



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

## LATEST NEWS

### Talawa Launch

#### Talawa unveils new home at Fairfield Halls

Talawa, the UK's primary black theatre company, officially opened their new studio and celebrated their exciting position as one of the new companies-in-residence at Fairfield Halls, which reopened in September following a multi-million-pound council led [restoration](#).

Thursday evening's unveiling included dance-theatre performances from FUBU Nation and a play reading and showcased Talawa's new space, which gives the theatre company a 200-seat studio and offices for the first time since 1995. As well as being a space where they will develop new work and ideas, host debates and events for Croydon's communities, the residency also provides a home for Talawa's art development programme MAKE, a community of Black British artists developing their careers in technical and creative theatre disciplines.

In moving to Croydon, Talawa has become the borough's first Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, an accolade awarded to organisations that are leaders in their areas, with a collective responsibility to protect and develop the country's national arts and cultural ecology.

<http://news.croydon.gov.uk/talawa-unveils-new-home-at-fairfield-halls/>

### Savvy Launch

#### Fairfield gets SAVVY!

An inclusive, professional theatre group is celebrating after moving into their first purpose-built studio and new home at Croydon's iconic [Fairfield Halls](#).

[SAVVY Theatre](#) is among the exciting new companies-in-residence that will transform the cultural offering at the venue, which reopened in September after a multi-million-pound heritage restoration.

Their opening event was a showcase for performances from SAVVY's range of companies, including their Young Company, YoungGrr Company, Action Replay – for adults with learning disabilities, and Crisis Averted, a new project with Crisis in Croydon.



# Culture, Leisure and Sport

## Cabinet Member Bulletin

### Councillor Oliver Lewis

#### December 2019

For the last 10 years, SAVVY have been offering unique, fun training and performance opportunities to residents of all ages, abilities and levels of experience, welcoming everyone to take part. In the last two years, they have worked with Croydon Council, with support from the council's cultural partnership fund and Arts Council England, to offer weekly theatre groups at locations across the borough and to bring exciting, interactive theatre to the spaces and streets of Croydon

<http://news.croydon.gov.uk/fairfield-gets-savvy/>

### CYAC Takeover

#### **Nadia Rose joined youth takeover of Fairfield Halls**

Croydon Youth Arts Collective's (CYAC) fourth annual Youth Takeover - a free arts and culture event at Fairfield Halls took place on Saturday (2 November), with a programme of performances and workshops, created by and for young people.

The Fairfield Halls event celebrated the diversity of Croydon while welcoming young people to the jewel of the borough's cultural crown.

Croydon's very own MOBO Award-winner Nadia Rose headlined with an after party with a line-up of local young artists including Kingdom, Flintz and KS MoreTime.

<http://news.croydon.gov.uk/nadia-rose-joins-youth-takeover-of-fairfield-halls/>

### Creative Enterprise Zone and Croydon Music City November update

#### **“Croydon Calling”**

The pilot **“Croydon Calling” grassroots gig series** is taking place throughout November and early December, giving local artists the opportunity to shine alongside established acts in range of central Croydon venues. The aim of the series is to help build local audiences, advertise Croydon as a destination for musical acts and to increase the number of venues that are offering live music in the town. Further information can be found at [www.bigsouth.london/croydoncalling](http://www.bigsouth.london/croydoncalling)

#### **Creative Industries Internship Scheme**

The second phase of the CEZ Creative Industries Internship scheme is well under way, with interns recently completing placements with Dance Umbrella, Well Versed Ink, Fashion Meets Music and Metropolis Music. The interns receive the London Living Wage, as well as valuable experience in leading organisations, both locally and in Central London.



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

## Libraries

### **Improved Wifi and Internet service rolling out at all libraries**

We have listened to customer complaints about the outdated IT provision and poor network speeds across libraries, and are installing the new IT and network library by library, completing the implementation by mid-December 2019. Faster network speeds will provide a much improved service to library customers, and to service providers who deliver our work clubs, homework clubs and digital workshops. This infrastructure underpins the delivery of the new Library Management System.

### **Scheme Access to more books and a library App as part of The Libraries Consortium**

The new Library Management system launched on 4<sup>th</sup> November, and will soon provide delivery access to the 6 million books within The Libraries Consortium through a free reservation system. New system features include notifications by email or text to alert customers when books due to be returned. You will soon have a mobile phone app which allows you to search the entire catalogue, reserve and renew items easily, plus manage your linked accounts and access ebooks and online resources.

The new library catalogue is available through the Croydon Website or [here](#).

If you are not a member of Croydon Libraries, or a member of any of The Libraries Consortium libraries, you can now join online [here](#)

Croydon customers can now access books and internet services across the 16 Libraries Consortium Boroughs with a Croydon Library card



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

---

## **Black History Month Activities in Libraries**

Croydon Libraries highlights included hosted drumming activities for families from Bantu Arts and a very popular Caribbean Family History event with Paul Crooks.

Three local authors talking about their books in libraries: Maisie Barrett, Lorna Liverpool and AkiToye Sunday.

## **Successful Instapoetry Campaign for Young People aged 13-19**

Croydon Libraries ran three Instapoetry workshops with Shaniqua Benjamin and Well Versed Ink at Croydon Central Library and Thornton Heath Library between 7<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> October. Eleven of our Library Ambassadors took part in the workshops and produced some amazing poetry inspired by this year's Black History Month theme: R.I.D the stigma (Representation. Identity. Diversity). The poems were posted on Croydon Libraries Instagram throughout October.

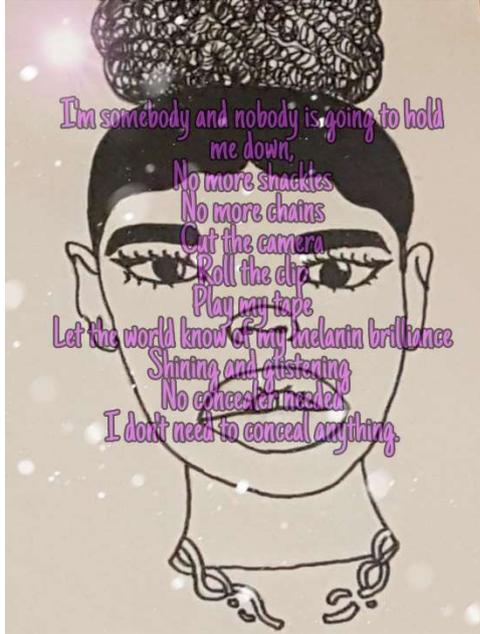


On the 21<sup>st</sup> Oct we had a celebratory open mic where the young people shared their poems, alongside Shaniqua Benjamin who compered the event. 26 people attended, including some of the young people who took part in the workshops. Between them they shared 9 poems themed around Identity, Black History, representation and stereotypes.

All the poems can be found on [@croydonlibraries](#) Instagram.



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



aw, here it goes  
*again*  
the feeling of exclusion  
exclusion that leads to a lack of recognition  
recognition that we needed to succeed

aw, here it goes  
*again*  
the feeling of frustration  
frustration because we are deserving  
deserving to be heard and better yet seen

aw, here it goes ... *again*

*r.m.*

can we relate to each other?  
do we relate to each other?  
when will we find out? later? tomorrow?  
what about now?

divisions, divisions  
shades, colours  
thoughts, beliefs

when will our uniqueness actually bridge us  
together?

*r.m.*

The girls in the magazines  
Don't even look like  
The girls in the magazines.  
We hold them in high esteem,  
Inducing low self esteem.  
They're not queens  
They're not supreme beings  
Nor are they fiends.  
The magazines are our enemies -  
Constantly failing to promote  
diversity.  
And I don't mean hiring one  
Black model to represent  
A whole community.  
We need models that are young  
and old  
Of different abilities  
and ethnicities.  
Stop editing people's insecurities  
Because a side effect  
of abiding by  
The shameful standards of society,  
Is creating a misrepresentation  
of reality.



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

---

## Museum of Croydon

Museum of Croydon has had an exciting year towards its end of programming for 2019 as it prepares for an innovating Trial and Test 2020 year. We have seen over 1000 more visitors this year to our exhibition gallery than our previous year to view the 'Coming Home' Stormzy portrait on loan from the National Portrait Gallery. Our Artist in Residence programme has come to a close for this year finishing with Tina Crawford's 'What a Waste', a local free embroidery artist examining the intersections between mental health and environmental impact of non-biodegradable material as Croydon's declares a climate emergency. Saree Reinvented was a success with a Saree Unwrapped family day seeing many people enjoying workshops and across the whole Clocktower, museum and library. We will be welcoming Croydon Art Society from 18<sup>th</sup> November until 9<sup>th</sup> December with art on sale from its members. Finally, we close our programming with an exhibition curated by our Apprentice who working with staff and volunteers have selected our favourite's artworks for display for our final exhibition '#faves' with dates to be finalised.

We will be busy preparing our 2020 Trial and Test year where we have opened our galleries and our programme to be led by local artists, communities and organisations which have been selected to provide a daring and exciting programme for 2020. This will help us shape our vision for the Museum going forward and help us understand further our collections and what they mean to our residents. Programming is currently being finalised with 9 temporary exhibitions planned along with many activities – watch this space! If you would like to help shape the future of the Museum of Croydon join our Museum & Archive Manager at The Big Conversation to find out more.

## London Borough of Culture Bid

Croydon was one of 7 boroughs to bid for the latest round of London Borough of Culture titles and we have bid for 2023. If we are successful we would receive £1.35 million from the GLA and would hope to pull in significant amounts of partnership funding taking the overall budget to over £4 million. Our bid included large scale events with companies like Arcadia from the Glastonbury festival, an open access fund of £500,000 for local community projects, a structured approach to involve all our neighbourhoods and communities via 23 beacons situated across the borough, a new structure for decision making linked to the Big Conversation and the Culture Network set up after the previous Borough of Culture bid in 2017 and new investment programmes in social prescribing and job creation in the culture and creative industries. A shortlist is expected in December with boroughs invited to make a

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

---

presentation to the panel in January next year. Decisions on the winning boroughs (they are awarding 2021 and 2023) are expected at the end of January.

### South Norwood Lake & Grounds: A Masterplan Park Update

One of the 6 greenspaces selected within the [‘Ambitious for Croydon’s Parks’](#) programme, South Norwood Lake & Grounds is a green jewel in the North of the borough and one of the very few openly accessible fishing lakes in South London’s.

After Active Lifestyles officers secured S106 funding and engaged with local anglers and users of the lake, 15 new platforms have been installed around the lake, including 3 which are fully accessible. They are not only enjoyed and used by those that fish but also by those that look for a place by the water for relaxation, to meet with friends and even to paint. The Council has taken a sustainable approach to replacing the platforms by using materials made from recycled plastic (which looks like timber), which will require less maintenance and should last longer than the previous timber platforms.



The working relationship with local anglers is progressing and, in partnership with the Croydon Sailing Club, the lake was treated with blue dye this year in an effort to manage the annual algae problem which has caused the lake to be closed in the past. This has proven successful and resulted in the survival of a large amount of fish fry, creating the foundation for a healthy future fish stock. To boost the species diversity and extend the fishing spectrum the lake will also receive a donation of 500 Tench and



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

---

500 Bream this December. The donation is made by a keen fisherman in memory of his late mother who introduced him to fishing at this lake when he was small boy. The positive season for the lake was picked up by 'Anglers Mail' periodical and resulted in a good news piece promoting the lake.

South Norwood Lake is also a popular site for keen local cricketers and, working in collaboration with the England Cricket Board and Surrey County Cricket Club, officers sourced the funding to install an artificial cricket wicket which will enable groups and local teams to play all season long.



Both of these recent developments were recommendations identified within the masterplan created for this loved greenspace and they demonstrate the ongoing efforts to deliver improvements to our greenspaces for all Croydon residents.

### **London Youth Games - Opening Weekend Roundup**

No amount of mud or hills could stop Croydon's under 17's girls cross country team charging to their first ever top 10 London Youth Games finish at Parliament Hill on Saturday.



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

---

A record breaking 11 girls represented Croydon in the age group where only 1 athlete represented the borough in the same competition 12 months ago. It was therefore fitting when sole representative on that occasion, Amy Miller led the team by finishing 14th of 108 athletes.



Nationally there is a trend of declining sport participation in females once they reach once they reach 15 years and over. This is broadly attributed to fewer opportunities, social stigma and lack of positive role models.

Croydon team manager and Croydon Harriers coach Matt Kiernan who coaches 16 of the 25 female athletes representing the borough on Saturday commented “the club has seen steady growth in female membership over the last 5 years and this gives us a greater chance of retaining new members, we focus primarily on the fun and social aspects of playing sport and hope this creates a positive and welcoming environment”.

**AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON**



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

In total Croydon fielded a squad of 50 athletes, ranging in ages from 9 to 17 across all 8 competition categories. The borough managed to finish 10th place overall in the boys and 16th in the girls.

Tom Harmer provided individual moment of the day when he won the boys under 13s event, beating a field of 238 athletes when completing the challenging 2km course in 7 minutes 25 seconds.



Cross country is the annual curtain raiser of the London Youth Games competition. A youth sport festival where all 33 London Boroughs compete across 25 different sports throughout the year culminating in an annual finals weekend in July.

## Registrars Service

### 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. We are also offering the service to staff irrespective of whether they are resident in the borough. This service is not being offered to non-residents.

Demand has been steady but a significant increase was noted over recent weeks on the run up to the previous as Brexit deadline of 31 October, this has now subsided a little but is expected to increase as we approach 31 January 2020.



# Culture, Leisure and Sport

## Cabinet Member Bulletin

### Councillor Oliver Lewis

#### November 2019

---

#### **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.

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.

#### **The Civil Partnerships (Opposite – sex Couples) Regulations 2019 approved**

The Civil Partnerships (Opposite-sex Couples) Regulations 2019, which extend eligibility for forming civil partnerships to opposite sex couples, were approved in Parliament and made on 5 November 2019. The regulations will come into force on 2 December 2019.

Registration authorities can now take or confirm bookings for couples to give notice from 2 December 2019 which will allow the first civil partnerships under the standard procedure to be formed from 31 December 2019. Civil partnerships formed under the special procedure can take place from 2 December 2019.

The Register office has updated the website and our online booking system to reflect these changes.

These regulations are separate from the ones needed to introduce the schedule system for marriages. Further information on laying and implementation dates for the marriage regulations will be provided at the earliest opportunity.

#### **Bereavement Services**

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

We are pleased to announce that in October 2019 we secured £8k for our latest nominated charity 'The Lily Foundation'.



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

---

The Lily Foundation supports those affected by mitochondrial disease (mito), which is a life-limiting disease, for which there is currently no cure or effective treatments. Therefore, when diagnosed with condition we know that a person's future will be short. The younger the child is when the diagnosis is made, the shorter the life expectancy. A child diagnosed before their first birthday is unlikely to make their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday.

The Lily Foundation supports families often from diagnosis, through to end of life and beyond. They provide one to one support and a network of families who have or are experiencing similar circumstances.

The charity was set up by Lily's parents, as they found when Lily was diagnosed there was very little support available for parents whose children were diagnosed with mito. They wanted to change this and set up The Lily Foundation to support families, fund research and raise awareness of mitochondrial disease.

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