

THE TEASHOP

In Redbridge

Celebrating You

WHAT'S THE TEASHOP?

The Teashop is a service that connects people over a cup of tea to enhance mental wellbeing, together. These sessions bring community members together to participate in enjoyable activities that are associated with improved mental wellbeing.

WHAT'S CELEBRATING YOU?

'Celebrating You' was a special four-part series of Teashop sessions supported by Healthwatch Redbridge, celebrating diversity in life experiences. Our aim was to create a safe space to explore how identity and background shape mental wellbeing, using practices from various cultures to guide session activities.

This report summarises the outcomes of Celebrating You, highlighting the importance of community-based, culturally inclusive services in enhancing the mental wellbeing of individuals with complex identities.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

4

Total sessions in 2 months

14

Total users attended sessions

100%

Would recommend the session they attended to a friend

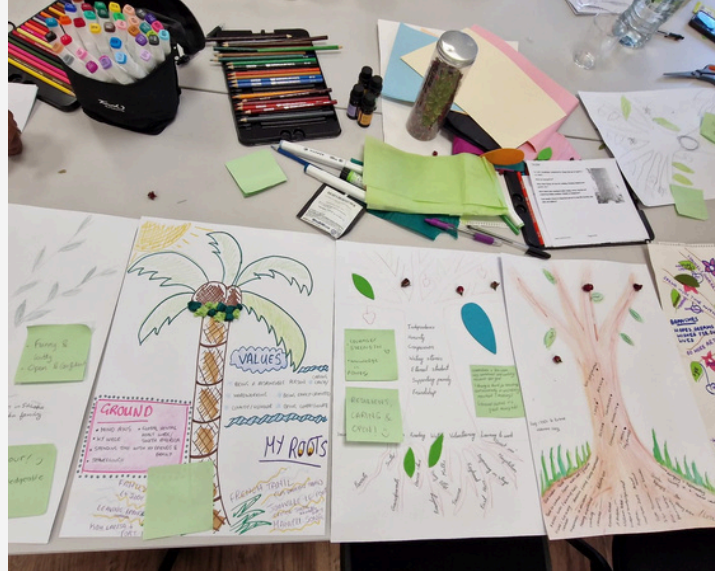
HOW DID WE CELEBRATE *You?*

Recognizing that different cultures shape us and our ability to cope with life's ups and downs, Celebrating You featured four unique sessions in June and July 2024.

1&2

Celebrating Your *Roots*

Across two sessions, we explored our pasts, presents, and futures with activities informed by Tree of Life, a therapy developed by Phola in South Africa.



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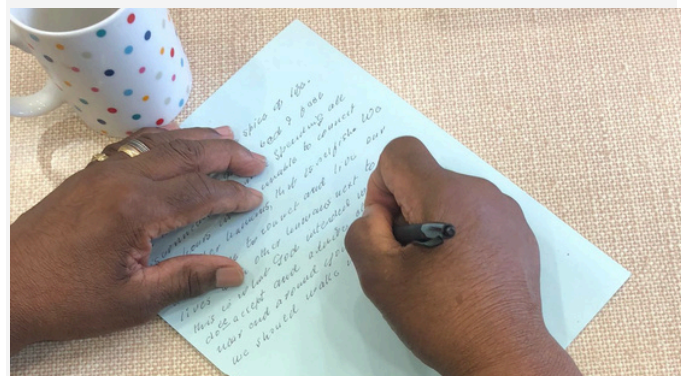
Celebrating *Belonging*

We used mindful journaling and breathing/meditation exercises to reflect on our communities and where we find our senses of belonging.

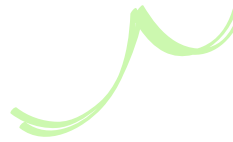
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Celebrating *Those Who Support You*

We ended the series with a celebration of gratitude, using poetry and creative writing to thank the people in our lives who have supported us.



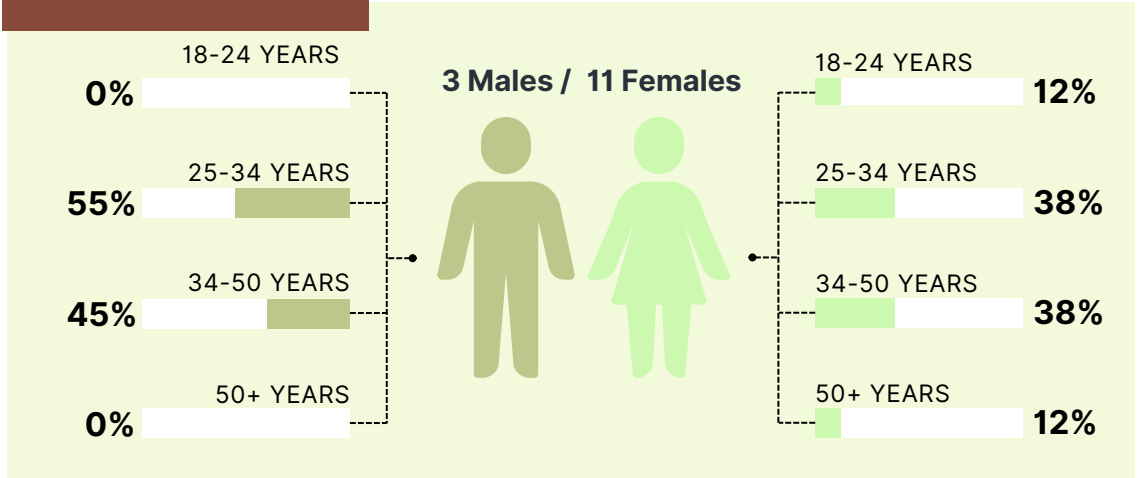
WHO ATTENDED?



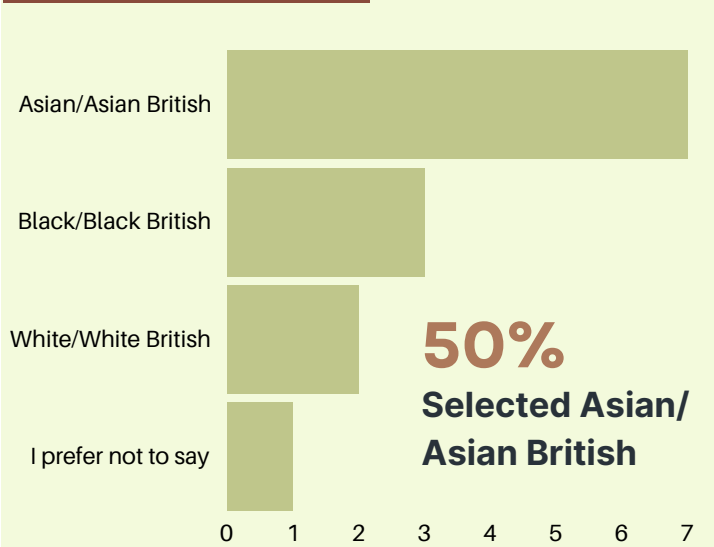
14
TOTAL NEW USERS



AGE & GENDER



ETHNICITY



21.5% Selected Black/ Black British
14% Selected White (Irish)/White British
14% Prefer not to say

IMPACT

To what extent did a session impact a user's mental wellbeing?

100% *62.5% said their mental wellbeing improved a lot*
37.5% said their mental wellbeing improved a little

MENTAL HEALTH

42% **6 Users**
 Had moderate symptoms of anxiety and/or depression*

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT US?

43% of users were referred to sessions through **Eventbrite/Instagram**
29% of users were referred to sessions through **GP referrals**
14% of users were referred to sessions through **Friends**
7% of users were referred to sessions through **VCSEs**
7% of users were referred to sessions through **Other**

*Moderate symptoms were indicated by a score of 10 or above in the PHQ-4 scale.

Why are programmes like Celebrating You *needed* ?

Existing mental health services in the UK often overlook the importance of cultural heritage and identity in shaping mental wellbeing. This was emphasised by our participants:

“
Understanding our roots can improve our mental health.
”

“
Cultural identity matters for our wellbeing.
”

“
Telling our stories is important for mental health.
”

“
Embracing our background can help us heal.
”

What were key challenges perceived by ethnic minorities in accessing *mental wellbeing support* ?



LONG WAITING TIMES

Participants highlighted excessive delays, especially for specific assessments like autism, with one person waiting up to two years.

LACK OF MENTAL HEALTH INTEGRATION

Many participants expressed concerns about the lack of mental health training for GPs. They described themselves as more knowledgeable than their GPs, who often seemed unaware of the connections between physical and mental health. This situation was quite frustrating for them, especially since they viewed GPs as the first point of contact for community care, yet felt they were not receiving adequate support.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

The group expressed that more training around cultural sensitivity is needed in mental health services. One participant who explained that she felt truly seen by a Black African doctor. This doctor was able to engage with her and relate to her experiences from a culturally nuanced perspective, rather than using a standard "ticking the box" approach. Many participants resonated with this sentiment. Having community organisations that represent different cultures and ethnicities is also highly valued. Participants see these spaces as places where they already feel acknowledged while also meeting people from similar cultural backgrounds.

“
The Black African doctor made eye contact, wasn't following a script, and made me feel validated.
”

What *changes* do they want to see?

SAFE, COMMUNITY-LED SPACES

Participants expressed a desire for more accessible, non-clinical environments where they can feel like they are being treated as individuals, not patients. Participants mentioned that having a safe space was important, something they felt was lacking in more formal services. They also emphasized the importance of consistency; for example, the *Black Woman Kindness Initiative* offers a wellbeing group every Friday morning, which was highly valued.

BETTER COMMUNICATION & INDEX OF SERVICES

Many weren't aware of what services existed in Redbridge, calling for an index of available support. While an online directory by the East London Foundation Trust (ELFT) was supposedly in development, participants were frustrated by delays.

24-HOUR CARE

A critical gap identified was the lack of round-the-clock mental health support.

INCREASED TRAINING FOR GPs:

GPs are often the first point of contact, but many lack adequate mental health and cultural training.

“I had to become my own doctor.”

COMMUNITY ORGANISATION SHOUT-OUTS

BWK
INITIATIVE

“Consistent; and a place where you can go and get support in-person; nice to see familiar faces.”

SAMARITANS

“I would rather go to the Samaritans than to go to a formal service.”

MIND AXIS

“Surprised my GP sent me here, I had no idea there was anything like this.”



Local church groups:

“I feel a sense of love, belonging and validation.”

We couldn't have done it without your generous *support.*


Thank you

to our team, all the participants, and supporters.

Special thanks to our three facilitators (Sheyamali, Sinthu, and Jeena) and Healthwatch Redbridge!

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