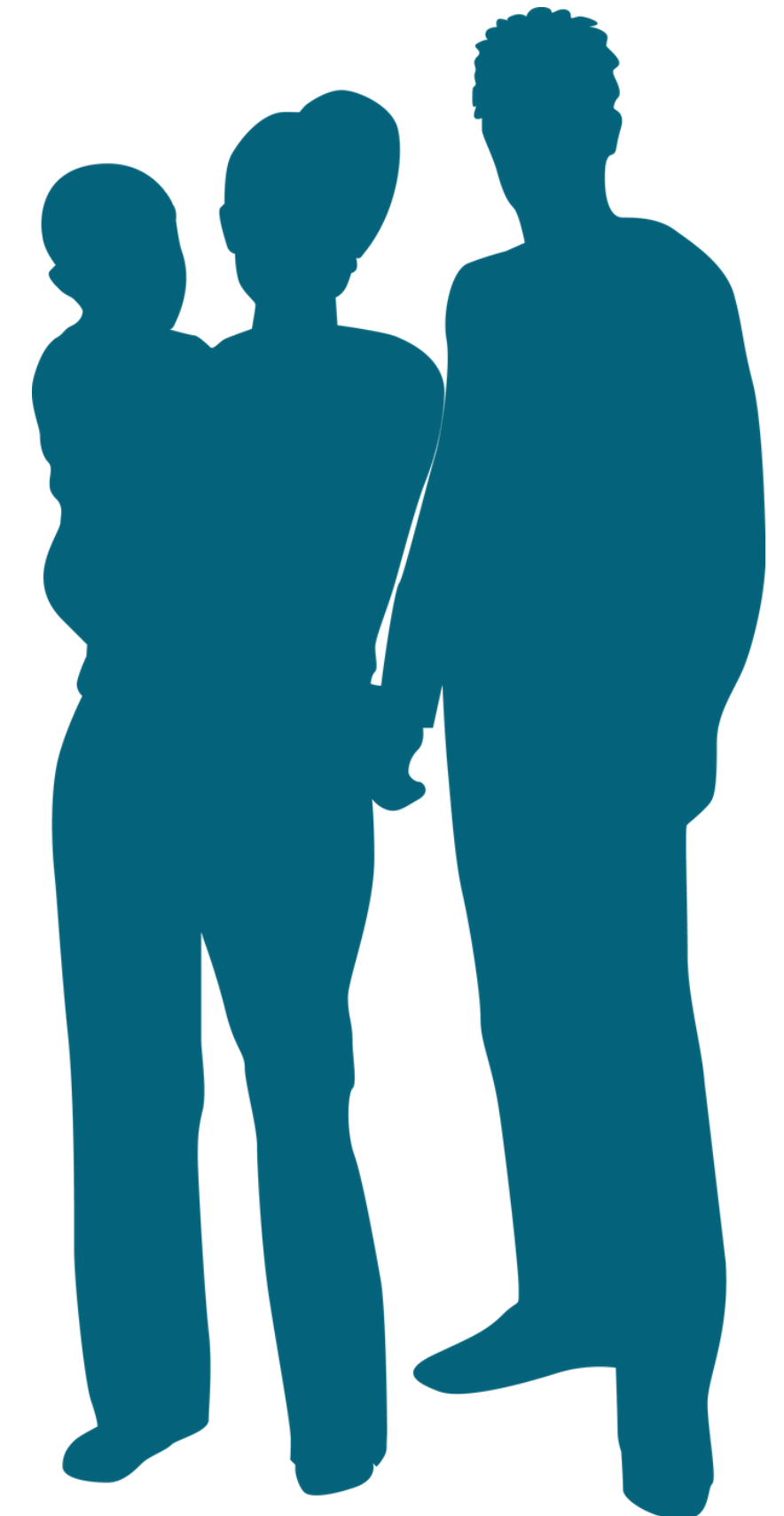
## Crime:

A key theme during our conversations with stakeholders was the **lack of reporting** for crimes, which can prevent the police from acting on prevalent crimes. This is because **evidence is required** from residents in order to action any tasks and offer **crime prevention**.

Similar to the other neighbourhoods, the prevalence of **opportunistic crime** was also raised in our Bewbush session.

There were **mixed emotions about** the **safety** levels in Bewbush. Some Residents and stakeholders stated they would not feel safe when walking around Bewbush at night

However, many people said they felt **generally safe** in the area, and Bewbush was **misrepresented** as a neighbourhood. People felt that **social media** played a significant role in portraying Bewbush as a place of crime.





Many residents and stakeholders have recognised the **increased police patrolling** in the neighbourhood, in which they are very **grateful** for. In turn this allows the police to **build rapport** with the community.

We also had a resident emphasise on the need to report crimes to the police, especially if they would like an outcome.

“The police have been very good about reporting drugs and crimes in neighbourhood - they are pleasant and deal with the issues - people don't report it and expect change but unless you notify the police, they can't do anything - I have had good experiences with the police and PCSOs in Bewbush.”

# Broadfield Findings

## Satisfaction as a place to live :

The overall view was that Broadfield is **positive** for stakeholders and residents, with there being good shops, bus services and amenities, creating a community feel.

Residents feel there is a **stigma** around the neighbourhood which leads to people having **misconceptions** of the area.

There were concerns of **lighting** around the **community centre** and **Barton car park, shops and underpasses**, creating dark spots which **attract unwanted drug dealing**.

**Fly tipping** and **litter** in general was mentioned by both stakeholders and residents, with litter being in parks , green spaces and over the Barton. Fly tipping has increased since having to book for the tip. There is flooding on paths, overgrown trees and plants restricting walk-ways which limits the use of the Green Walk.

Residents find it **confusing on who is responsible for what** (WSSC or CBC). Stakeholders mentioned confusion of services and how to refer, what services are on offer etc.

## Services and Volunteering:

Stakeholders mentioned the **difficulty to recruit trustees and committee members** as many stopped during COVID and have not returned. General recruitment is difficult, and stakeholders are finding it difficult to find people who are skilled and willing to commit; with a lot having **volunteers drop out**.

Volunteer **motivation is very low** and people are not often keen to learn and engage in new skills or training to volunteer. Need a more diverse volunteer work force.

A more **holistic approach** to coordinating services from organisations, council and health services would be useful. This allows people to become aware of available support.

There are a few community groups, but **advertising isn't good**, it was highlighted that word of mouth creates awareness. Events in the community centre and library creates an opportunity for people to meet others.

Residents feel there could be more **incentives** to bring those not involved in community groups together. This provides an opportunity to reach the ideas of others, especially younger people.

## Education and Skills:

**Support** could be put in place for parents and young people to **guide** them in continuing education, training or their future opportunities.

It was highlighted that there are not enough adult education opportunities, and that University costs are preventing individuals as there is no guarantee that they will be able to get a job in those fields.

This also creates a **lack of motivation** as many people are not aware of alternative routes into work or training. There is a need for more **Tech colleges, apprenticeships and non-academic opportunities** for those within the community.

The need for work experience for young people to see and trial what is out there is important.

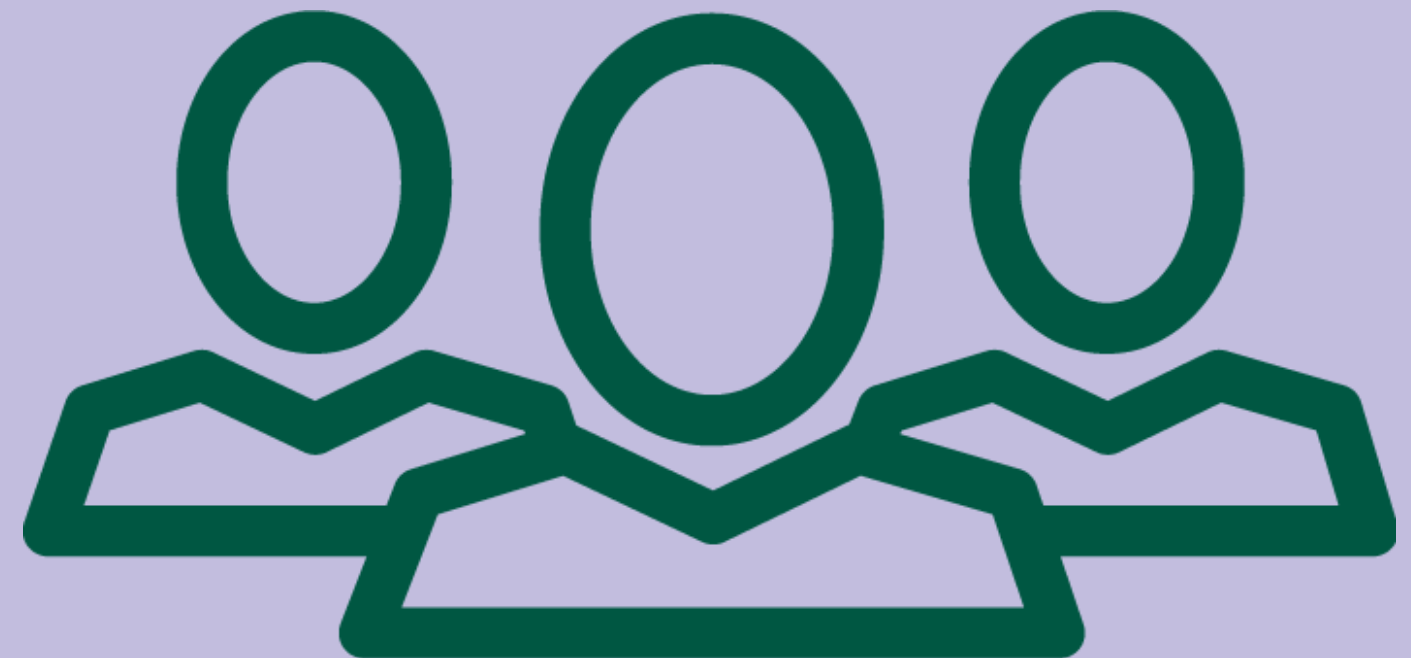
There are groups for young people to engage with, including taekwondo and Kicks which try to offer support, but a lot of young people are there just for the activity. Young People have asked for **knife defence training**.

## Health and Wellbeing:

Difficulties in **accessing GP services** was highlighted by both residents and stakeholders. This includes **limited appointments** and **increased use of online services**.

Similar to other neighbourhoods, the **gap in mental health services** was emphasised. It was suggested that a **preventative measure** needs to be put in place for those who are not in an emergency high risk point but need help. This is because waiting periods could lead to them becoming high risk.

The social element that **social prescribers** bring to the lives of local residents was **praised** by many of our stakeholders.



## Employment:

Residents and stakeholders felt there were opportunities in the area, however **childcare barriers, hours of work, and low paid employment** may prevent them.

This is because the **salary** they earn **cannot afford childcare** or their **bills**.

Although it was noted that there is a **lack of awareness on available employment support**, our stakeholders emphasised the brilliant advertisements of the career fairs days.

Furthermore, **training requirements** are required for particular jobs. This can also **deter** people from applying to unfamiliar roles.

## Crime:

It was highlighted that having **police officers assigned to specific neighbourhoods** makes a huge difference compared to when they are not assigned to each neighbourhood.

Stakeholders and residents emphasised the idea that **children** need an opportunity to feel empowered.

It's important for them to feel part of the community, and have **positive role models**, to allow them to feel inspired.

Similar to other neighbourhoods, the **prevalence of opportunistic crimes, drug dealing** and **street drinking** was highlighted.







"There is a great selection of schools but there could be more on personal safety and general skills for life.

There should also be more practical option in school for those to pursue areas that interest them and engage them in education"

A resident aged 18- 24, stated in our survey **"There's not much community age diversity especially for age 20's. There only seems to be things for older people and not young people"**, when talking about their satisfaction levels with community groups and events in the local area.

The **sense of community** came out strong in Broadfield, as many residents shared **positive feedback** about living in the area. A few residents also shared that there is a **misperception of Broadfield**, which upsets them as they have a sense of joy living in the area. Below are a few key quotes, based on this theme:

"The services, shops and community feel is good, I would not want to live anywhere else."

"Before I lived here it was on my "don't look at list" , but I am glad we moved here , we really like it , everyone looks out for each other on our road, and we feel safe in our area"

"I enjoy the diversity of the community! Everyone looks out for each other, and I feel very safe to walk around at night. The shops are good, and the owner of the post office shop is great for community development and providing jobs and training to young people."

"I'm sick of people running Broadfield down. I've lived in other places, and it's like living in paradise here compared to them.



# Youth

Provision and services for young people was highlighted in our sessions.

Many explained that there is a reduced number of activities or services for the younger generation in Broadfield.

It was suggested that once you give young people opportunities that interest them, they are more likely to take ownership.

Stakeholders emphasised the need to **utilise existing places** for young people to work together on projects or engage with services.

Therefore, it is important to engage with the opinions of this generation to create something sustainable.

Although there is a youth centre in Bewbush for the young people to attend, they may be **reliant on their parents** to drop them there. There are various **barriers**, which can **prevent parents** from taking their children to such sessions, for example, **lack of time, financial barriers, or transport issues**.

An example of teenagers coming together and working on a project was highlighted by one of the stakeholders in Broadfield. They shared that a group of teenagers had created a bike ramp in the local park.

However, this was a self-led project with no service engagement. To encourage similar activities, a space should be provided for young people to take ownership of.

This could **overcome lack of engagement**, as they are in control of the initiatives that are presented to them.

# Proposed Projects by Stakeholders

## West Green:

A Community Garden for people to meet, learn about food and healthy eating and have responsibility on planting and making the area nice.

St Peters Church could be used as a food hub, safe and warm space and a place where people can gain training to jobs. This could also be a space for drop-in sessions on employment etc.

Crawley Well-being Mobile Unit could visit the Charis Centre or other locations to promote health and well-being as there is not GP service.

Youth Advisory Group or Forum to have their say on the skills and training they would like YMCA to offer to make it about the Young People not what others think Young People want or need.

Cultural Hub to share art and culture and have a space to be involved in these activities to raise awareness and understanding of arts and future pathways.

## Bewbush:

Events and Community Gatherings to showcase Bewbush and what is on offer.

Upskilling service offering 1:1 appointments to help move people onto a positive future with skills and employment opportunities.

After-school club for children from local schools to come and have a safe space to do their home-work , be supported and play with other children.

Provide a wider range of employment support opportunities e.g. recruitment open days and CV workshops so people can understand job portals and how to apply to jobs, what are employers looking for when applying to jobs

Make services accessible for the younger people. – transport to pick them up and bring youth to these places.

## Broadfield:

Young People have asked for Knife Safety / Knife Defence training.

Kicks would like to expand their provision and add extra sessions as current session attracts 60+ people.

Create art projects that involve residents and revamp the area , i.e., pieces on roundabouts , its dark areas , use litter picking as an art activity that makes people take pride in their area.

# Stakeholder and residents suggestions:

## West Green:

- Increase the services that are available in the area and create networks amongst existing services and The Charis Centre.
- Courses in the area that are not "school" like, or education focused but holistic courses for all to enjoy.
- Increase health and wellbeing activities fitness classes , yoga , walks and a community garden to get people engaged with activities; could services lease to make a community feel and improve the "look" of the area.
- There should be 'hearing centre' – a place for people to go along to chat to somebody, every area should have a community centre specific for signposting.
- Provide a skills workshop and support in how to write CV etc but ensure it is accessible

## Bewbush:








- Community Group or Residents Group to maintain the area , collect litter and socialise afterwards.
- Adult Education opportunities and training courses that are in the evenings and focus on a range of topics that resident would like (engagement and consultation to find this out).
- Increase awareness and information sharing on Volunteering , organisations like Rivers or the FreeShop to share best practice with others and to promote volunteering in the community as a "next step" to moving into employment.
- Gym in Bewbush centre – having the gym free for young people.

## Broadfield:

- Activities that involve young people to showcase Broadfield and reduce stigma from outside i.e., creative projects.
- Liaise with community groups, volunteers and service providers to promote a reduction in littering and encourage community to look after the area.
- Volunteer recruitment fair in Broadfield
- Adult education opportunities and offer "future pathways" support for young people to encourage next steps after school.
- Involve Young People in the consultation and see their thoughts on what they would like in the area – if there is groups or services, they would like to be involved in etc
- Improve lighting, CCTV and general overground areas to make the area more appealing and safer for residents.

# Recommendations

**Below are recommendations based on key themes, which were prevalent in all three neighbourhoods:**

-  To overcome the lack of awareness of services, a consultation could be run to find out how people access information and investigate the barriers individuals face.
-  To Increase partnerships within the neighbourhood groups, local action groups for each neighbourhood could be created to help with information sharing.
-  To work towards Improvement of mental health services, we could initiate discussions amongst existing services to identify what already exists and the barriers or gaps in this area.
-  To bring services into the community, through connecting services with specific groups or individuals who need direct support i.e., health services into West Green due health inequalities.
-  To create youth voice and hold sessions for young people to understand what they would like.
-  To work with existing training providers and education settings to find out the available courses and to consult individuals in the neighbourhoods on the types of courses they'd like to see.
-  To create volunteer networks and workshops including training to support organisations and their recruitment of volunteers.

# Next Steps

There is a need for further discussions around key ideas and themes which have been presented in this report. This includes:

- Share findings with steering group, stakeholders and residents
- Create neighbourhood action groups to share information, encourage partnership working and oversee local UKSPF action plans with established groups from statutory, voluntary and community groups in each neighbourhood.
- Arrange consultation for young people to share their views
- Arrange networking session to find out about existing services and gain insight into how to best share information.
- Bring professionals together from Mental Health Services to identify existing support and identify services for those not enrolled in support pathways.
- Promote Crawley Volunteer Managers Forum and identify the support needed for volunteer recruitment.



Thank you to Stakeholders who gave up their time to take part in our World Café sessions in each neighbourhood, and those who helped promote our survey and resident sessions with their clients.

Thank you to each resident who gave their time and filled our survey and attended our sessions to share their views.



Parmila Mannan

Emily Thorpe