



# Culture, Leisure and Sport Cabinet Member Bulletin Councillor Oliver Lewis October 2019

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## LATEST NEWS

### Fairfield Halls Reopening

A star-studded ceremony celebrated the reopening of Fairfield Halls following a multi-million pound council-led restoration of the iconic Croydon venue. Special guests included Dame Judi Dench, who reopened the Ashcroft Playhouse in honour of her friend and Croydon-born actress the late Dame Peggy Ashcroft, and Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, who formally opened the building.

During a tour of the new and restored spaces, the Mayor described the revamped venue as ‘amazing’, praising its accessibility with a year-round programme of free entertainment, and new cultural offer which reflects the borough’s rich diversity.

At the civic ceremony the Mayor of London formally opened the main venue and unveiled a plaque in his name. The audience enjoyed performances from Silvestone with LMP, and Shaniqua Benjamin, spoken word artist and Founder of Young People’s Insight. Shaniqua performed a special commission, A Palace of Magic and Memories, dedicated to Fairfield Halls.

The refurbishment is the first phase in the development of a new cultural quarter in Croydon’s town centre – a major milestone in the town’s ongoing regeneration.





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## Borough of Culture

At the civic ceremony Cllr Lewis announced that Croydon would be bidding to be London Borough of Culture in 2023. “This is just the start.” He said, “Our cultural ambition does not stop here. Croydon will be bidding to be London Borough of Culture in 2023.”

We are already developing a place where creativity is at the heart of our regeneration and our economy, as we evolve as Croydon Music City and one of the Mayor of London’s Creative Enterprise Zones. At the same time we are creating thousands of new opportunities for young people in theatre, after successfully bidding to become one of only five Youth Performance Partnerships in England. This is a time of rapid change in Croydon, as with new partnerships, new platforms and new places, and we look forward to working with the many talented artists and arts organisations across our community as our cultural scene continues to flourish and grow.



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## Creative Enterprise Zone / Music City

Since June, the CEZ has expanded a number of its projects from their initial pilot phases. The CEZ has delivered its first round of Creative Industries Internships, which offer valuable hands-on experience while paying the London Living Wage. As a result it has expanded and now has five additional providers added to the roster, including Boxpark (Event Management). The Young Persons 40% Workspace Discount scheme has supported 20 young creative entrepreneurs into artist's studios (Conditions and ASC Art House), hot desk office hubs (Nexus, Matthews Yard), and retail spaces (FMM Popup, Made in Croydon).

The Creative Enterprise Zone now has a brand identity and the process of developing the CEZ website is well underway, with a developer recently being appointed. A number of CEZ consortium members have collaborated on the site's structure, content and development process over the last three months and it is due to go live for a soft launch in October.

Through the "Croydon Music City" strand of the CEZ this summer we have created opportunities for Croydon's musicians at "The Ends" festival, The South Norwood Festival, Croydon Pride and The Croydon Mela.

Going forward, we have our first CEZ Careers Roadshow taking place this week. The BRIT school will open its doors to school pupils, who will learn about the wide range of careers available within the music and creative industries. We are also pleased to announce that our first live music series "Croydon Calling" will be taking place throughout November at various venues in the area in an effort to stimulate the Evening and Night Time Economy.



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## Museum of Croydon

Museum of Croydon had a fantastic summer with a variety of exhibitions and events for all the family including the continuation of the highly successful Windrush exhibition. We had 490 people participate in the Space Chase Time Travel Trail co-hosted with the library giving families to chance to explore the Clocktower and the museum whilst earning a certificate at the end. We also celebrated 80 years since evacuation with reminiscence sessions for over 40 evacuees. It was also a chance for us to showcase our significant archive collections which highlighted the journey of evacuees in the Borough with a lovely spot on the Evacuee Special of Countryfile featuring our very own Borough Archivist, Lindsay Ould!

Our exhibition programming included the opening of Bold, an artist group show led by Mark Goldby as part of our Artist in Residence programme which explored the perception of homosexuality throughout history as part of our Pride season. This was followed by the chance to explore 100 years of social housing, a joint exhibition with the Museum of Croydon and housing teams to highlight this significant movement of social housing in the Borough. This varied exhibition featuring objects and photographs depicting how social housing has evolved in the Borough culminated in a fun interactive mural by Thornton Heath artist, Pins. The exhibition boards will now embark on a tour of local libraries.

We now have the beautiful Saree Reinvented exhibition on display in the Clocktower atrium until 2 November with an array of colours as a project led by Apsara Arts which explored the history of the saree and the related stories of South Asian women in how and why the saree plays an important part in connecting to their heritage and cultural identity. Following the highly successful Coming Home project with the National Portrait Gallery celebrating the portrait of Stormzy and his mother we will be welcoming our next Artist in Residence, with 'What a Waste' in the exhibition gallery from 18<sup>th</sup> October until 9<sup>th</sup> November. Home-grown artist Tina Crawford uses non-biodegradable waste to produce pieces based on her identity and health issues. We

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then conclude our exhibition programme with the Croydon Arts Society displaying their works for sale from 18<sup>th</sup> November until 7<sup>th</sup> December.



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## Libraries

Croydon Libraries are undertaking an exciting transformation programme to make all libraries modern, welcoming spaces. Selsdon Library was the first to be refurbished and opened on 10th August with the new look including improved IT, new lighting and furniture and a flexible open space. Norbury Library closed on 2nd September and will reopen in Spring 2020, with South Norwood next on the list. We are rolling out a new network to all libraries this quarter, offering new equipment and much improved access speeds to the free internet and Wi-Fi which will be available in all libraries by the end of 2019.

Libraries Week is taking place from 7th to 12th October featuring a Start-up Roadshow in Central Library on 11th October. Throughout October the Instapoetry campaign will run to encourage young people to write poetry and Croydon Libraries are encouraging creative young people to produce Black History Month inspired poetry. As part of Black History Month, Banu Arts African Drumming will perform between 11am-noon 21st October at Broad Green Library and 2pm-3pm 24th October at New Addington Library. All of the libraries are supporting the Public Health England Every Mind Matters campaign.

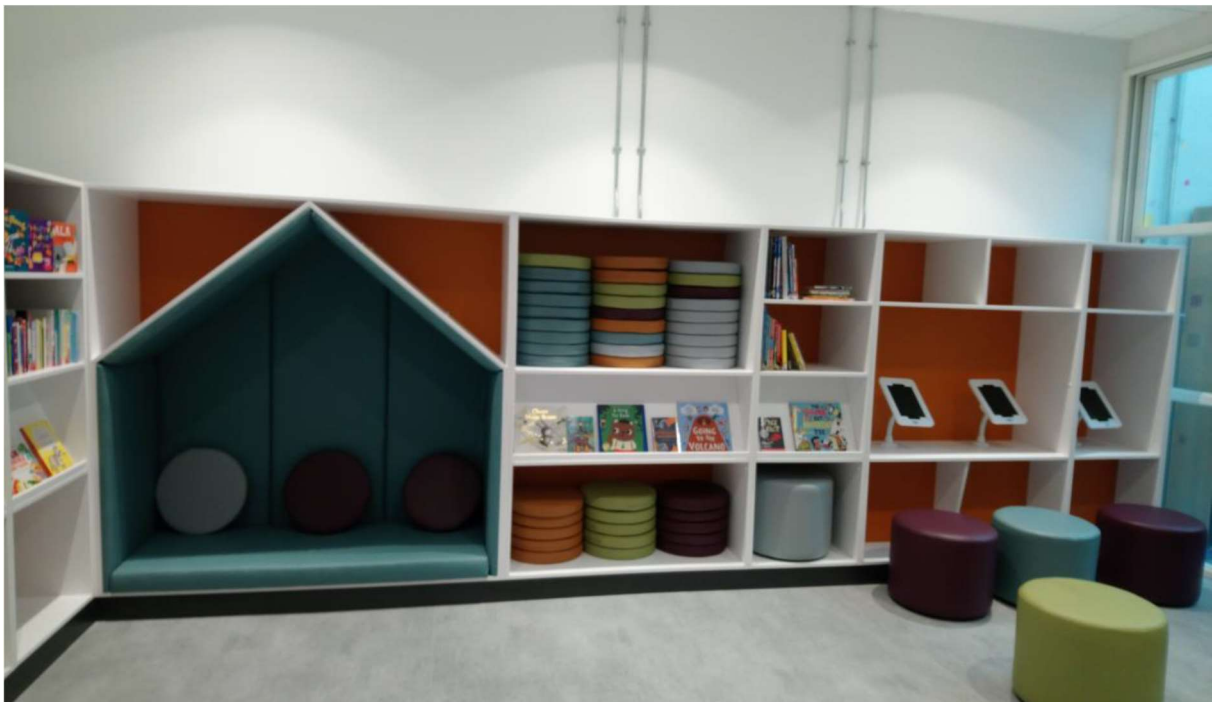


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## Croydon Pride 2019 and Croydon Mela

This year's pride event saw a significant growth in terms of attendance on the parade (almost 1,000) and in the park (10,000 across the day). Thanks to some new strategic partnerships and excellent programming the overall audience was more diverse than in previous years. The numbers were also up for the Croydon Mela with an estimated 12,000 in attendance at the event which was programmed this year by an all-female local artistic team.



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## **Registrars Service**

### **Locality Working**

Registrars continue to work from Croydon University Hospital four mornings per week.

Appointments are made directly by the hospitals Bereavement Services when a death occurs, which has led to a more joined up service for those at an extremely difficult period of their lives.

### **EU Settlement Scheme**

To support residents who are EU Citizens in making applications under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) the OISC and Home Office have worked together to create a scheme which allows Local Authorities to give residents assistance to make face to face applications

Based on the information available on Croydon Observatory there are an estimated 22,000 EU citizens living in the borough.

The majority will make their application online but it is estimated there may be up to 3000 residents that will require our assistance until it closes in 2021.

Here at Croydon we are offering a free appointment based service to any residents requiring assistance. Demand has been steady but a significant increase has been note over recent weeks as the Brexit deadline of 31 October draws ever closer.

### **Marriage Schedule System**

The Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration Etc.) Act successfully completed its passage through Parliament on 15 March 2019 and attained Royal Assent on 26 March 2019.



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The Act will modernise how marriages are registered for the first time since 1837, through issue of a marriage schedule system and registration in an electronic register. It will move away from the current paper register creating a more secure system for keeping marriage records, that is also more efficient and far simpler to administer and amend, if necessary, in the future. The electronic register will also allow for the names of parents of the couple (mother / father / parent) to be included in the marriage entry and on marriage certificates, instead of only their fathers' names as is currently the case.

The change will result in a considerable amount of work for the service prior to and post introduction. The date for implementation has not yet been agreed but is likely to be early 2020.

### **Bereavement Services**

#### **Replacement Cremators**

The first of our 2 new cremators is in and operational, this has been well received by the Crematorium Team. The new cremator has a larger chamber enabling it accommodate larger coffins that are becoming increasingly more common place than the one replaced. In addition to this the new refractory and more efficient burners will reduce gas usage.

The project remains on schedule with installation of the second cremator is about to commence with the completion date being early November.

#### **Cremation Metals Recycling Scheme**

We are again in a new period for nominations. This is a national scheme that distribute and surplus monies from the recycling of cremation to bereavement related charities. The scheme has now been extended to include pacemakers which should see the amount donated to charities increase even further. To date over £8million pounds has been distributed across the UK!



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If you know of any local charities that work with the bereaved and would benefit from this scheme please contact Kevin Pilkington [kevin.pilkington@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.pilkington@croydon.gov.uk) or Eddie Ranger [edward.ranger@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:edward.ranger@croydon.gov.uk) to discuss further

## **The Green Flag Award**

We are proud to confirm that the Croydon Crematorium and Mitcham Road Cemetery site has again been awarded the prestigious Green Flag Award in July 2019.

This award provides superb recognition for all of those working in and alongside Bereavement Services to provide the highest standards of service for the residents of Croydon