



"Reworlding Hubs, Liberatory Harm Reduction, Saving Our Lives"

Think Local Act Personal





ABOUT COFFEE AFRIK CIC

Based in East London, Coffee Afrik CIC is leading 29 projects for marginalised Black and Global Majority communities across seven Hubs.

Projects include a problematic drug use safe space, a research lab, a youth hub, two women's cooperatives, and a systemic litigation space.



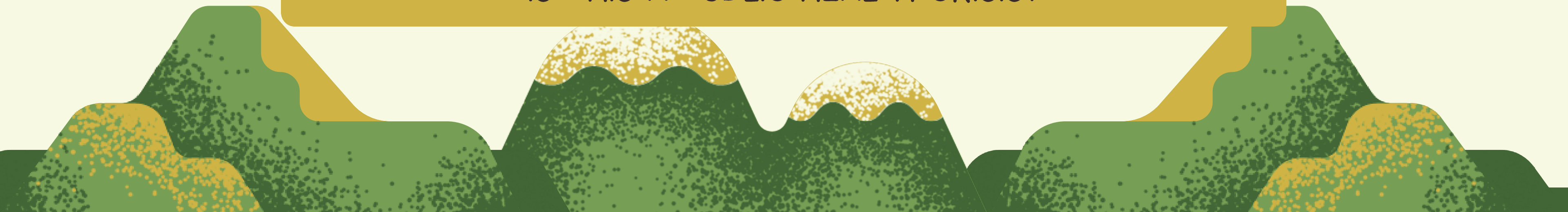
Our work is inspired by the Black Panther Party and its community programming, designed with key principles including love, care, and liberatory harm reduction.



NEEDS IN LBTH

1. Poorest children in the country.
2. Highest opiate use in London.
3. Second highest DV in London.
4. Most densely built up in the UK.
5. The largest Muslim community in the UK.
6. Over 20,000 on the housing waiting list.

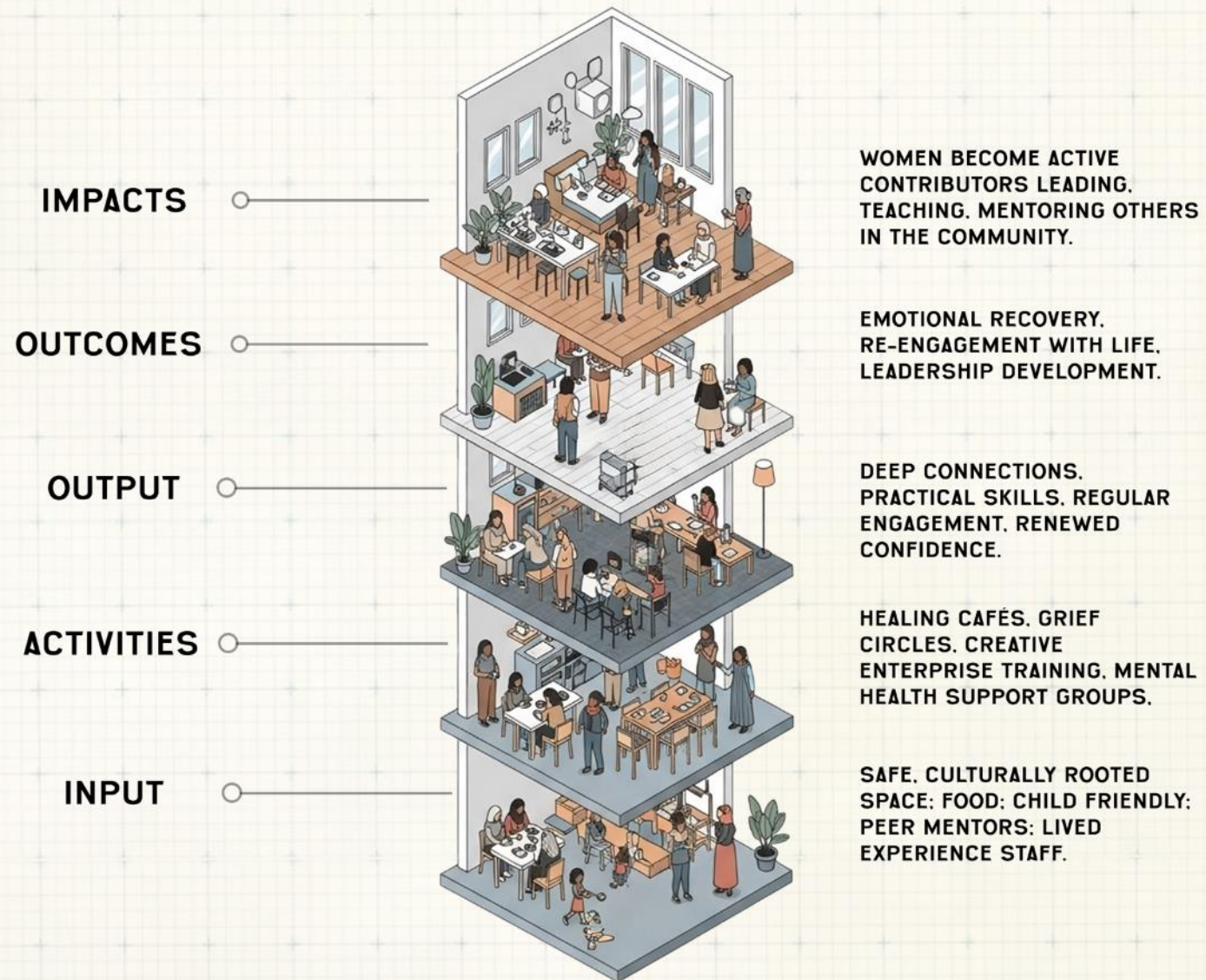
IS THIS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS?





THEORY OF CHANGE WOMEN'S HUB

THE THEORY OF CHANGE AT THE HEART OF COFFEE AFRIK'S MODEL IS ROOTED IN LIVED EXPERIENCE. NOT INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS. HEALING AND GROWTH HAPPEN THROUGH:



“ WE DON'T JUST COME HERE TO GET HELP. WE COME TO REMEMBER WHO WE ARE AND BUILD SOMETHING TOGETHER ”

Fixers: Pay £5k to get council house

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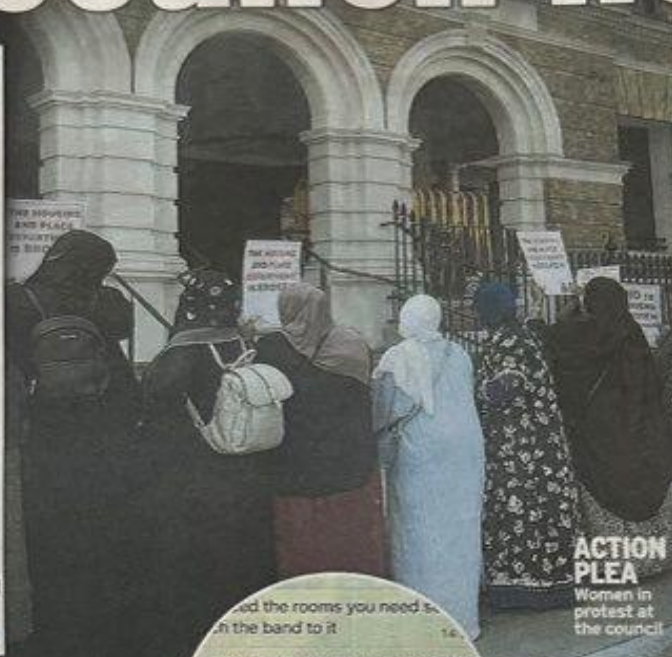
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LURE Messages trying to entice payment



HARD SELL Exchange of messages



...and the rooms you need s...
...n the band to it
You can't change your mind after
1 room is £2000
2/3 is £3500
If you want this space take the
advantage now
if someone's paye...

» Families are told they can jump queue

» 'I spent a fortune but didn't get a home'

PUSHING FOR MONEY Fixer's spiel

EXCLUSIVE
BY MELISSA SIGODO Community Reporter
& NICK SOMMERLAD Investigations Editor

VULNERABLE women on housing waiting lists say they have been targeted by "fixers" promising help to jump the queue in return for corrupt payments of up to £5,000.

During a two-month investigation the Mirror spoke to a number of women in London's poorest borough, with one of the longest waiting lists in England.

A mum-of-five who talked to us has been in temporary accommodation for 12 years since being made homeless.

She claims that in 2016, after she was moved to a borough more than 10 miles away, she was asked to make a payment of £5,000 to a corrupt official at the housing advice service.

She said: "I was complaining about the bidding system for properties and he told me 'there are other options but you have to pay... it is off the record'."

"When I complained he said, 'Oh, sister, I am trying to help you'."

"I said, 'How are you helping me? If it is cheating, I don't want to be involved.'"

She claims the man recognised her at the same office in 2018. The mum added: "He said if I could make the payment there is a collection of homes I could choose from. He said, 'Whenever you are ready, make contact'."

"I told him it was terrible. I've always [trusted] the process. I thought they were taking care of me."

A second woman, also from the Somali community in Tower Hamlets, East London, said she paid £4,700 to a man - calling himself Ahmed - who followed her out of the council offices offering to help her move up the housing list.

Three months after she met the man at his offices elsewhere to make bank transfers, the promise of a property had not been honoured. She did not complain to the police or the council but did speak to her bank, which returned half the money.

The Mirror's investigation also found that as recently as two months ago, the

woman was approached through social media app Snapchat by another man claiming to be able to get her shortlisted for homes. The fixer asked for £3,500.

In March 2022, there were 21,840 households on the council's waiting list. Local campaigner Abdirahim Hassan, co-founder of Coffee Afrik, believes Somali families are discriminated against when they apply for housing.

Somali women have protested outside the council's HQ calling for action on housing. Last month, a third woman communicated with a man on a Facebook group who claimed to work for nearby Newham council and to have access to someone at Tower Hamlets. The middleman claimed that for £3,000 he could get his connection to assist her get housing.

The woman said: "Properties haven't come up for months and you're thinking 'This is where they're going'". The mum-

of-three became homeless years ago while pregnant after her landlord decided to renovate her property.

She is in temporary two-bedroom accommodation and said: "My daughter is 14, my sons are 11 and nine and they all have to sleep in the same room."

Tower Hamlets council said: "We have not received any information about alleged bribes or fraud that can be investigated. We have been actively working with these families via their representative for months to ensure their complaints are thoroughly investigated."

"No substantiated evidence in relation to bribery or fraud has been presented." It said it found no council involvement in the three cases from 2021 onwards and that it had not received a complaint about the alleged cash requests in 2016 and 2018, despite our source saying she told staff.

Newham council said: "While we have no record of an employee with that name or any evidence this is taking place in Newham, it is concerning someone is trying to take advantage of families waiting for a permanent home."

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"I said, 'How are you helping me? If it is cheating, I don't want to be involved'"

MUM-OF-FIVE ON HER ANGER AFTER BEING APPROACHED



CO PRODUCTION THROUGH AN ANTI RACISM LENS?

THE HEALING MUST BEGIN WITH YOU – SOMATICS

HOW WIDE CAN YOUR LEADERSHIP GO?

WHAT CARE DO WE NEED?

IS DISRUPTION POSSIBLE – AMILCAR/FRANTZ FANON.

"How do you use HOPE as a discipline as practitioners/leaders".

16 aunties in the workshop, 7 grew up in the city, 6 grew up in rural areas

How can we recreate 'home' in the Hubs?

The community at the Tower Hamlets Women's Hub are recreating 'home' in their space. To get started, a listening workshop was held to discuss the concept of home and the aunties' ideas.

Nomadic lifestyle: 'get the camel and go to the next place'; adaptable, survival mindset, and being able to thrive



What was your childhood home like?

Somali traditional packed houses that you can move 'that's how you stay alive.'



"When I lived in the village, I saw a snake hiding in my roof! I ran away!"

"I lived in a white house in Burco with my grandmother; it was a big house with lots of light."

"I lived in a mountainous community by the sea; we created sand structures around our home to prevent flooding."



WHAT SERVICES WOULD LXP'S LIKE TO SEE IN THEIR HOOD

CYCLING

TALENT SHOW

SEWING
CLASSES

UPCYCLING
FURNITURE

SOMALI
TRADITIONAL
DANCING AND
SINGING

TRIPS TO THE
BEACH AND
ABROAD
(PILGRIMAGE)

SOMALI
LANGUAGE
CLASSES FOR
CHILDREN AND
TEENS

COMPUTER
CLASSES

FURNITURE AND
PLANTS AND
MAKING
CURTAINS

SWIMMING

HISTORY AND
JUSTICE
CLASSES

ENGLISH
LANGUAGE
LESSONS

GARDENING

HEALTHY
COOKING
CLASSES AND
NUTRITION

RUNNING
MACHINES AND
OUTDOOR GYM

REIMAGINING PUBLIC HEALTH

WHAT SERVICES EXIST ACROSS HEALTH CARE NETWORKS RIGHT NOW?



REWORLDDING HUBS, LIBERATORY HARM REDUCTION, SAVING OUR LIVES

We are working with our Hub communities to co-design and pilot sustainable structures that devolve our power and resources (currently held within Coffee Afrik CIC) to them.

PLAN FOR COMMUNITY CO-PRODUCTION 2025



SPRING AND SUMMER

PILOT: HOW DO WE IMITATE HOME?
We're supporting the community to co-design the Tower Hamlets Hub using objects we can buy, bring from home, or make, using a set budget (held in our community bank account).
We're encouraging the community to think about how we imitate home, what our childhood homes looked like, and what makes a safe space.
A trip to the Museum of the Home will serve as inspiration, and deepen our understanding of the home.

SUMMER AND AUTUMN

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SESSIONS
During co-production sessions last year, the women at the Hubs identified that they would like to understand more and share knowledge about the following topics related to the running of the Hubs including: Governance, Fundraising, and Collecting Feedback.
In response, to this, Francesca (our Governance and Capacity-Building Lead) will be leading on these knowledge sharing sessions.

Our focus is on our two Womens' Hubs in Hackney Downs (Charterhouse Club) and Bethnal Green (Cyrprus Street Community Centre)

ALL YEAR AROUND

In collaboration with the Hubs, we're developing a **COMMUNITY BANK ACCOUNT** to encourage participation in financial decision-making and to build financial reserves for the community. Open Collective, a financial platform allowing several members to administrate the funds, will host the account. A committee will govern the account overall.
How funds will be generated:
Coffee Afrik contributes a % of its annual income
Income-generating activities/ support from local stakeholders.
Ways to spend funds:
Investment in community infrastructure, business ventures led by the community
Financial hardship grants for community members in crisis.

FOCUS FOR 2026:
Continue development of community bank account
Support women to develop business ventures/ income generating activities ie. community cafe, clothes stall at Ridley Road market



IDEAS FOR HOW POWER AND RESOURCES CAN BE DEVOLVED TO PEOPLE

Decision-making Board

Composed of 6–8 patients for example who shape local services and delivery.

Women who want to be on the Board put themselves forward and are democratically chosen.

Neighborhood care model

Decision making in the hood, by and for patients.

Monthly listening events.

Accountability and justice frameworks.

Restorative justice

Patients involved in harm reduction.

Challenging the system.

Oversight and scrutiny.



'The antonym of the therapeutic landscape therefore is not simply the unhealthy place, but the traumatic landscape: the place that harms people not only through physical dangers, but also social dislocation, precarity, and hopelessness.'



ORGANIZING HEALTH JUSTICE WITH PEOPLE

TAWHID –
ISLAM BASED
THERAPY

CULTURALLY
SENSITIVE
CARE

CARE IN
ESTATES

GP PRACTICES
OWNED BY
COMMUNITY
NOT PARTNERS

DECOLONIZING CO PRODUCTION

CO PRODUCTION OUTCOMES

Below are 7 health impact areas for you to use which can be used to inform monitoring and evaluation tools (more information on the next page).

Amplified community participation and ownership

Increased sense of autonomy, self-determination, and vision for the future.

Increased skills and capacities

Increased community and individual wellbeing

Increased sense of belonging and healing from trauma

Awareness of alternative health models — how to organize and embed in day-to-day life.

Organic growth of health justice, distancing from a top-down operational approach.

The following are ideas for questions/observations to help us assess how activities are contributing to project outcomes. These can be used to inform the development of evaluation tools preferred by the patients (reflection circles, surveys, videos). Please note that many of the health outcomes are long-term, so these suggestions will likely be most useful in the later stages of your training.

<p>Amplified community participation and ownership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance and active participation in appointments;• Proactively giving constructive feedback and contributing ideas;• Recording time volunteered.
<p>Increased sense of autonomy, self-determination, and vision for the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reporting trying new things/experiences inside and outside of the context of the health context;• Ability to articulate a vision (and optimism) for the future;• Evidence of self-advocacy, participation in exercise, mindfulness and other healthy behaviors.
<p>Increased sense of belonging and healing from trauma</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reporting making new friends and connections;• Increased participation in health justice;• Expressing sense of trust and safety with each other;• Ability to discuss past experiences;• Increased pride in heritage, cultural practices, sharing culture

<p>Increased community and individual wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved physical health; • Increased ability to cope with stress; • Improved resilience to illness; • Prioritizing self-care.
<p>Increased skills and capacities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at monthly skills-building/knowledge-sharing workshops; • Confidence to contribute ideas to the exploration of power-sharing structures; • Evidence of applying new skills inside and outside of the Coop context.
<p>Increased awareness of alternative health models — how to organize and embed in day-to-day life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance and active participation in workshops related to solidarity; economics and community-building workshops delivered by DE and other partners; • Active participation in the exploration of co-produced power distribution models (i.e.. decision-making committees, co-developing a sustainable business model).
<p>Organic growth of hubs, distancing from a top-down operational approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased voice around how the Coops are organized and run; • Women step into leadership and decision-making roles; • Structures for devolving power and resources (i.e.. decision-making committee or community savings link) are set up and consistently engaged in.



Healthcare Providers

THE HEALTH JUSTICE SERVICE RECOMMENDS TRAINING HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS IN CULTURAL SENSITIVITY TO IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT, OUTCOMES, AND RECOVERY.



CULTURALLY SENSITIVE TRAINING IMPROVES PATIENT ENGAGEMENT, MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES, AND ENSURES INCLUSIVE CARE.

