CROYDON u3a BULLETIN

November 2026

Charity number: 1029466

www.croydonu3a.org.uk



Here is the front page of our very own Croydon u3a calendar for 2027, with stunning photos showing some of our activities. Want one? They will be available at the Monthly Meeting on the 11 November for a donation of £10.



New members' Welcome Coffee Morning – you are sure of a warm welcome with Croydon u3a

Contents

Pages

1. **Front Page**
2. **Chair's Letter & Diary Page**
3. **AGM**
4. **Committee Information**
5. **Card Workshop**
6. **News from the Groups**

15. City of Surprises

16. Scams & Fraud

17. Community Outreach

18. News from the Travel Team

23. Interest Groups List

The address of the Masonic Hall is 73 Oakfield Road, Croydon CR0 2UX. Masonic Hall free car park is in Stanton Road.

Monthly Meetings: the formal part of the meeting starts at 2.15 pm. Please come earlier to enjoy tea, coffee, biscuits and a chat, or come for lunch. The Masonic Hall provides a special u3a menu at reasonable prices – order from the bar.

Croydon u3a QR Code

Find us at Croydon u3a

Bulletin stop press: The next Bulletin will be out late December early January 2027. Copy to Linda Grigsby, Bulletin Secretary lindagrigsby17@gmail.com, cc Jenny Wilson jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk by 15 December

To join a Zoom event email jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk mob. 07808 723686

-



Jenny Wilson– CHAIR

Dear Croydon u3a Members

Our 40th Annual General Meeting was a very successful event. We now have two new committee members – their details are in this issue – and we thanked Maggie Chan for her inspirational service as Interest Group Co-ordinator and Publicity Officer. Maggie will continue to promote our organisation outside committee responsibilities.

The formal part of the meeting was followed by very informative talks about Fraud, Scams and Trading Standards. Details of who to contact & how to report concerns are in the issue.

I am thrilled with our new initiative – a Croydon u3a Calendar 2027 – the brainchild of committee member Linda. It promotes many of our Interest Groups and activities. I showed it to a few other London u3a chairs – they were very impressed. If you have an idea to develop and promote our organisation, please speak to a member of the committee for it to be considered.

At our December Monthly Meeting we will be hosting staff and representatives from Orpheus College, which is a specialist organisation which empowers young disabled adults to build independent fulfilling lives through the performing and creative arts. The founder Richard Stilgoe will be joining us. So, we will be welcoming the Christmas season in style – please come in your Christmas jumper, Santa outfit, sparkly top, flashing bow tie …… Prizes for the best dressed members.

Very best wishes for the rest of 2026,

–

jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk

Best wishes,

Jenny

Jenny Wilson, Chair of Croydon u3a and London Region Council Rep



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2026/27

DATE	EVENT	FURTHER DETAILS/ SPEAKER
2026	**MM = Monthly Meeting**	
Wed 11 Nov at 2.15 pm	**MM** at Masonic Hall	VE Day – A Day of Happiness – Nick Dobson
Mon 16 Nov at 7.30pm	Quiz Night – Zoom	
Fri 4 Dec	A Christmas Market in Rochester	Now full – waiting list
Wed 9 Dec at 2.15 pm	**MM** at Masonic Hall	Orpheus College & Sir Richard Stilgoe for a Christmas celebration
2027		
Wed 13 Jan at 2.15 pm n	**MM** at Masonic Hall	Paul Whittle – By Scotland's Far Shores
Mon 18 Jan at 7.30 pm	Quiz Night – Zoom	
Wed 10 Feb at 2.15 pm	**MM** at Masonic Hall	Louise Camby - Spring
Mon 15 Feb at 7.30 pm	Quiz Night – Zoom	
Wed 10 Mar at 2.15 pm	**MM** at Masonic Hall	Colin Brown - RNLI
Mon 15 Mar at 7.30 pm	Quiz Night – Zoom	
Thurs **15 Apr**	**Croydon u3a's 40th Birthday**	
Wed 21 Apr	Members' Lunch at Crown & Pepper	Details to follow
Tues 18 May	Outing to Stansted Park	Details in this Bulletin
Tue 13 July	Public Transport outing to Camden Lock cruise	Details in this Bulletin

If you are interested in joining the Zoom Quiz Nights contact Jenny Wilson
jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk



AGM 2026

Thank you to all of you who attended the AGM on 14 October, and those who were unable to attend but sent in proxy votes. During the meeting I asked the new Committee to vote on whether they should ask Jenny Wilson (Chair), Joy Ellery (Vice Chair) and Paul Smith (Treasurer) to remain in their roles until the next AGM as no other volunteers were forthcoming. This was done in accordance with our Constitution. However, technically a Committee starts their term of office after an AGM, but I thought it was important that our members left the meeting assured that we had a Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer in place rather than leaving with uncertainty. I know that some members have been very worried about the future of Croydon u3a because of this uncertainty. So to be clear - we have the key officers in place until the next AGM and Croydon u3a will continue as before. Nevertheless, we do need volunteers to shadow the roles for our long term future. Trisha Holmes, Business Secretary.

Thank you

Many thanks for giving me an M&S token and for your kind words at the AGM, when I stood down from the Croydon u3a Committee.

I have very much enjoyed the Coordinator roles I have held - and it has been both a pleasure and a privilege to be able to support the work of Croydon u3a over the last few years.

Maggie Chan

Croydon AGM – October 2026

We have two new members who have now joined the Committee:

KAREN IP



I am so pleased I joined the u3a earlier this year, shortly after I retired. In my career I worked for many years with both younger and older people in Croydon and Surrey, first as a Careers Adviser in schools and more recently as the Information & Advice Manager at Age UK Croydon.

Prior to that I worked in IT and spent six fascinating years living in Hong Kong (when it was still a British colony), where I married my Chinese husband – hence my very short surname!

I am currently enjoying being part of the u3a Cycling and Tai Chi groups, and I have also joined u3a's Interest Groups Online. I have been a Trustee for many years, most recently for Croydon Almshouses, as well as for Croham Hurst Good Neighbours and the Croydon Drop-In youth counselling service.

SHEILA BATCHELOR



I spent my early years in North London, moving to Croydon in 1966 when we bought our first house in Elmore Road South Norwood. My 4 children have attended school and grown up in Croydon, and I have returned to the neighbouring area of Beckenham.

My early career has been in education, teaching in Primary schools in Croydon for 4 years before moving into Special Education which I loved and was able to continue in a part -time capacity into my 70s.

After retirement I trained as a City of London Guide in 2021-22 and have been able to enjoy guiding and planning walks since then. Joining Croydon u3a was by chance as one of my granddaughters has married into the family of one of the committee members who was very enthusiastic about the benefits and enjoyment offered and persuaded me to join in 2022.

I have enjoyed the monthly meetings and have joined one of the History of London groups which I have also taken on a couple of City walks. I hope to play a part in keeping Croydon u3a going for the benefit of all.

See photos of Croydon Committee members here
https://croydonu3a.org.uk/imgs/committee_photos_26_27_october_2618.pdf

And photos of our Support Team
here https://croydonu3a.org.uk/imgs/committee_support_team_2026___4745.pdf

Card Making Workshop

Have you never made your own cards before or are experienced?



Here is you chance to make your own special Christmas, Seasonal or Occasion cards for loved ones, family or friends, with all resources provided. Whether you want traditional, floral or glitzy, bright colours or pastels there will be something for everyone. Also, you will make an easy flower decoration using paper cake cases.



The workshop will run from 2pm – 4.pm on Saturday **12th December at St George's Church Hall, Barrow Road. Waddon CR0 4EZ**.
The cost will be £10 with refreshments included.

There is parking beside the hall and the 119 bus stops at Crowley Crescent, quite close by (about 5 min walk)

How to book your place =

1. **Places are limited - please email / phone/ Text**
   angie.stagg@croydonu3a.org.uk T:07905230704 (leave a voicemail if no answer)

2. Payment by **BACS**
   Transfer £10 to Croydon u3a sort code 23 05 80 a/c 13630003 Please use the reference **CW and your Initial & Surname**

   Then email this information below with a note that you have transferred the fee.

   Name ..... u3a membership number .....

   Email .....

   Phone .....

3. Payment by **CHEQUE**
   Cheque payable to Croydon u3a for £10 with reference **CW** on the reverse. Post your cheque to Angie Stagg 40 Barrow Road, Waddon. Croydon. CR0 4EY

4. Payment in **CASH** to Angie at the monthly meeting with the completed slip.

News from the Groups

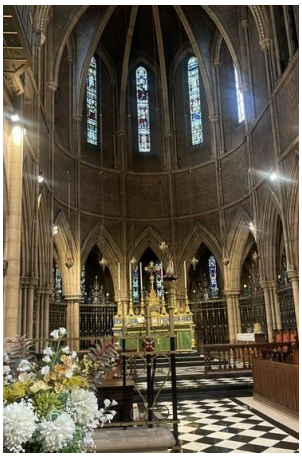
HELP! Your u3a needs **YOU**: Croydon u3a is proud to provide 70 groups for our members to enjoy. However we are the victims of our own success - as our membership grows, our groups are becoming full. Please do consider becoming a Group Leader - it isn't onerous and you will be supported in setting up and leading a group. You can either start a totally new group (tightrope walking perhaps?) or start a parallel group - such as a walking group - you don't need to think of a walk yourself as we have a range of walks to choose from. For an informal chat - you can phone me on 0208 777 4235 or email me at trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk

BLUES AND JAZZ – thank you Andrew!

Andrew Agius, Blues and Jazz, has stepped down as Group Leader. Andrew has led the group for many years and I would like to send him our thanks for all that he has done to make the group so enjoyable. This of course leaves the group without a leader – please let me know if you are interested in helping to keep the group going – you will receive support.
Trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk

Looking at London Group

Tour of St Michael and all Angels Poplar Walk Croydon
We had a very informative tour of the above church by Fr Antonio Joseph , who used to be a foreign diplomat for Antigua and Barbuda ,and is a mighty presence being about 6 foot 7 inches tall. We looked at the font designed by GF Bodley in 1904 , with a carved canopy designed by his son. The nave built of London stock brick and bath stone .The pulpit designed by G F Bodley in 1898.



The high altar was added in 1920.The tall window shows the Archangels with St Michael. The clock also designed by Bodley made in 1896 by Gillett and Johnstone. The organ is a Father Willis from 1872 made for the original temporary church and moved 10 years later to its present position. The double fronted case was designed by, yes you've guessed Bodley
We were then taken in to look at all the most exquisitely embroidered vestments, in very rich colours, and they change colours according to the church calendar, and clergy can choose the colour of their choice for their own vestment.



We then ended the outing by attending the organ recital by Angela Sones, Director of Music from St Albans Birmingham. Unfortunately only about a dozen people attended the recital which is a great shame, think it is not as well known as the Croydon Minster recitals.

Fiona Bowles

News from the Groups

Members of Croydon u3a's **Local History group** were delighted to be invited to help with Shirley Community Library's Local History project.



As you may know, the Library was saved from closure, with the non-profit Community organisation *Play Place Innov8 CIC* taking on its management under a long-term lease. *Play Place* is working closely with residents, volunteers, and community groups and the Library now hosts a wide variety of different activities as well as still providing a library service.

The Library holds several files of archival resources which badly need indexing and sorting - a project which was taken on by volunteer Dawn Gibbons. Herself a member of Croydon u3a, Dawn turned to us for help, as well as inviting other members of the community to get involved. Work has now begun on sorting out the files and as you can see in the photos, the project is proving engaging and interesting.

Dawn writes: 'If there are any u3a members who have any items to donate to the library archives about Shirley we would be happy to accept them'. She adds that they would also be welcome '…if they just want to visit to view the library archives and find out about other facilities at the library'.

Shirley Community Library still needs more volunteers for a variety of different roles - email the Library Manager, Becky Murray at becky.murray@playplace.org if you are interested in helping.

Maggie Chan

CREAM OR JAM FIRST???

Barbara Reynolds writes that the **POETRY FOR PLEASURE** group had a wonderful clotted cream tea with a range of cakes, back in the summer, courtesy of Philippa Bassett. We had spent an enjoyable afternoon reading and listening to poems on the theme of **Holidays and the Seaside.** The poems ranged from Pam Ayres to Philip Larkin, Robert Frost and Rita Dove, with their descriptions of blue water, yellow sands and listening to the waves. What unites the group members is not what to put on the scone first, but listening to poems being read aloud. You are welcome to join us on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 2pm. Please contact Trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk



News from the Groups

Books Made Into Film

The group now meets at Shirley Community Library, corner of Wickham Road / Hartland Way, Croydon CR0 8BH – third Thursday each month, 11am – 12.30. Why not come along and have a good discussion about books, films, life, the universe and everything. Just bring £2 as a contribution to the Community Library. You can also purchase hot drinks.



Image by Freepik

PICKLEBALL

You may remember in an earlier Bulletin I asked if anyone was interested in starting a Pickleball group? I am delighted to say that there are 2 volunteers willing to set up and run a group, that will potentially meet twice a month.



Pickleball is considered to be the world's fastest growing sport, is good for your health and can be as competitive as you like. It is allegedly named after the pet dog of the person who developed the idea! If you are interested in joining a group please get in touch with me via email: Trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk

Singing for Pleasure

If you are one of the many people who enjoyed singing in your school choir but have not sung for ages or indeed have never sung in a group for whatever reason, then why not come along and ***Find Your Voice***. You will no doubt have been told of the many benefits of singing with others. Singing for Pleasure in my friendly group; stimulates the brain, lengthens your lifespan, breeds confidence, keeps Alzheimer's at bay and is good for your general wellbeing.



I am looking forward to welcoming back present members after the long break – extended by the heatwave peeking on successive Wednesdays. More information can be found on the Singing for Pleasure page in the "interests" section of the Croydon u3a website or contact Gillian by email using *gjbibby@hotmail.com*. The first two dates are the 9th and 30th of September. So why not come along, give it a go and ***Find Your Voice***.

Directed from the piano by Gillian Bibby

News from the Groups

Help with Phones, Laptops and Tablets

If you need IT help, why not pop into the Masonic Hall before the Monthly Meetings where we offer one to one help from 1:30 to 2:15 on a first come first served basis with issues including:

- Using your laptop, mobile phone or tablet for creating and organising documents, photos and other files.
- Sending and reading emails and text messages, and keeping in touch by Zoom and WhatsApp.

Just ask for Steve or Vanessa on the day

Ballroom Dancing Group

Join our Ballroom dancing group where every age is the perfect age to dance with Thomas and Harley who are our semi-professional coaches.



No partner needed. Remember A B C D (Any Body Can Dance). Classes are 1st and 4th Tuesday of the month at Shirley Methodist Church, Eldon Avenue, Shirley CR0 8SD from 11 am to 12 noon at a cost of £7

If you are interested please contact Karen Hook, 07799 776684 karen.hook@hotmail.com

Table Tennis

The Table Tennis group has proved to be extremely popular and some changes have been made to ensure that everyone has a chance to play. There are now two groups as of 20 February 2026. Group 1 will meet from 12.15 to 2.15 led by Andy Gray; Group 2 will meet 2.30 – 4.30 led by Steve May. **Please note Group 2 is FULL.** The venue and day remain the same – St Matthew's Church every Friday. If you are interested in joining Group 1 please contact Andy Gray: andygray64@btinternet.com

.

News from the Groups

Botanical Watercolour Painting,



Caje Moniz is now planning another 12-week course in botanical watercolour painting. Meeting once a week, the course includes:

- observation and sketching;
- colour mixing and basic techniques;
- painting leaves, flowers, stems, branches, bark;
- painting fine detail;
- composition, background and texture.

Participants will need to have their own equipment - a detailed list of items will be provided. To express your interest please contact **Trisha Holmes, Interest Groups Coordinator trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk**

The Singalong Group



The Singalong Group is now fully established and more members would be welcome! We meet on the 2nd Monday of the month at Shirley Methodist Church'. If you would like to join us please contact Trish Bishop on 07711 229899, email trishbish@outlook.com, or Linda Grigsby on 07754 092042, email lindagrigsby17@gmail. com

It doesn't matter if you don't think you can sing just come along and join in the fun. Please note that IT IS NOT Karaoke!. T he cost is £4 including refreshments.



This is the opportunity to enjoy a great evening. We meet on-line on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7.30pm. The questions are set by those group members who volunteer and the variety is tremendous. There are no teams, no score sharing & no worries if you can't get a few answers!! We learn a bit along the way and have a great evening.

There is room for new members to the group and there's no charge.

Contact Jenny Wilson – jenny.wilson@croydonu3a.org.uk

News from the Groups

Board Games Fun



Did you know that current research indicates that playing board games helps you to feel good? Well Croydon u3a knows this already! **Board Games Fun** welcomes anyone who.wants to have fun on a Friday afternoon: there are 1,000+ games on offer so there will be something for you to try. It's a great way to meet people, have a chat and a laugh - and even discover a skill you never knew you had. Light refreshments are available in the cafe. The group meets every second Friday from 2.30 - 5.30 pm in the Ludoquist Cafe, 63-67 High Street, Croydon, just minutes from the Clocktower library complex. There is a reduced entry fee of £5 to Croydon u3a members. Come along play board games...have fun.

Contact Trisha if you are interested. trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk

Aqua Aerobics

At CROYDON HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS CLUB

Old Farleigh Road, Selsdon CR2 8YB

Aqua Aerobics is now a regular class meeting in school holidays on the dates below:

Tuesday 27 October half term – 1.30pm
Tuesday 31 December – time tbc
February 2027 – half term

Contact Linda Grigsby on 07754 092042/ lindagrigsby17@gmail.com to book your place.

The cost is £7



News from the Groups

Focus on Africa - Come and Discover!

Curious about Africa? Have a story to share, or simply want to learn something new? We'd love you to join us!



Perhaps you grew up in Africa, have lived or worked there, or have friends and family on the Continent. Maybe you've visited and want to discover more. Or perhaps you've never been to Africa but are curious about its people, places, history and cultures.

Whatever your background or level of knowledge, there's a place for you in ***Focus on Africa*!**

We meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month at Croydon Central Library, sharing stories and experiences and learning from one another. Our meetings are friendly, lively and varied - and in the best Croydon u3a tradition, we learn from each other, discovering something new each time.



Our programme for the coming year includes hearing about Uganda, Zanzibar, Ghana, The Gambia and Senegal from members who have lived in or visited these places. We'll also explore African art, music and fabrics, visit exhibitions, museums and cultural events, and enjoy meals together at restaurants serving food from different African countries.



We want to explore Africa beyond the headlines, celebrating its rich history, diverse cultures, creativity and achievements.
Come with your questions, share your experiences, discover something new and make new friends. **We look forward to welcoming you!**

Interested? Contact Grace Richardson, the Group Leader, via Trisha Holmes, the Interest Groups Coordinator.

News from the Groups

Members of the Environment and Climate Crisis Group have been involved in testing water quality

We took part in Europe-wide citizen-science project, testing our local water sites, in order to discover the level of nitrates and phosphates.

At **Jubilee Pond** the water level was very low and quite brown. The readings showed moderate Nitrate level but the phosphate concentration was very high, beyond the scale.



The test involves scooping a precise amount of pond water into a measuring pot and sucking that into the tube with powder reagent. After 3 minutes N03 and 5 minutes P04 shaking and holding tight, the colour would change to indicate the level of chemical pollution – the higher pollution level, the deeper colour.

We continued to **The Gruffy – Sanderstead Pond** feeling more experienced. It was good to see lots of life – ducks and underwater movement, fish or what? The readings were also encouraging N03 very low and P04 in the low to moderate level.



We were unable to test the **pond at Heathfield House** as it is just mud and growing a fine number of plants instead of water. The ponds in **Little Heath Wood** were also dry so we looked at the ornamental waterfall in the Japanese Garden. Sadly, the area has not been well maintained and there was only a small residual pool choked with foliage, duckweed and leaves but the banks are rewilding with flowers. The phosphate level was unsurprisingly very high as there is no water flow and lots of organic matter.

We moved into the London Wildlife Trust managed **Bramley Bank** to check the pool in the woods there and although the water level is now very low there was lots of life, dragonflies, water boatmen and probably frogs too.

Here to round off our investigations we found the purest water, both Nitrate and Phosphate readings were very low indicating good ecological status. Perhaps this is because it was the most natural, probably spring fed in the woods and with no pollution sources nearby. We were left feeling that we need to know more and intrigued as to what the situation will be in April when we test our local water again.

Please read the full report with excellent photos on our website

https://u3acroydon.weebly.com/water-testing.html written by **Sheila Kemble**.

News from the Groups

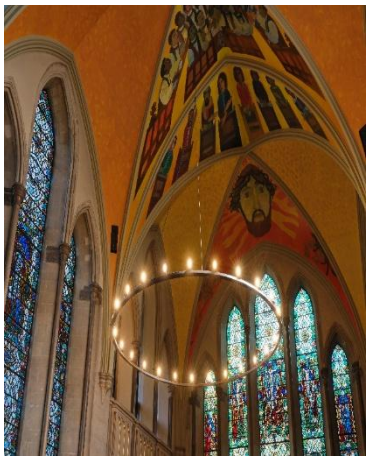
Southbank Group

The Southbank group started in April and aims to visit places of interest and to see performances in the Southbank area which encompasses Waterloo, Elephant & Castle and Blackfriars. We have also ventured onto the North Bank and Westminster.



As the Garden Museum and Lambeth Palace are located next door to each other we decided to visit both buildings. We took the train to Vauxhall from where there was a short walk to the Garden Museum. As 2 of our members who had booked tickets couldn't make it, we had 2 extra people join us, which included the Group Leader of the Architecture group who was very helpful. He gave us information about some of the buildings we passed on our way, which everyone found interesting

The Garden Museum was founded by Rosemary and John Nicholson in 1977 to rescue the abandoned church of St Mary-at-Lambeth, which was due for demolition. The church is the burial place of John Tradescant, the Elder (1570 – 1638), who was the first British gardener and plant hunter and his son John Tradescant the Younger (1608–1662) who continued the family legacy. Together, the Tradescants dreamed of "a well mulched Eden on the Thames," gathering wonders from three continents into one extraordinary home. Captain William Bligh (1754–1817), who is best known for the mutiny on HMS Bounty in 1789 which was made into a film, is also buried there. It is a fairly small museum and includes paintings, garden history and exhibits from TV garden related programmes which included puppets from the Flower Pot Men from Watch with Mother TV series which most of us watched as young children! The Medieval Tower had just finished being renovated and was open for the first time on our visit. There are 131 steps up a narrow passage to a viewing platform which was well worth the climb.



Lambeth Palace has tours monthly during the summer months to support different charities and our tour was supporting Arts for Dementia. The tour included visiting the State Rooms, where generations of Archbishops have welcomed guests and dignitaries, Guard Room, dating back to the 14th century, Great Hall, built in 1663 by Archbishop William Juxon and Crypt Chapel, which is a quiet space for prayer and reflection. The exhibits included portraits of former Archbishops, gifts received from dignitaries and other artefacts. After the tour food and drinks were available in the courtyard. It was a lovely sunny day so it was nice to eat and socialise together. On our return some of us walked back via Waterloo and the Graffiti Tunnel.



If you are interested in joining the **Southbank Group** or would like more information please contact Liz Brereton brereton59@gmail.com

City of Surprises

We met Green Badge City of London Guide Sheila Bachelor at City Thameslink to begin our walk. Although we stayed close to our starting point, the area offered plenty to discover, with Sheila bringing its history, stories, and hidden details to life.



Cutlers Hall

The Worshipful Company of Cutlers
One of the oldest Livery Companies in London. Sheila told us about the intricately carved terracotta frieze on the wall outside the building. Four panels each depicting a different craft – Forging, Grinding, Hafting and Finishing.



St Sepulchre's Church, known as the Musicians Church. Henry Wood of Proms fame is laid to rest in here. On the corner, outside of the church is the first Metropolitan Drinking Fountain.



Golden Boy of Pye Corner

The area has a dubious history; houses of ill repute, The Fortune of War pub where body-snatched corpses used to be held in a backroom until the surgeons at the nearby Saint Bartholomew's had time to pick them up. Ironically the Great Fire of London stopped at this point, saving both the pub and Cock Lane.



"Exquisite Pain' by Damien Hirst

St. Bartholomew the Great, an amazing church with a sculpture "Exquisite Pain' by Damien Hirst depicting the brutal murder of St. Bartholomew. The area near Smithfield is where both Queen Mary and Elizabeth I had many people put to death for their religious beliefs. William Wallace also met his end here in a grisly death. There is a memorial to him, but sadly the building was covered in scaffolding, we were able to see some of it.



William Wallace Memorial



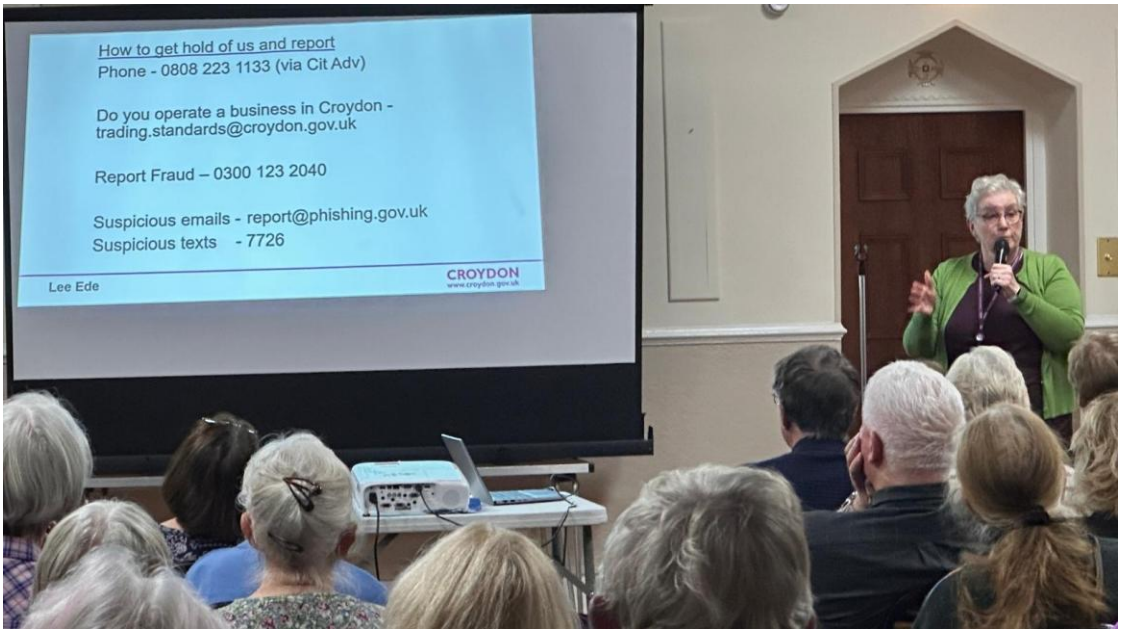
Temple Bar

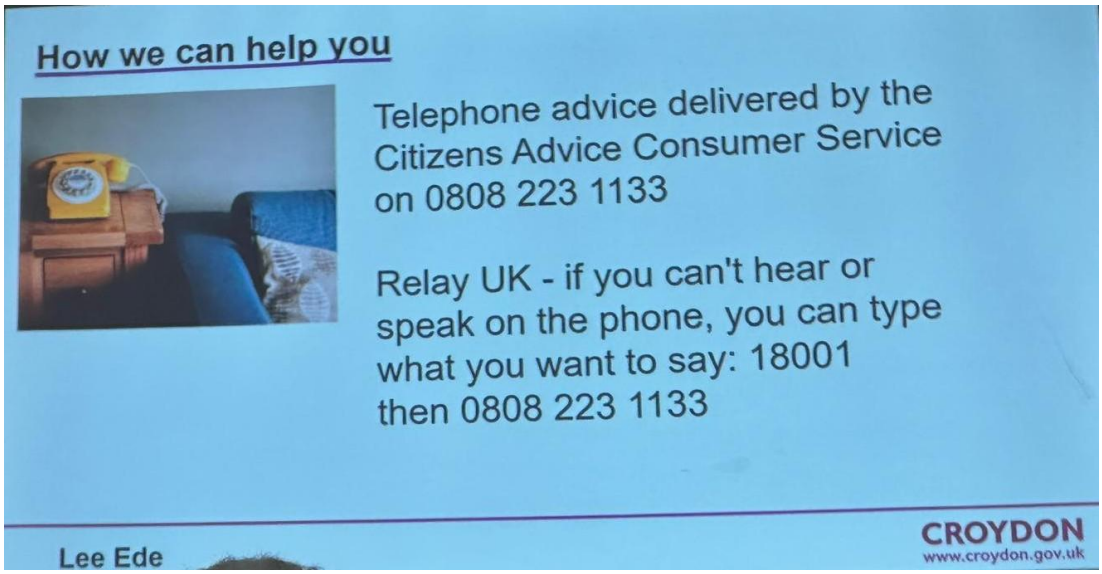
The only remaining Wren Gateway, originally in Fleet Street, moved to Theobold's Park, Hertfordshire. Returned to London, re-erected in Paternoster Square near St. Pauls Cathedral in 2004.

Report by Anne Tanner

Scams & Frauds

The 2 speakers at our October meeting recommended these details for anyone concerned about a scam, fraud or similar issue they wished to report:.





COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Over the past two years Croydon u3a members have worked to give those people that **Crisis Skylight – Croydon** are helping daily.

Our role has been to help support the development of a small Christmas goodie bag for all 650 “members”, and proving hundreds of toiletries etc. And, we have gone through our wardrobes and given warm clothing required.

This year we have been asked to help provide more male “boxer shorts” underwear, and I am hoping we can provide 300 new boxer shorts (small, medium, large), and hope our male members will help us by giving us a new “pair of knickers”.

On the back of this information is a full list of all the things I will be collecting from October onwards to early December. So please see if you have any items that meet our key requests. I will pick up bags at the General Meetings, or I am happy for members to deliver to my door.

If you have an hour or two available to help make up the food goodies bags early December then let me know if you would like to join the team

My name is Valerie Apps, and my contact is 07831 220483

Items specifically requested by Crisis:

- Mens underwear – boxers (s,m,l).
- And spray deodorants for both male and female.
- Moisturisers – lip balm, hand cream, Vaseline etc. T
- Toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Additional items requested:

- Personal hygiene products for women. Disposable razors and shaving cream for men. And small shampoo, shower gel, etc

CLOTHING:

- Coats: Male & Female waterproof/thick coats. Plus hats and gloves.
- Jumpers: Male and female thick winter jumpers. Winter shirts and sweatshirts. Jogging bottoms, outdoor trousers.
- Footwear: Male and female boots (no heels), walking boots, shoes, trainers.

INDIVIDUAL CHRISTMAS GIFTS:

We will be making up individual goodie bags of sweets and biscuits etc. All sweets, biscuits, cereal bars etc have to be doubled wrapped e.g. 6 wrapped biscuits in a packet. Wrapped sweets – e.g. kit-kat, twix, etc

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

News from the Travel Team

CROYDON u3a TRAVEL TEAM 2026

Hello fellow u3a members.

After a very hot Summer the leaves on the trees have changed colour and are now falling as we enter the colder period of the year. And with this we head to the end of another successful year for the Croydon u3a Travel Team. Many thanks to those members who have been on the short breaks, coach trips and other visits we had organised for you in 2026.

The biggest issue facing us has been the sharp rise in petrol and diesel costs meaning hiring coaches has become very costly. This will impact on our trips into 2027. Combined with increased entrance fees, keeping trip costs down is proving challenging.

Looking back on the year we had a variety of activities. At the end of March there was a 5 day break to the Wye Valley and the Forest of Dean. Back in May members enjoyed the coach trip to Parham House and Gardens with its guided tour of the historic house with time to wander and enjoy the lovely gardens. In June members enjoyed a boat trip along the Thames on a Thames Boat Trip with lunch. July saw a trip to Sutton Hoo with its reduced cost for those with a National Trust membership. In August we did two trips using public transport – one to the Old Jewish Quarter and one to Crossness Pumping Station.

Two Members Lunches took place – one in March and one in October with a trip to the Christmas Market at Rochester taking place in December to complete the 2026 programme.

In October 21 members enjoyed a 5 day holiday in Liverpool and the feedback was excellent.

What happened about the Bayeux Tapestry visit at the British Museum that had been planned? As you know demand for tickets has been huge, and the original booking day had no provision for groups. It was a case of just ring the booking office. The general public was told to ring the same number! It proved impossible to get through. BUT this new booking period for Jan-Mar 2027 has a group booking form that had to be submitted in early October. We are now waiting to see if we have been successful and we will let you know in the January Bulletin.

So, we hope you have a great Christmas and wish you all a Happy New Year.

David, Cariss, Karen, Linda, Andy and Paul

Guided tour of the Crossness Pumping Station



17 members, led by Andy Gray travelled by train from East Croydon via Farringdon and Abbey Wood and then by taxis to Crossness, where we met our guide, Laura.

After tea and biscuits, we watched a short video about the history of London in the 1800s and it's lack of an appropriate method of dealing with its sewage.

This led to a number of cholera outbreaks and eventually in 1858 Joseph Bazalgette, chief engineer of the Metropolitan Board of Works, led the design of London's new main sewer system.

The Crossness Pumping Station was opened in 1865 at the southern outfall of the sewer system and was in use until the 1950s.

In 1985 a preservation group was formed and in 2003 one of the original steam pumping engines was returned to use. These are operated regularly at open events usually once a month.

It was a fascinating tour seeing the interior of this remarkably ornate Victorian building. The exhibition area covered the history of sewage, with a wonderful collection of toilets!

News from the Travel Team

Croydon u3a Holiday Break to Liverpool 5-9 October

21 members of the Croydon u3a (including1 member from Bromley u3a and 1 member from Caterham u3a) travelled by coach to Liverpool on a very dry autumnal day, which lasted throughout our week there. Many sites were seen and tours taken to see the legend of the Beatles and where they lived when they started out. Below is a photo of the famous 4, and of Cilla Black, and the two Johns outside the Cavern pub.



Also a photo of the Liver birds, Bella and Bertie.



This photo is of the original Tom Jones, who was our blue badge guide when we had our day trip to Chester. Here he is singing 'Calon Lân' in Welsh (meaning 'A Pure Heart'), and to my utter amazement George Taylor and Eric Trower from our group joined in with the chorus. It really gave me goosebumps, and John, our driver, said that it's the first time any of his passengers had joined in that particular hymn/song.

An 80th birthday was also celebrated for Pat, and here's a photo of her with her cake, which the hotel kindly cut up for us all to have a piece.











u3a Outing to Stansted Park

Tuesday 18 May 2027

Coach leaves at 8.30am from Fairfield Halls, Park Lane, Croydon, (please arrive by 8.15 am for registration) arriving back between 6.00 – 6.30 pm

The cost of this outing is £28 (includes tour around the house and chapel, which starts at 1pm, coach and driver's tip



In 1983, the 10th Earl of Bessborough gave Stansted Park, its beautiful contents, and the Arboretum to the public. Today, you can visit the beautiful State Rooms, furnished as if the 10th Earl was still at home, before exploring the extensive Servants Quarters below stairs. The history of the house and the family are brought to life by our friendly and knowledgeable stewards, who can assist you throughout your visit. From 1pm you are booked on the 'free flow tour' and visit the house and chapel at your leisure

Other places to visit are:

- Pavilion Tearoom
- Garden Centre
- Stansted Park Farm Shop
- Light railway £3.50)
- Maze (£2.50)
- Mobility: there is a wheelchair lift at the Castle



Return the booking form below to: Linda Grigsby, 37 Albatross Gardens, South Croydon CR2 8QW; Mob: 07754092042 **OR** Cariss Smith, 62 Penwortham Road, South Croydon CR2 0QS; Mob: 07904 163454, either at the Monthly Meeting in the Masonic Halls, **OR** by Bank Transfer account no. 13630003, sort code 23-05-80 **(PLEASE PUT THE OUTING NAME); OR** with a **cheque (payable to Croydon u3a) together with stamped addressed envelope.**.

……

BOOKING FORM – Stansted Park 18 May 2027

Leave 8.30 am from Fairfield Halls, departing approximately 4.00pm, arriving back around 6-6.30-pm.

Name(s)..... Membership No(s) .....
Address .....
Postcode: .....Mob No. .....E-mail .....

I would like ..... ticket(s). Total £..... (cheque payable to "**Croydon u3a") together with stamped addressed envelope** to. **OR** by Bank Transfer account no. **13630003, sort code 23-05-80 (PLEASE PUT THE OUTING NAME);**

My contact in case of emergency is: Name.....Tel. No. ……

News from the Travel Team

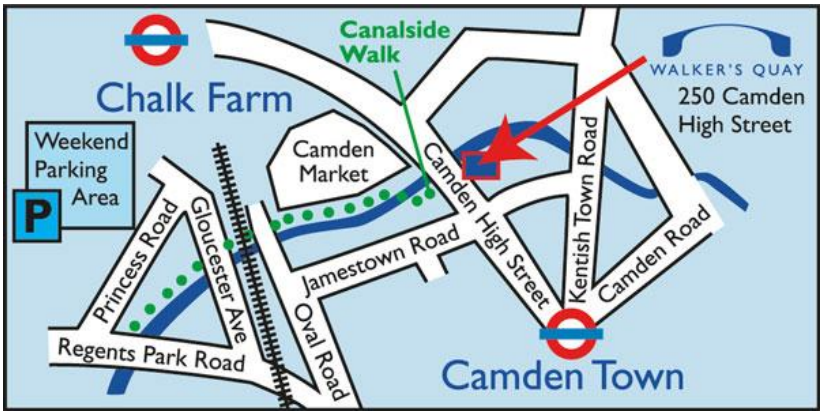
u3a Public Transport Outing Cruise from Camden Lock

Date: Tuesday 13 July 2027

Cost of this outing is £21



For over 57 years the Jenny Wren Boat Hire Company have been providing canal board cruises along the Regent's Canal, commencing at Walker's Quay.
Once on board you rise 2.5m in the lock at Camden, an experience unique to this cruise, before sailing through London Zoo and Regent's Canal; a short tunnel to Robert Browning's island at Little Venice, leafy stretches of Regent's Park, and colourful houseboats, returning to Walker's Quay. The cruise tales 90 minutes with a live commentary provided as you relax.
Be mindful that there are several steps down to the boat.



Travel details to be confirmed nearer the time. Contact **EITHER**: Linda Grigsby, by Email: lindagrigsby17@gmail.com; mob: 07754092042 **OR** Andy Grey; Email: andygray64@btinternet.com, Mob: 07979284343 to express an interest

……

Outing to Camen Lock - £21:

Name(s)..... Membership No(s) .....
Address .....
Postcode: .....Mob No. .....E-mail .....

I would like ..... ticket(s). Total £..... (cheque payable to "**Croydon u3a")** **together with stamped addressed envelope** to. **OR** by Bank Transfer account no. **13630003, sort code 23-05-80 (PLEASE PUT THE OUTING NAME); OR Cash at the Monthly Meetings**
My contact in case of emergency is: Name.....Tel. No. ……

News from the Travel Team

CROYDON u3a TRAVEL TEAM EVENT

General Information and Booking terms and conditions

Please carefully read these **Booking Terms and Conditions**, as submission of a Booking Form will be taken as your acceptance of them**. PLEASE INCLUDE AN EMERGENCY CONTACT PHONE NUMBER, WHICH MUST BE LOCATED IN THE UK.**

Coach Pick up and Drop off are at Fairfield Halls concourse See cover page of poster for times. On the day of an outing, if you have any problems joining the trip, please ring the Trip Organisers (mobile numbers on cover page of poster or on the ticket) by 7:00am. Outings are for Croydon u3a members only. In the event of low take-up, we may take members from other u3as.

Booking Forms: Booking forms for each outing are dealt with individually. When booking for multiple trips, a **separate booking form and stamped addressed envelope** are required for each one. Your booking may be jeopardised if this is not done. If you request more than one place, we must have the first name and surname and u3a number of each person.

Payment: EITHER make payment online to Croydon u3a - Account No. 13630003 Sort Code 230580 **Reference** – insert the **Name of the Trip**. If you are paying for someone else insert their name and the name of the trip. **OR** alternatively, pay by cheque payable to Croydon u3a. Please send your completed Booking Form, cheque and self-addressed envelope to the address given on the Booking Form. **OR** make a payment at the Monthly Meeting at the Travel Desk.

Reduced admission: We can only offer the reductions which are advertised by the venue itself at the time we book it. We cannot deal with any special offers or discounts you may personally have.

Refunds: Refunds are generally non-refundable unless we are able to resell the place.

Mobility Requirements: Some, but not all, of our outings are suitable for members with manageable mobility restrictions. You must contact the named Travel Team Trip Organiser member on the poster cover page before booking if you wish to bring a mobility aid so that we can discuss your needs.
We will mention in our publicity and outing details any significant access or safety considerations of which we are aware. **YOU MUST BE ABLE TO GET ON AND OFF THE COACH UNAIDED.**

Restricted mobility: Members with restricted mobility may be accompanied by a carer on any outing, but a place needs to be booked. The carer does not have to be a U3A member but will be required to pay the full cost. Members are asked to think carefully about the physical demands of the outing and their own situation before submitting an application. We need to ensure that all participants are safe and that everyone enjoys the day. Ultimately the Travel Team reserves the right to decline applications in exceptional situations, regrettable as this may be.

Your responsibilities: You are asked to pay particular attention to the scheduled **Arrival & Registration, & Departure** times and assemble at the designated meeting point. If you are late, we may have to leave without you to enable us to keep to the time-table. In such an instance, you would have to arrange your own return home, and you would not be entitled to any refund for the cost of the unused portion of the day. If this should happen, we would endeavour to contact you and/or your emergency name contact number, which MUST be a number in the UK. We ask members for their mobile phone numbers and for them to ensure they are **switched on** during the outing. Participants are responsible for themselves and their belongings.

Data protection: The details you give us on the booking form will be held by the organisers until the outing has taken place and will be used only for the purpose of the outing. When it has taken place, they will be destroyed. We keep a record of your mobile numbers to save you giving us those details on every outing. Participants are responsible for themselves and their belongings.

General: We try to schedule comfort stops at a convenient time and place, but it is not always easy to do this for a large coach. Apart from the initial outbound departure time, most other times are approximate. We cannot predict traffic hold-ups or bad weather, both of which may affect our arrival and final departure times.

CROYDON u3a INTEREST GROUPS

Contact: Trisha Holmes 020 8777 4235 - trisha.holmes@croydonu3a.org.uk should you be interested in any of the groups. (October 2026). Please note that * denotes Group is FULL; WL = waiting list

Group Title	Day of the Month	Start Time	Venue
Action Groups			
Ballroom Dancing	1 & 4 Tuesdays	11.00–12.00	SMC
Chair Yoga	2 & 4 Mon & 1,2,3 Fri	10.00 am	Zoom
	1 & 3 Mondays	10.15 am	SMC
Dance Exercise	Mondays *	9.45 am	St Matthew's Church
International Folk Dance	1 & 3 Wed	10.00 am	SMC
Line Dancing	1 & 3 Fri *	10.30 am	SMC
Table Tennis 1	Every Friday	12.15 – 2.15pm	St Matthew's Church
Table Tennis 2	Every Friday *	2.30 – 4.30pm	St Matthew's Church
Tai Chi 1	1 & 3 Mondays	12.45-1.45 pm	SMC
Tai Chi 2	1 & 3 Mondays	2.00 – 3.00pm	SMC
Active outdoor Groups			
Cycling	1 Weds & 3 Thurs	Varies	Varies
Historic Visits	4 Thurs *	Varies	Outings
Riverside & Canal Walks	3 Weds April – Oct *	Varies	Varies
Riverside & Canal Walks(2)	4 Weds April – Oct	Varies	Varies
Riverside & Canal Walks(3)	3 Tues Jan – Nov *	Varies	Varies
Riverside & Canal Walks(4)	3 Friday April – Oct	Varies	Varies
Riverside & Canal Walks(5)	4 Friday April – Oct *	Varies	Varies
Short Walks	2 & 4 Thurs	10.30 am	Varies
Arts & Crafts			
Knit & Natter	2 & 4 Tues *	11.00 am	Home – Waddon
Painting & Drawing **1**	Every Mon *	10.15	St John's Selsdon
Painting & Drawing **2**	Every Mon	10.15 am	SMC
Cultural Activities			
Architecture	3 Thur *	10.00 am	Various
A Taste of World Cuisines	1 Tues *	Lunch time	Various
Art Appreciation	4 Fri	2.00pm	SMC
China	3 Tues	10.00 am	Zoom
Croydon Memories	4 Fri *	12.00 noon	The Boulevard
Focus on Africa	4 Tues	10.30 am	Central Library
Into Film	Thurs Varies *	2.00 pm	David Lean cinema
South Bank	Varies	Varies	Varies
Theatre Visits	Varies	Varies	Varies
Wine Admiration	1 or 2 Fri W/L	2.00pm	Home – Various
Games of Skill			
Board Games Fun	2 Fri	2.30pm	Ludoquist Café, Croydon
Darts and Pub Lunch	4 Weds*	12.30pm	Local pub
Mah Jong	Varies	Varies	t.b.a
Quiz Nights	3 Mon	7.30 pm	Zoom
Rubber Bridge	Every Tues	2.00pm	Mildred Crt, Addiscombe
Gardening Groups			
Love Gardening	1 Mon *	10.30 am	Various
Wild Flowers	4 Monday (March to Sept)	10.30 am	Various

Group Title	Day of the Month	Start Time	Venue
Languages			
French Conversation (lower/Intermediate)	Every Mon	10.00am	PUR Church
French Conversation (Adv)	2 & 4 Tues	2.30pm	Zoom
German Friends	Mons	10.15	Zoom
Italian – Conversation	1 Fri *	10.00 am	Home – Purley
Russian – Intermediate	1 & 3 Wed	10.00am	Home – Croydon
Spanish Conversation (lower/Intermediate)	Every Mon	11.00am	PUR
Literature			
Book Club	3 Wed	2.00pm	Home
Books Made into Films	3 Thurs ***members welcome***	11.00 am	Shirley Comm Library
Play Reading	1 Mon *	2.00pm	Home various
Poetry for Pleasure	2 Tues	2.00pm	Home Addiscombe
Share a Good Read	2 Mon *	2.30 pm	St Johns, Selsdon
Writing for Pleasure Group	1 Wed	2.00 – 4.00 pm	SMC
	3 Wed	7.30pm	Zoom
Maths, Science & IT			
Science & Technology	2 Tues	8.00pm	Zoom
Music			
Blues & Jazz Appreciation	Varies	Varies	Various
Guitar Improvers	2 & 4 Tue	10.30 am	SMC
Mandolin	By arrangement	By arrangement	Home, Addiscombe
Singalong	2 Monday	10.30 am	SMC
Singing for Pleasure	2 & 4 Wed	10.30 am	St Matthews Church
Social Studies/History			
17th – 19th Century History	1 Wed	2.30pm	Home – Central Croydon
Early Medieval History	1 Tues	2.30pm	Home – Central Croydon
Environment & Climate Crisis	3 Tues	7.30pm	Zoom
History – Local	2 Fri *	2.00pm	Home – Wallington + visits
History of London **1**	1 & 3 Tues *	10.00 am	PUR + Outings
History of London **2**	2 & 4 Tues *	10.00am/2.00pm	StMC + Outings
History of London **3**	1 & 3 Wed *	2.00pm/10.00am	StMC + Outings
History of London **4**	3 & 4 Wed	1.30 pm varies	PUR Ch + Outings
Looking at London	1 Mon	2.00pm	StMCh + Outings
Members on Their Own	Various	Various	Various
(MOTO)	Tues	7.30 pm	Zoom
Philosophy	4 Wed	10.30	SMC
Tracing Your Ancestors	4 Wed	2.00pm	THL
Transport	3 Mon	10.30 am	CC + outings

Abbreviations for Venues – **The Boulevard**, Selsdon Road: - **CC** – Christ Church Purley: -**PURCh** - Purley United Reform Church: - **St John the Baptist Church Hall**, Dale Rd, Purley CR8 2EF: - **SMC** – Shirley Methodist Church: - **StMC** - St Matthew's Church: - **THL** - Thornton Heath Library.