



the
exchange

the
exchange

THE OLD LIBRARY
WALNUT TREE ROAD
ERITH
DA8 1RA

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@exchangeerith



Also open for Super Saturdays.

Friday 10.30 - 5pm

Thursday 10.30 - 9pm

Wednesday 10.30 - 5pm

Opening hours:

Come in to visit, or shop online.

products from our Makers of the Month.

plants, ethical gifts, and coming soon.

Our retail space, specialising in house



GARDEN ROOM
THE

the
exchange

WHO WE ARE

Our home, the Old Library, was a place made by local people – built by them, kept alive by them, and used by them for learning and nurturing a sense of community.

Today, The Exchange continues this ethos. We are a place where people make things. Things like furniture, ceramic tiles and plates and hand-woven window blinds, but also things like gardens, events, performances and festivals. The Exchange is a place for making and sustaining communities, and developing skills along the way.

Pop along to discover what we do, purchase something from our Garden Room shop, or simply spend some time with family and friends in our Town Square.

OPENING HOURS

We are generally open every week during the hours below, as well as occasional Saturdays for our Super Saturday series.

Wednesday	10.30am – 5pm
Thursday	10.30am – 9pm
Friday	10.30am – 5pm

Super Saturdays (18 May and 08 June)	10.30am – 5pm
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For the latest information, please check our website for details.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Every Thursday | Open until 9pm GARDEN ROOM LATES

[SOCIAL] [GARDEN]

Pop in for our regular Thursday evening Garden Room Lates – get a drink from The Garden Room bar, buy that last-minute gift, or just simply enjoy the historic space and the tulips that will be popping up in the garden for spring.

Every Thursday | 6.30 – 8.30pm LIFE DRAWING

[ART] [SOCIAL]

£12 (£10 Concessions) on the door | No booking required.

Learn to draw from life and hone your observation skills every Thursday evening. This is the perfect activity for anyone wanting to improve their drawing skills – and it's a great opportunity to make new friends, too. These sessions are open to all, beginners and experienced alike.

Thursday evenings during term time ARTSTRAIN BEXLEY ACADEMY

[PERFORMANCE] [YOUNG PEOPLE]

Apply to join: artstrain.org.uk/artstrain-academies

Are you a passionate musician or songwriter aged 13-17? ArtsTrain's Bexley Academy is a free song-writing programme that runs throughout the year. It is a chance for young people across Bexley to develop their song-writing skills and musicianship in a unique, creative and collaborative environment.

APRIL

14

OFFSITE | Garden Museum, Lambeth SE1 7LB

Sunday 14 April | 10am – 4pm GARDEN MUSEUM: SPRING PLANT FAIR

[GARDEN]

Admission £5/ £4 Garden Museum Friends

We're proud to be selling the Exchange's very own volunteer-propagated and homegrown plants at the Garden Museum in Lambeth, as part of their Spring Plant Fair. Each year, expert plant growers and specialist nurseries, including Beth Chatto's and Great Dixter, offer some of the best garden plants you'll find for sale in London. Please visit the Garden Museum website for more details.

18

TO

02

Thursdays between 18 April and 02 May

11am – 1pm LEARN TO CROCHET FOR BEGINNERS

[CRAFT]

£25 | Book online

Learn the joy of crochet in three two-hour sessions. Join our beginner-friendly course led by Mandy Johnson, an Exchange textiles volunteer, to be guided through the basics of crochet. No prior experience required; we provide a hook and yarn. Limited spaces.

CRAFT WORKSHOPS

Anyone can come and volunteer in our craft workshops. As a volunteer Maker, you will work alongside some incredibly talented craft professionals, developing skills in ceramics, textiles and timber, whilst making things that can either be used by the community at The Exchange or that can be sold to raise money for our community programme.

This year's projects include ceramic pinch pots, tableware and tiles; award-winning timber chairs, tables and shelving units; and hand-woven linen window blinds and hand-stitched quilts.

If you are interested in getting involved, come along to a Volunteer Introduction session to find out about the commitment needed for each project, and benefits of joining one of our amazing craft teams.

MAKERS OF THE MONTH

Makers of The Month is a new programme for 2024, designed to encourage craft and entrepreneurship in the local community. Each month, we'll feature two or three local, independent crafters who will showcase and sell their product in our retail space, The Garden Room. See our website for more information and how to apply.

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Wednesday 24 April | 2 – 3pm LOCAL HISTORY TALK: THAMES NAUTICAL TRAINING COLLEGE, H.M.S. "WORCESTER"

[HERITAGE] [TALKS + TOURS]

£6/Under 16s free | Book online

Ken Chamberlain, long-term Chair of the local history society and Exchange volunteer, is back to give a series of illustrated talks on Erith and the surrounding area. Come along to hear the story of the boys training ship, the H.M.S Worcester, which was based at Blackwall, Erith and Greenhithe for over 100 years.

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Friday 26 April | 11am – 12pm VOLUNTEER INTRODUCTION

[VOLUNTEER]

Free | Sign up online

Are you interested in participating in one of our Workshop projects? Or are you interested in meeting and greeting people in The Garden Room, telling our visitors about what we do? Then why not come in to one of our Volunteer Introduction sessions to find out more about our work, what we believe in and what our ambitions are. And if you like what you hear, sign up!

MAY

02

Thursday 02 May | 7.30 – 9.30pm CRACK THE CASE: A SPRING END

[ENTERTAINMENT]

£12 | Book online

DCI Jade Flannery returns with a spring edition of Crack the Case. Time to get all the skeletons out of the closet with an evening of intrigue, witness reports and a case file for your team to crack. If you're a lone investigator, no problem, you can come on your own or as part of a group. A real spring mystery that you won't want to miss.

17

TO

31

17 – 31 May | Visit during opening hours + Mark's Super Saturday THE MARK OF THINKING HANDS

[CRAFT] [EXHIBITION]

Free | No need to book

An exhibition showcasing the work of our textile and ceramic volunteers. From rich embroidered narratives to tactile sculpted ceramics, each handcrafted piece explores the connection between creativity and mindful mark-making. Every piece tells a unique story of thinking hands.

SUPER SATURDAY

EXCHANGE IN BLOOM

Saturday 18 May

10am, 11.30am, 1pm GARDEN TOURS

[GARDEN] [TALKS + TOURS]

Free | No booking required but limited capacity for each tour.

Join Head Gardener Colin Stewart for a short, informal tour of our beautiful garden, designed by Sarah Price. Though small, this young but rapidly developing garden has several areas with distinct atmospheres and an interesting diversity of planting, united by Sarah's painterly eye. Meet on The Garden Room terrace.

10.30am – 12.30pm OAK GALL INK MAKING

[CRAFT] [GARDEN]

£38 | Book online

In this practical workshop you will learn how to create your own ink using Oak Gall, the tannin heavy oak 'seed'. Artist Anna Hughes will also demonstrate how to use the ink to create botanical illustrations and participants will have time to experiment with these techniques. You will leave this class with a recipe and instruction card, and a labelled bottle of your own handmade ink.

11am – 1pm FAMILY ART CLUB

[ART] [FAMILY]

£3 donation per child | Drop-in

As part of our brand-new Family Art Club, led by volunteer Becky Wolff, we will be celebrating the outdoors by exploring the wonderful patterns and shapes found in our garden. As a family, you will create garden-themed bunting to hang in your home, experimenting with the scale and details of The Exchange's beautiful plants and flowers to inspire your design. This is an opportunity for families to collaborate with arts and crafts, so come along, unwind and create with the Family Art Club.

2.30 - 4pm SARAH PRICE: ART + CRAFT OF GARDEN MAKING

[GARDEN] [TALKS + TOURS]

£12/£6 for members | Book online

We're delighted to welcome Sarah Price - three times RHS Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medal winner and designer of our own garden - back to The Exchange. Sarah is one of the most prominent and creative garden designers of her generation, and this special lecture will offer insight into her inspirations, planting philosophies and original approach to hard landscaping. The talk will be followed by a Q&A session.

4 – 5pm OLD LIBRARY HISTORY TOUR

[HERITAGE] [TALKS + TOURS]

£5 donation on the door | Book online

Find out about the significance of this historic building to the local area, and the characters involved in making and running the old library and museum, with local resident and blogger Hugh Neal. All ages are welcome. Please meet Hugh in The Garden Room. Your donation will be put towards the upkeep of the Old Library.

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Wednesday 22 May | 2 – 3pm LOCAL HISTORY TALK: THE STORY OF ERITH FIRE BRIGADE

[HERITAGE] [TALKS + TOURS]

£6/Under 16s free | Book online

Ken Chamberlain, long-term Chair of the local history society and Exchange volunteer, is back to give a series of illustrated talks on Erith and the surrounding area. Erith's Fire Brigade was founded by volunteers in 1871 and didn't join London's Fire Brigade until 1965! Join us to hear more about its history and the people who kept it running.

30

Thursday 30 May | 6.30 – 7.30pm VOLUNTEER INTRODUCTION

[VOLUNTEER]

Free | Sign up online

Are you interested in participating in one of our Workshop projects? Or are you interested in meeting and greeting people in The Garden Room, telling our visitors about what we do? Then why not come in to one of our Volunteer Introduction sessions to find out more about our work, what we believe in and what our ambitions are. And if you like what you hear, sign up!



PARTNERSHIP WITH TR Aid

We are now working with Traid, an incredible charity that collects and sorts second-hand clothes for resale, giving them a new lease of life. The money they make from resale is used to fund global projects that are proven to tackle the enormous environmental impact of the fashion and textiles industry.

If you have pre-loved items you want to donate, visit The Exchange during our opening hours to drop them off. Traid accepts the following items:

- Clean, good quality clothes (men's, women's, and children's)
- Paired shoes
- Bags
- Jewellery
- Accessories
- Linens (excluding duvets and pillows)

JUNE

SUPER SATURDAY

NEW THINGS

Saturday 08 June

11am – 1pm INTRODUCTION TO BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE

[COMMUNITY]

£6/Under 16s free | Book online

The Bexley Deaf Centre is one of the last surviving deaf centres in the country. Join the incredible team from the Centre at this event to develop your awareness of deaf culture, to grow your understanding of how British Sign Language works, and to learn some basic signs for everyday use.

1 – 5pm INTRODUCTION TO TUNISIAN CROCHET

[CRAFT]

£25 | Book online

Tunisian crochet is a combination of crochet and knitting. Just like regular crochet - you work mostly with chain, double, and treble stitches. Just like knitting - you work stitches by casting on and off using one extra-long crochet hook. Intrigued? Then join Mandy Johnson, one of our Exchange textiles volunteers, for an introduction to the fundamentals. Please note, this workshop is for those with a solid foundation in regular crochet and is unsuitable for beginners.

2 – 4pm FAMILY ART CLUB

[ART] [FAMILY]

£3 donation per child | Drop-in

For this session of Family Art Club, we will be soaking up the energy of early summer with watercolour and ink. You will experiment with playful brushstrokes and have fun colouring outside the lines, discovering the wonderful freedom of combining these two mediums and creating lively illustrations. This is an opportunity for families to enjoy mindful time together with arts and crafts, so come along, unwind and create with the Family Art Club.

2 – 3pm VOLUNTEER INTRODUCTION

[VOLUNTEER]

Free | Sign up online

Are you interested in participating in one of our Workshop projects? Or are you interested in meeting and greeting people in The Garden Room, telling our visitors about what we do? Then why not come in to one of our Starter Days to find out more about our work, what we believe in and what our ambitions are. And if you like what you hear, sign up!

3 – 4pm OLD LIBRARY HISTORY TOUR

[HERITAGE] [TALKS + TOURS]

£5 donation on the door | Book online

Find out about the significance of this historic building to the local area, and the characters involved in making and running the old library and museum, with local resident and blogger Hugh Neal. All ages are welcome. Please meet Hugh in The Garden Room. Your donation will be put towards the upkeep of the Old Library.

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Thursday 20 June | 7 – 8.30pm DEVELOPMENT LAB: EVENT PARTNERS

[COMMUNITY] [IDEAS]

Free | Register online

Have you got an idea for a community activity, event or project? Are you interested in kickstarting it at The Exchange and need some support? Well why not become an event partner? At this event, Strategic Director Sarah Batten will work with you on your event proposal. When ready, you can then submit your idea to our Board of Trustees who will make a decision on what ideas we can support, and on what support we can offer.

