

What was the process?

Over seven weeks of workshops between 1 March - 19 April 2023, 18 people (from a pool of 60 Crawley local residents) worked with consultant Lisa Baxter from **The Experience Business** to create a People's Theory of Change.

This is the change people want to see in Crawley that Creative Playground can help make possible and underpins the vision and aims of the project.

Participants included people aged over 60, people engaged in grassroots community organisations (Friends of Goffs Park, Diverse Crawley, Broadfield Arts Festival, Autism Support Crawley), local councillors, council officers, students and tutors from Crawley College, young people from the Youth Council and Dance Hub, workers at neighbourhood community centres and other local residents.

The first two workshops explored what is happening in Crawley and the impact of this from a social, demographic, place, economic, arts and cultural and political perspective.

This revealed some clear opportunities and challenges for those who live and work in Crawley.

Out of this thinking the group decided what is motivating the need for change, what the future could look like and the values and dreams for Creative Playground.

In the final session everyone began to think of ideas for creative events and activities to make these values a reality. The process finished with a sharing back of what has been discovered and plans for the next steps to kick-starting the project.

Here, we share the key findings from the discussions, the values we feel most passionate about and the voices of the participants.

Motivations

- Committed but under-resourced community groups
- Under-appreciated diversity
- Uninspiring townscape
- Drain of young people
- Limited creative and cultural ecosystem
- Homogenous neighbourhoods
- Creative Playground



Values

- JOYFUL TOGETHERNESS
- BOUNDLESSNESS
- PRIDE OF PLACE
- INCLUSIVE
- OPPORTUNITY

How we live them

Seeing

- A vibrant town
- Diverse people
- Community connecting

Thinking

- Invigorated
- Proud
- Part of something
- Affirmed

Feeling

- Crawley is the place to be
- This is for me
- This is for everyone

Doing

- Connecting & sharing
- Socially bridging
- Making art
- The unexpected



What is motivating the need for change?

- » A thriving ecosystem of committed community groups keen to step up and hindered by limited capacity and resources.
- » A town rich in under-appreciated diversity.
- » An uninspiring townscape that is colourless and lacking in character.
- » A drain of young people who seek opportunity and a better life elsewhere.
- » A limited creative and cultural ecosystem, leanly supported by the local authority, with no strategic underpinnings.
- » A strong desire to instil a shared sense of pride in the town across all its inhabitants.
- » A town of perceptually bounded and seemingly homogenous neighbourhoods, the distinctiveness of each lost on the others.
- » Creative Playground and the creative opportunity this brings to the town.
- » The creation of shared values that are ambitious and inspire action.



What are our values? What is our desired future?

Joyful Togetherness

- >> We create bonds through play and enjoyment, where people can experience fun and feel uplifted.
- >> We will bring people together through inspiring creative activities and inspire a sense of belonging.

“Enable people to connect through a shared experience, thus reinforcing sense of similarity, rather than difference. Building positive memories.

Life can be tough, drudging in deprivation, art can uplift the soul.

Boundlessness

- >> We dare to hope and dream; for ourselves and for others.
- >> We are dedicated and ambitious, welcoming ideas that aim high and are committed to achieving them. Nothing less will do.
- >> We are boundless in our thinking, energy and commitment.
- >> We think outside the box.
- >> We are radical, risk-taking and non-conformist.
- >> We believe in free expression and proactively explore the new and different.

“Crawley is known as a place where the creative arts are visible across the town, and where there is encouragement and opportunity to take part and express their unique artistic gift.

All and every aspect and type of art, fun and beauty can be encapsulated in the Creative Playground project.

Never constrict any endeavour within a box. I like to think we explore every avenue and aspect of a project.

Unlimited access to create and enjoy a wide variety of artistic expression for everyone.

Really listen to what people want and respond in a way that is beyond their wildest imagination.

Raise young people's aspirations.



Pride of Place

- » Crawley is a vibrant place to live, grow and learn.
- » We are proud of Crawley, the place we call home.
- » We want everyone to share our pride through celebrating our town, our hidden stories and the diversity of the people who live here.
- » We want everyone to feel uplifted and excited about Crawley through their engagement with Creative Playground.
- » We want to put the town on the map, and a map on the town.
- » We want to inspire young people to stay.

“ *Make Crawley a destination for exciting things - you don't have to go to Brighton or London to get it.*

People can feel inspired just by walking around.

Crawley is my adopted home and Crawley adopted me.

It can only happen in Crawley because of the unique melting pot.

Reflect the diversity that makes Crawley what it is.

Opportunity

- » We want the people of Crawley to enjoy the opportunity to learn new skills, discover talents they never knew they had, develop.
- » We want these opportunities to be sustainable and long-term.
- » We want to dismantle all barriers to accessing this opportunity.

“ *Learn and discover new things, enriching yourself and those around you.*

I want Creative Playground to create opportunities for artists in Crawley.

Inviting inspiring people into Crawley.

Keep the youth from moving.

Inclusive

- » We are open to everyone regardless of age, culture, gender, faith, background or ability.
- » There are no barriers.
- » Being open means creating safe and welcoming spaces that make everyone feel invited, valued, respected and accepted.

“ *Everyone should matter in Crawley.*

Art can be enjoyed across diverse backgrounds.

No matter which neighbourhood you live in there is something for you to get involved in.

Anyone and everyone has access.

I feel alive and excited when I am with people who are different from me. It feeds my curiosity and I love learning from them and getting to know them.



What happens if we live these values?

What will people be doing?

Exploring and transcending boundaries becomes more commonplace and we become more radical if there is greater accessibility and acceptance.

Connecting and Sharing

People will come together in new ways.

People will be sharing their skills with one another.

Young people will be engaged in the life of the community.

Being kind.

People will be connecting in spaces through food, music and play.

People will become Playmakers.

Learning and discovering new things, enriching myself and those around me.

Make new friends (stopping isolation).

Socially Bridging

Talking and engaging with different people I might not have engaged with otherwise.

Connecting with and learning from other neighbourhoods.

Every neighbourhood working together.

Young people engaging with older people and vice versa.

Making Art

Every day people are making art and engaging in creative acts.

Engaging in everyday creativity.

Long term engagement rather than one-offs.

The Unexpected

People will be experimenting and trying new things.

Taking part in inspirational environments to encourage dreaming.

Spontaneous things.

I can escape daily life and not conform.

What will people be seeing?

The world/environment around people because their canvas, as inspiration, comes from and manifests through everything.

A vibrant town

Art that is unique and new.

Art everywhere.

Spontaneous activity.

People enjoying themselves and having fun.

People seeing joyful events in their neighbourhood.

Celebrations in neighbourhoods and green spaces.

Everything is interesting, even a walk to the shops.

Growth, not decay.

Diverse people

Accessible and diverse creative opportunities.

People see themselves represented.

Bespoke activity for those with different needs.

A diverse range of people engaging with Creative Playground.

The unconfident.

Language that people can relate to.

Not the usual community spaces.

Community connecting

Different people coming together in new ways.

Crawley as 'one'.

People connect through a shared experience, thus reinforcing a sense of similarity, rather than difference.



What will people be thinking?

People will start to think and feel that art and artistic expression are natural and therefore more accessible to all.

Crawley is the place to be

Crawley is a happening place.

Crawley is a vibrant place to live, grow and learn.

Crawley's reputation has changed for the better.

I am proud to live in Crawley.

Living here can broaden my horizons.

There's more to Crawley than meets the eye.

Crawley benefits from its diversity.

There are opportunities here you can't get anywhere else.

Crawley is known as a place where the creative arts are visible across the town, and where there is encouragement and opportunity to take part and express their unique artistic gift.

This is for me

I want to have a go.

I can be a part of this.

I want to be a part of this.

My ideas and ways of expressing myself are accepted.

I can fulfil my creative potential.

I am growing.

I want to be part of something bigger.

I had no idea my life could be so much fun.

I want to spend more of my precious time being creative.

A creative life is a happier, more healthy life.

Life can be tough, drudging in deprivation, art can uplift the soul.

This is for everyone

Crawley is an inclusive place.

I understand more about people who are different from me.

It's ok to be different.

I don't have to be an expert. This speaks to me on a human level.

I am confident to be myself without judgement.

There are opportunities here you can't get anywhere else.

All things are possible in this town.

I don't have to conform.



What will people be feeling?

An increased feeling of artistic freedom which may positively extend/influence other aspects of life.

Proud

Feel proud of our home town.

Happy to be living/being in Crawley.

Wow, this is all on my doorstep.

Proud of other people's achievements.

Invigorated

Enthused.

Encouraged.

People can feel inspired just by walking around.

Excited.

Free.

Energised.

I feel like an explorer.

Happiness and joy.

Imaginations are fired and inspired.

Affirmed

I matter.

I am important.

Accepted.

Welcome.

My ideas are listened to.

Confident.

Valued.

Purposeful.

Accomplishment.

My views count.

Part of something

Part of a bigger sense of community.

By us, not for us.

Crawley is my adopted home and Crawley adopted me.

Get involved

Drop us a line: hello@creativeplaygroundcrawley.com

Call us: 07951122157



CREATIVE
AND PEOPLE
PLACES



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**