

Oct / Nov / Dec 2025

Produced by

LEISURE LINK



FREE MAGAZINE

A magazine about accessible activities and events for everyone.



REVIEWS+FEATURES
EVENT LISTINGS
MONEY SAVING OFFERS
+SO MUCH MORE



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You can support Club Soda by donating **online**
at www.justgiving.com/charity/clubsodauk
or in person at our events.



WHAT IS INSIDE?

- Page 2 **Dates for your diary** - Dates to remember
- Page 3 **Venue map** - Where things are happening
- Page 4 **What is Leisure Link** - About the project
- Page 6 **Interview** - DJ Joker
- Page 8 **Reflections** - History behind Leisure Link
- Page 10 **Share with us** - Photos and artwork
- Page 12 **Feature** - Art should comfort the disturbed
- Page 15 **What is coming up?** - Upcoming events
- Page 20 **Useful information** - Join our mailing list

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 9 October Magazine Launch @ Riff Ruffs
- 8 Oct-1 Nov Croydonites @ Various Locations
- 11 Oct+8 Nov Relaxed Screenings @ David Lean Cinema
- 2nd Sat Month Inclusive Socials @ Ignition Brewery
- 27th October Soda Crew DJs @ Boxpark
- 28th October LDAC Celebrate @ St Augustine's Church
- Until 29th Nov Exhibition @ Museum of Croydon
- 22nd Nov SoDaDa @ The Old Library - Norwood
- 29th Nov-Jan Art Fair @ Bethlem Gallery
- 1st Dec Soda Beat @ Stanley Arts
- Mondays Croydon Folk Club @ Ruskin House

VENUE MAP

Places where things are happening in Croydon over the next 3 months.



We are a community of **Creatives**, **Gig Goers** and **Campaigners** with learning disabilities.



Club Soda is a charity based in Croydon that provides opportunities for people with learning disabilities to access and enjoy music and the arts.



What is Leisure Link?

A project run by Club Soda, providing information about leisure, arts, and sport-related opportunities in Croydon and beyond.

Socials

We run **monthly socials** where you can:

- **Meet** people who are passionate about making Croydon accessible to all
- **Share** activities you have been doing and things you look forward to
- **Recommend** events & venues locally
- **Discover** new places to go

Magazines

We create **regular magazines** that:

- **Review** accessible places in Croydon
- **Provide** information about where to go
- **Discuss** what is important to people in Croydon with learning disabilities

Podcasts

We produce **regular podcasts** that:

- **Promote** local artists & organisations
- **Feature** venues, events & activities
- **Celebrate** inclusive arts & culture



LEISURE LINK

What we enjoy most!



"I like meeting new people, also hearing and seeing other people's ideas in the magazine."



"The project has helped me boost my confidence and film my two podcasts."

"I like all the different events that are in the magazine and finding fantastic things to do."



"I like reading everything in the magazine when it puts the DJs out there."

"I love hearing about local events that I'd have never been aware of otherwise!"



"I also like sharing my own experiences and events I go to."

"My favourite so far has been filming my two podcasts. I also like the magazine launches."



"I enjoy making mocktails, hearing what others get up to and seeing their activities inspire others to have fun in different ways."



DJ JOKER

SODA CREW DJ



Meet DJ Joker, one of Club Soda's rising stars behind the decks. Known for his cool, fantastic, and fun style, DJ Joker has been bringing energy and great vibes to Club Soda events for the past three years.

"I only really started DJing properly when I joined Club Soda," DJ Joker explains. "But I was always listening to music and wanting to be a DJ. Once I got the courage, I asked if I could try—and that's how it all started."

His DJ name was inspired by a love of comics and a bit of playful teamwork:

"I'm really into DC and Marvel, so I came up with DJ Joker. It works well with Tasha, who DJs as DJ Harley Quinn—we make a great pair!"

Favourite Venue: Boxpark Croydon

When asked about his favourite place to play, DJ Joker doesn't hesitate:

"Boxpark has to be the main one. There's enough space, the lighting is great, and it feels like a proper club. Plus, it's a safe space for people with disabilities. We even did a back-to-back set there, and hopefully, we'll get to do another one soon!"



DJ Challenges and Requests

Like every DJ, Joker has had his share of unusual moments:

"People sometimes ask me for a track I don't have. I just say sorry and make a note to get it for next time—well, I try to remember!"

The biggest challenge? **"If the system goes down, I try to reboot it. If that doesn't work... well, you just have to stay calm and do your best."**

Dream Collaborations & Future Plans

When asked who he'd love to perform with, DJ Joker has to think for a moment—there are so many artists on the wishlist!

And where does he want to DJ next?

"I'd love to play at a festival one day - maybe Croydon Pride or Mighty Hoopla!"

The Gear & The Groove

DJ Joker keeps it simple but effective:

"I mainly use a laptop and DJ controller, but if I can't use those, I use CDs. I find mixing quite easy—it didn't take me long to get the hang of it."

And when asked about staying energized during a set:

"Water or fizzy drinks—got to stay hydrated when you're DJing!"



Favourite Memory

Looking back, joining Club Soda and stepping up to the decks for the first time remains a highlight: **"It was a big deal for me, and it gave me confidence. I love making people happy through music."**

“

I love making people happy through music. ”

”

DJ Joker is proof that with courage, support, and a good beat, you can turn passion into performance. Keep an eye out for his next set - you might just catch him back at Boxpark, dropping tunes that get everyone moving!

LEISURE LINK REFLECTIONS

ANDREW SLEGG

Leisure Link has always been a fantastic group that has produced hundreds of brilliant Newsletters, but the really great thing about it is that it has just kept getting better and better.

I first started going to Leisure Link meetings when it started up in 2003 by Naomi Blackwell and Robert McClarnon from Croydon Council's 'New Directions' Team. Meetings were always held in the Town Hall and a mix of people with learning disabilities, parents, Council staff and local Councillors talked about the leisure groups and events that were taking place in Croydon. They also talked about what was stopping people from going out and having a good time, such as how difficult it was to get to and from events, ('transport'), and how people who lived in care homes got upset when they had to go home earlier than they wanted to. A campaign about this called 'Shift the Shift' started in Croydon to try to get care home staff to stay out later to support the people they were with.



I loved Leisure Link as I wanted people with disabilities and people with autism to have the same opportunities to go out and have a good time as everybody else in Croydon. I still do.

So, when Robert and Naomi moved on, I tried my best to keep the group going. We wanted to attract more people with learning disabilities to the group, so we started meeting in different places in the heart of Croydon such as The Green Dragon pub, The Oval Tavern and 'Matthew's Yard'.



The group had its wonderful 'regulars' such as Sedley, Holly and Robert, but we were only a small group and at times it was difficult to keep going, until...Club Soda came riding in to town with the incredible Rachael in the saddle and we were saved!!! With time, our meetings were turned into colourful magazines and later on even podcasts, linked to Club Soda's bands, club nights and SoDaDa—and we had lift-off.



The amazing Club Soda and Gig Buddies crew provided the creative support and ideas that quickly saw Leisure Link start to grow into the fantastic group it is now.

Thanks to the Club Soda team, Leisure link is now as strong as it's ever been. Yes, it still lets everyone know what's going on in Croydon and supports people to go out, make friends and have a great time, but it is now more inclusive and accessible than ever.

We've come a long way since the first Leisure Linkers sat round the big, long tables in the Town Hall, waiting quietly to speak.



We should thank those who started up Leisure Link and kept it going for over 20 years, but I'm sure that they would be so pleased to see how it's grown in to the wonderful group it is now ... a safe place where people come together as equals, have fun, say what they want to say, share ideas and experiences and choose what they want to do next.

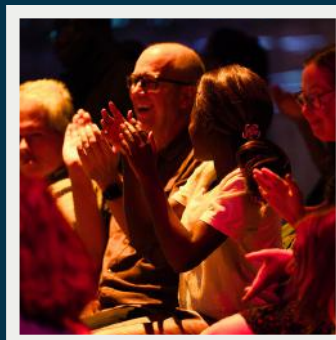
Thank you to everyone who has helped make Leisure Link into the amazing group that it is. A true Croydon gem...a Croydon Diamond...Croydon Gold.

So, 'What's next? Surely Leisure Link can't get any better!!! Oh, yes it jolly well can...and it is... Wishing the Club Soda magazine all the best for the next thousand years.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

"I went on tour with SLiDE to the Tate Modern. I had the best time in my life."

TASHA



"My favourite act at SoDaDa was Drag Syndrome."

STEPH



"Gig Buddies had an awesome social at the Ignition Brewery in Sydenham."

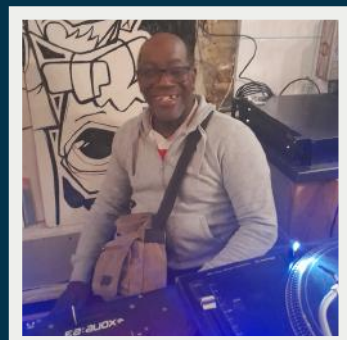


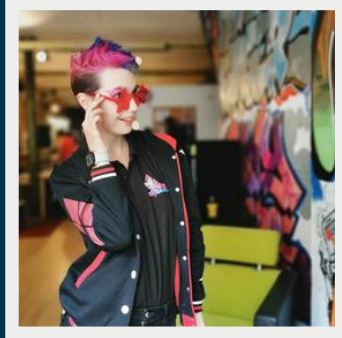
"There is a miniature railway at Brockwell Park. Open on Sundays in October."

SEDLEY

"We went to Boxpark and had food there."

STEPH





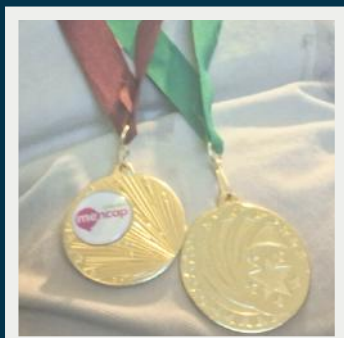
"I'm looking forward to the next magazine launch in October at Riff Ruffs."

"I visited the Long Gallery in the Maudsley."

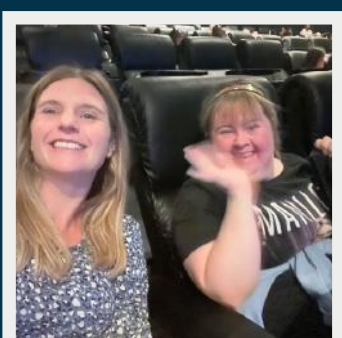


EMMA

"I got two medals from Croydon Mencap for volunteering."



SEDLEY



"My gig buddy and I went to see the Disney movie Freakier Friday at Valley Park Vue."

HOLLY



SHARE YOUR VIEWS / PHOTOS / FEEDBACK

Send to rachael@clubsoda.org.uk

ART SHOULD COMFORT THE DISTURBED & DISTURB THE COMFORTABLE



AN INTERVIEW WITH **EMMA SELWYN** - performer, activist, and proud member of Not Your Circus Dog

Emma is a neurodivergent artist and core member of performance collective Not Your Circus Dog. In this conversation, she shares her journey through creative spaces, her experience with Access All Areas, and how the groundbreaking show, Not F*ing Sorry is changing minds.

So, Emma, how would you describe yourself as an artist?

"I do a lot of live art and performance that doesn't necessarily sit neatly in any one box. I also do devised work, which means I create my own pieces from the ground up rather than acting in plays that already exist."

“ “ **It felt like fate. It changed everything.** ” ”

"Even in primary school I was performing. I once played chimes in a nativity play to wake the three wise men up. Very aggressively, I might add."

How did you first get involved with Access All Areas?

"Oh, that's a whole story. I was deeply unhappy and working in a call centre. Just before Christmas 2015, I found out I could apply for the diploma course through Access All Areas. It felt like fate. It changed everything."

Emma explains that the diploma, which began in 2014, is one of the only professional-level theatre training courses in the UK made specifically for learning disabled and neurodivergent adults.



What kind of support does Access All Areas offer?

“They understand both pastoral care and the performing arts. For example, they might help translate documents into easy read or support travel. They support you and only step in if you ask. There’s also a safeguarding team in place in case anything serious happens.”

“ “ It is support that respects you as an artist and a human being. ” ”

What kind of work does the company create?

“The work is often raw, bold, and about our lived experiences. I was in Not F*ing Sorry, which started as our diploma final project in 2016. We chose cabaret because it’s fun, cheeky, and powerful. We’ve performed it for nearly ten years now.

“Access All Areas wants to push boundaries. We don’t want people to sit back and feel comfy; we want to challenge them. There’s this quote: ‘Art should comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable.’ That’s what we’re doing.”

“ “ We are achieving something for ourselves, not for people who think we can’t. ” ”

“This year, we even ran pre-show workshops for learning disabled audiences, to help people connect with their bolder selves. We explored stuff like confidence, feeling unsafe, or being misunderstood. I brought - among a lot of things - a great deal of passion and fury. I think?”



Have attitudes changed since touring the show?

“I think so, yeah. Especially in spaces that aren’t used to us. Once, our posters were even censored—but that’s the point. We want reactions, we want people to feel something. We’re disruptive.”



“Disability arts festivals welcomed us early on, but society has grown more negative towards disabled people in recent years. We need to reach social workers and government too, because they’re too comfortable. They need to hear from us.”



Final thoughts?

“I never thought I’d be doing this professionally, never in a million years. But I’m glad I am. And we’re not done yet.”
Emma’s voice is one of power, presence, and purpose—proof that disability arts isn’t just art. It’s activism. It’s connection. It’s everything the mainstream needs to hear.

WHAT IS COMING UP?



CROYDONITES FESTIVAL OF THEATRE

What: Simple Cypher's newest production of Roll Play. Be amazed when hip hop and circus collide in this explosive outdoor show.

When: Saturday 11th October, 2:15pm & 4pm

Where: North End, Croydon (outside METRO Bank)

Cost: Free - Suitable for all



Image: Steven Wright.
Performers: Ed Stephen, Chris Thomas, Kieran Warner

Croydonites is a festival of theatre and performance. Many other performances around Croydon run from 8th Oct - 1st Nov.

To find out more: www.croydonites.com/whats-on



RELAXED FILM SCREENINGS

What: An independent cinema in the heart of Croydon.

When:

The Wild Robot (PG) 102mins
Saturday 11th October, 11am

The Roses (15) 145mins
Saturday 8th November, 11am

Where: David Lean Cinema,
Croydon Clocktower,
Katharine Street, CR9 1ET

3 See map on page 3

Cost: £6

To book online:
davidleancinema.org.uk



Two wheelchair spaces are available and can be booked in advance. The lights are on low, the audience can move around if they wish to. Box office opens 45 mins before the film starts.

WHAT IS COMING UP?



TAPROOM & IGNITION BREWERY

What: A chilled-out evening for neurodivergent customers. Join us for drinks, board games, and arts & crafts.

When: Second Saturday of the month on the following dates:
11th October, 5:30pm – 9pm
15th November, 5:30pm – 9pm
13th December, 5:30pm – 9pm

Where: 44a Sydenham Road, Sydenham, SE26 5QX

 See map on page 3



Monthly neurodiversity socials for adults of all ages who like things a little quieter and a little darker than usual.

Find out more: www.ignition.beer/the-taproom



EXHIBITION AT MUSEUM OF CROYDON

What: Art and Joy.
An exhibition inspired by themes of what brings us joy!

When:
Until the 29th November
11am – 4pm, Wed – Sat

Where: Atrium Gallery and Temporary Exhibition Gallery, Croydon Clocktower, Katharine Street, Croydon, CR9 1ET

 See map on page 3



Image: Glenn Foster Photography

The exhibition Art and Joy, hopes to bring happiness and to increase understanding of the importance of art for wellbeing.

Find out more: museumofcroydon.com



CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY

What: Join LDAC for art, poetry, games, food and more. As we celebrate a future where everyone is seen, valued and empowered.

When:

Thursday 28 October,
11am – 3pm

Where: St Augustine's
Church and Centre,
St. Augustines Avenue,
South Croydon, CR2 6BA

 See map on page 3



To find out more: call **07521 417134**
email stella@ldacroydon.org.uk or
victoria@croydonmencap.org.uk

SODA CREW DJS AT BOXPARK


What: Soda Crew DJs

When:

Monday 27th October,
7pm – 10pm

Where:

Boxpark, 99 George Street,
Croydon, CR0 1LD

 See map on page 3

Cost: £5 on the door
(£2 for carers)

To find out more:
clubsoda.org.uk



Our pioneering South London club night returns to Boxpark Croydon, featuring DJs and MCs from South London with learning disabilities.

WHAT IS COMING UP?



CROYDON FOLK CLUB

What: Croydon Folk Club exists to promote Folk Music performances in Croydon. Set away from the hustle and bustle of the town centre at a venue that few may have discovered before.

When: Mondays at 8pm

Where: Ruskin House,
23 Coombe Road, Croydon,
CR0 1BD

4 See map on page 3

Find out more:

croydonfolkclub.org.uk

or email croydonfolkclub@aol.com



If you enjoy music and real ale then this is one not to miss. The Cedar Hall and Ruskin House are accessible but contacting in advance is recommended.



SODADA IN THE WILD

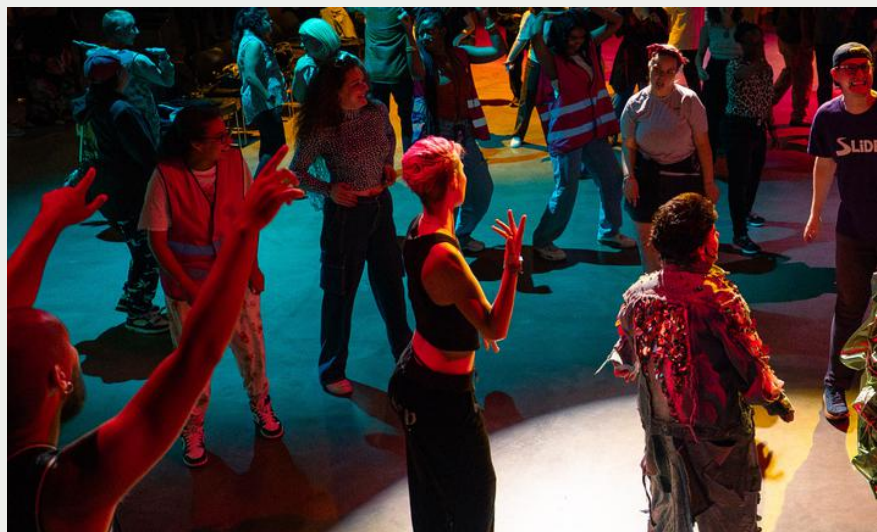
What: Sodada is a multidisciplinary cabaret night produced by learning disabled artists, showcasing learning disabled talent, for a learning disabled audience.

When:

Saturday 22nd November,
6pm - 9pm

Where: The Old Library,
14-16 Knights Hill, Norwood,
SE27 0HY

6 See map on page 3



Expect an explosion of music, dance, and more, all wrapped in a vibrant jungle theme (dressing up is encouraged!).

Find out more: slidedance.org



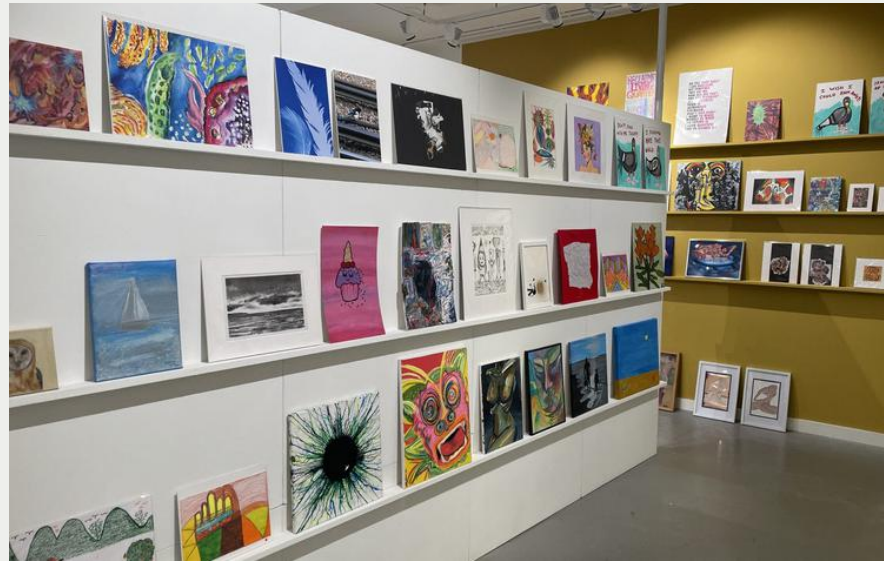
BETHLEM GALLERY ANNUAL ART FAIR

What: Join us for our annual art fair showcasing work by over 150 artists connected to the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

When:
Saturday 29th November
– Saturday 10th January

Where: Bethlem Gallery
Bethlem Royal Hospital
Monks Orchard Road
Beckenham, BR3 3BX

9 See map on page 3



Paintings, prints, ceramics, photographs, textiles and sculpture, all for sale at very affordable prices, and located, this year, in the museum's temporary exhibition space.

Find out more: bethlemgallery.com



SODA BEAT AT STANLEY ARTS

What: Soda Beat Xmas Cracker

When: Monday 1st December
7pm - 10pm

Where: Stanley Arts,
12 South Norwood Hill,
SE25 6AB

7 See map on page 3

Cost: £5 on the door
(£2 for carers)

To find out more:
clubsoda.org.uk



Planning to feature every single one of Club Soda's musicians at this event with some very special and unique collaboration. Bring a festive hat!



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Want to know more about...



Club Soda?

Email: info@clubsoda.org.uk



Gig Buddies?

Email: sorrel@clubsoda.org.uk

leisurelink



Croydon

Leisure Link?

Email: rebecca@clubsoda.org.uk

Let us know which places you love to go to in and around Croydon by contacting loraine@clubsoda.org.uk

"I love PHAB Club"

VALERIE

"I love The Oval Tavern"

GIG BUDDY

"I love SoDaDa at Fairfield"

TOFI

"I love Heart of Gaming"

JORDON

NOTE: We work hard to make sure that the information in this magazine is correct. Please always check with venues and services before heading out.

Thank you Learning Disability Alliance Croydon for sponsoring us. We can now reach more people in Croydon than ever before.



You can support Club Soda by donating online at www.justgiving.com/charity/clubsodauk or in person at our events.

We are grateful to City Bridge Foundation and Adobe Foundation for funding Leisure Link.



CITY BRIDGE FOUNDATION



Adobe Foundation