



Autumn 2008
First edition

Postnatal Directory

Clapham & District Branch



Welcome to the first edition of the Clapham & District NCT Postnatal Directory. This directory has been put together to provide a quick and easy reference point for activities and services for you and your baby in the area.

The directory has been compiled by local parents, solely on the basis of the recommendations of local parents, and does not accept any form of advertising. Whilst we've checked the details of individual activities, we suggest you contact in advance to avoid disappointment.

We hope you enjoy the postnatal directory and please let us know your recommendations for future editions by emailing postnataldirectory@claphamnct.com

Contents

3

Play

playgroups and other fun activities for you and your baby

6

Eat

baby friendly places for coffee and lunch

6

Shop

baby stuff and shops with changing facilities

7

Health

yours and your baby

7

Support and Info

breastfeeding and postnatal support groups

8

Life with Baby

what our mums wish they'd known in the first few weeks, how to get your life back on track and mum-time activities

The NCT (also known as the National Childbirth Trust) was founded in 1956 and is the UK's leading charity for parents. Every year we support thousands of people through the incredible life changing experience of pregnancy, birth and early parenthood.

We are a membership charity with over 75,000 members across the UK. Our strength comes from the dedication of our volunteers, who work through our network of branches to provide and support local services, training and evidence-based information for parents, families and health professionals.

We are trusted and respected by health professionals and governments as an organisation that represents the needs of parents. Our work is funded through membership fees, fundraising activities and the delivery of our services. If you would like to join, donate or find out more about the work of the charity please visit www.nct.org.uk or call 0844 243 7000.

All views expressed in this directory are personal and do not necessarily reflect those of the National Childbirth Trust charity. The appearance of an advertisement in this directory does not imply endorsement of the advertiser or its products by the NCT, nor does it constitute a recommendation. The information in this directory is intended for the use of NCT members, only in connection with NCT activities and may not be used for any commercial purposes.

The directory is published by Clapham and District Branch, designed by DS Design & Photography (www.dsdp.co.uk) and printed by Pop-i Studio (www.popi.co.uk).

play • verb
1 engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious practical purpose.

NCT Playgroups

Clapham NCT volunteers run the following five fantastic drop-in playgroups in the area. Contact details are kept up to date on the Clapham NCT website:

www.nct.org.uk/in-your-area/clapham/playgroups

Battersea Chitter Chatter

Mondays 10-11.30am at Battersea Arts Centre (Lavender Hill, SW11 5TN). Babies and toddlers over one year. **Nadia says** "great venue, great space, well organised playgroup".

Bumps and Babies

Mondays 10-11.30am at St Michaels Church (main entrance, Cobham Close, SW11 6HR). Pregnant mums and under ones.

Clapham Playgroup

Wednesdays 10.00-12 noon at St John the Evangelist Church Hall (386 Clapham Road, SW9 9AR). Babies and toddlers.

Balham Pitter Patter

Wednesdays 10.00-11.30am at St Stephen's Church (35 Weir Road, Balham, SW12 0NU). Newborn until walking. **Katie says** "the relaxed atmosphere offers a great opportunity to meet other mum's in the area whilst the babes interact with others and experiment with new toys".

Stockwell Playgroup

Fridays 10.00-11.45am at St Stephen's Church (St Stephen's Terrace, SW8 1DH). Babies and toddlers.

Other Recommended Playgroups

Happy Mondays

Monday 3-5pm at St Stephen's Church (35 Weir Road, SW12 0NU). **Jenny says** "Drop-in playgroup for under fours with baby area for under ones, softplay, songs and activities".

Trinity Toddlers

Wednesdays 10-11:30am at Holy Trinity Church (Clapham Common Northside, SW4 0QZ). **Pam says** "Busy drop-in group for under-fours, with tons of toys and a softplay space for babies."

Mother & Toddler Group

Wednesday and Fridays 9.30 – 11.30am at Broomwood Methodist Church (Kyrle Road, SW11 6BD). 9 months to 3 years. **Sofia says** "Great selection of toys, singing and a good opportunity for toddlers to work on their social skills!"

St Pauls Community Centre

Thursdays 10am-12noon (Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX). **Pam says** "Best for near-walkers to toddlers in a spacious church hall. The fun spills out into an enclosed garden on nice days."

Little Fishes

Thursdays 2.30-4pm at the Dolphin School Church Hall (106 Northcote Road, SW11 6QP). **Lucy says** "Run by a wonderful vicar called Nick who is very friendly and welcoming. Lots of toys for all ages which are very clean. Safe room and children get grapes and water at the end."

Baby Bright

(www.barnabybright.org) at St Barnabas' Church (Clapham Common Northside, SW4 9SW, 020 7978 4109). For older babies 18 months to 3 years and you need to apply. **Sofia says** "super selection of toys, outdoor space and a great opportunity for toddlers to interact with other children their age in an informal environment".

One O'clock Clubs

There are a variety of these council operated clubs in parks around the area. They are free, usually open 1-4pm weekday afternoons and offer a range of fun play activities.

In **Lambeth**, the **Tooting Triangle club** has a lovely outdoor space and the **Brockwell Park club** has a large play area and is very secure. www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/Environment/ParksGreenSpaces/Play



In **Wandsworth**, particularly recommended by our mums are the **Bolingbroke Grove, Battersea Park and Garret Park clubs** for their baby sensory rooms.

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/home/childrenandyoungpeople/playservices

Playgrounds

Make your way to your nearest park and you will probably find a playground of some sort. Start off with the baby swings (the orange bucket ones are perfect for little ones).

Clapham Common: Westside/Battersea Rise and Windmill Drive.

Wandsworth Common: Chivalry Road and close to Common Ground Café.

Tooting Commons: Tooting Triangle (off Emmanuel Road) and near the duckpond. **Simon says** "Tooting Triangle has a lovely dog free grassy area with a little hill perfect for picnics"

Brockwell Park: entrance off Arlingford Road.

Agnes Riley Gardens: between Atkins Road & Poynders Road.

Swimming

You can start taking your baby swimming almost as soon as they are born. Just start slowly and ideally go to a warm pool.

The Latchmere Leisure Centre (Burns Road, SW11

5AD, 020 7207 8004) comes highly recommended as you can take your buggy to the poolside and it is very baby friendly with a cafe for feeding afterwards.

The Balham Leisure Centre (Elmfield Road, SW17 8AN, 020 8772 9577) pool is also warmed up on Tuesday afternoons.

Better still, sign up for some **baby swimming classes** to increase your and your baby's confidence in the water.

The following all operate classes in the area:

Little Dippers

(www.littledippers.co.uk, 0870 758 0302)

Waterbabies

(www.waterbabies.co.uk, 020 7585 1510) and

Baby Swimming

(www.babyswimming.co.uk, 01865 794222)

Softplay

Once your baby starts to move, this is great fun and a good way to tire them out! There are good sized playzones at the **Latchmere and Tooting Leisure Centres**. Also, **It's A Kids Thing** (www.itsakidsthing.co.uk, 279 Magdalen Road, SW18 3NZ, 020 8739 0909) has a separate area for little ones and a good cafe.

Music Classes

Babies love music and loads of mums recommended this as an activity! Classes range from drop-in sessions to more formal weekly classes.

Amanda runs her energetic **Amanda's Action Kids**

(www.amandasactionkids.co.uk, 020 8578 0234) drop-in sessions at Common Ground Café (Wandsworth Common, SW18 3RT, 020 8874 9386) on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, and on Wednesday mornings at Munchkin Lane Café (83 Nightingale Lane, SW12 8NX, 020 8772 6800).

There are also loads of **Tin Pan Annie** (www.tinpanannie.co.uk, 020 8670 0644) and **Monkey Music** (www.monkeymusic.co.uk, 020 8699 0977) classes in the area too. **Katie said** "Monkey Music is a great way to introduce a baby to playing with musical instruments and those catchy tunes will have you humming and jigging with the buggy all the way up the road!"

Also recommended by a local dad is **Fruity Tunes** (www.fruitytunes.net, 020 7450 0935) as a great introduction for babies and toddlers into music - lots of classics and original songs, plenty of puppets and music instruments.



Rhyme Time

Many of the libraries in the area run free rhyme time sessions. Often fairly chaotic, but always entertaining.

Clapham Library Tuesday & Friday 10.30am
1 Northside, SW4 0QW, 020 7926 0717

Pam says "Very popular with story-telling, songs and rhythm games led by an enthusiastic library staffer, with a fresh fruit snack at the end. All for 50p!"

Balham Library Tuesday 9.30am & 2.45pm
16 Ramsden Road, SW12 8QY, 020 8871 7195

Battersea Library Tuesday 11.00am
265 Lavender Hill, SW11 1JB, 020 8871 7466

Battersea Park Library Tuesday 11.30am
309 Battersea Park Road, SW11 4NF, 020 8871 7468



Brixton Library Tuesday 10.30am
Brixton Oval, SW2 1JQ, 020 7926 1056

Northcote Road Library Monday 9.30am
155e Northcote Road, SW11 6QB, 020 8871 7469

Streatham Library Thursday 10.30am
63 Streatham High Road, SW16 1PL, 020 7926 6768

Tooting Library Thursday 11.30am
75 Mitcham Road, SW17 9PD, 020 8871 7175

Baby Signing

A fun way to encourage your child to learn how to sign with songs and signing to favourite nursery rhymes. **Tiny Talk** (www.tinytalk.co.uk, 0870 2424898) and **Baby Signers** (www.babysigners.co.uk, 01273 882203) both come recommended by our local mums.

The Zoo

Battersea Park Children's Zoo

Lots of opportunities for animal encounters and there is a great playground too!

www.batterseaparkzoo.co.uk, 020 7924 5826

Other Ideas

Lynda suggests that "once your babies are mobile, why not just "bombproof your house" and have playdates".

One enterprising group of mums set up their own small playgroup called "**Drop & Run**". They run it once a week, at one persons house, with two mums supervising, giving the other mums three hours free time (when not on duty) and their babies are with people they know and trust.



Eat

eat • verb
1 to have a meal in a café or restaurant

There is no shortage of cafes and restaurants in the area and the ones listed below all have change facilities and have been recommended by lots of mums due to their baby friendly attitude:

La Baita (Clapham Common, by the bandstand, SW4 0QW, 020 7924 2429). **Lynda says** "A brisk walk to get there, loads of pram parking, does takeaways and now has an alcohol licence so you can enjoy a glass of wine in the sun in the summer".

Bertie and Boo (162 Balham High Road, SW12 9BW, 020 7326 4031). **Katie says** "Lovely staff, good coffee and amazing homemade cakes - made by local mums".

Common Ground (Wandsworth Common, off Dorlcote Rd, SW18 3RT, 020 8874 9386). Large, friendly café serving a good range of meals and cakes. Large number of highchairs available for baby feeding.

Crumpet (66 Northcote Road, SW11 6QL, 020 7924 1117). Recommended by lots of mums for convenience, service and rainy days. Has lots of space, a buggy park and child friendly nibbles, plus a great range of teas and cakes.

Marzano (49-53 Northcote Rd, SW11 1NJ, 020 7228 8860). What looks like a grown-up restaurant will happily accommodate loads of buggies, mummies and babies.

Munchkin Lane (83 Nightingale Lane, SW12 8NX, 020 8772 6800). Safe, does homemade baby food and has good toys. Drop your baby off on the playmat to explore the understair toy chest whilst you sit back and enjoy a cuppa.

Nightingales (193 Balham High Rd, SW12 9BE, 020 8673 3228). More of a mum's treat with great coffee, comfy sofas and high chairs.

Most branches of Costa, Starbucks, Caffe Nero and Pizza Express are also child friendly and have change facilities too.



Shop

shop • noun
1 a building or part of a building where goods or services are sold



The **Clapham NCT** runs **Nearly New Sales** twice a year in March and October at Broomwood Methodist Church. See the Clapham NCT website for next event details www.nct.org.uk/in-your-area/clapham/events

Northcote Road is awash with baby shops and can be an expensive afternoon trip! From the Battersea Rise end working up you've got: One Small Step One Giant Leap, JoJo Mamen Bebe, Trotters, Q T Toys & Games, Petit Bateau, Quackers, Sally's Children's Hairdresser, Fara Charity Shop, Tiny Impressions.



Southside Wandsworth

(www.southsidewandsworth.com) has H&M, Primark, Next, Adams, Mothercare, GAP & Boots all under one roof as well as parking, restaurants and excellent toilets. It can be a little savage on a Saturday but if you lose your toddler, they have excellent procedures for shutting down and searching the place!

Also recommended are Blooming Marvellous (5 Bellevue Road) for clothes and early toys and Happy Toes (73 Bedford Hill) for shoes.

Further afield, Peter Jones, Sloane Square and John Lewis, Oxford Street both have big nursery departments and excellent baby facilities. Lilliput, Queenstown Road stocks lots of nursery equipment and toys.

Mum's tip: look out for the special baby friendly trollies at the supermarket including the ones you can strap your car seat onto.

Health

health • noun
1 the state of being free from illness or injury
2 a person's mental or physical condition

Look out for free baby massage classes run at Sure Start Children's Centres (www.surestart.gov.uk) and by some local midwives.

Balance Physio (www.balancephysio.com, 113 Gauden Road, SW4 6LE, 020 7627 2308). **Bryony says** "invaluable postnatally with two great sports massage therapists, a postnatal physio and very good pilates classes".

Buggyfit (www.buggyfit.co.uk) postnatal exercise classes on Clapham Common, Wandsworth Common and Battersea. **Jenny says** "cheaper than a personal trainer".



Essentials for Health (www.essentialforhealth.co.uk, 0845 108 0088). Baby massage classes at St Thomas' Hospital.

Kinetika gyms (www.dcleisurecentres.co.uk) Balham, Tooting & the Latchmere. Good creches & affordable classes.

Neal's Yard (www.nealsyardremedies.com, 6 Northcote Road, SW11 1NT, 020 7223 7141) for baby massage, cranial osteopathy and homeopathy.

OCC Cranial Osteopathy (www.fpo.org.uk, 162 St John's Hill, SW11 1SW, 020 7490 1114). Donate what you can.

Physio For All (www.physio4all.com, 40 Webbs Road, SW11 6SF, 020 7228 2141) for postnatal physio and pilates.

Powerpramming (www.powerpramming.co.uk) postnatal exercise classes on Clapham and Tooting Commons.

St Georges Hospital, Tooting offer free postnatal exercise classes run by female physios.

Yoga (postnatal and baby classes) at Battersea Yoga (www.batterseayoga.com, 020 7978 7995) & Appleyoga (www.appleyoga.com, 020 8788 8892).

Support & Info

Call the **NCT Breastfeeding Line** (0300 3300771, 8am-10pm, seven days a week) to talk to a qualified breastfeeding counsellor for information and support to help you breastfeed successfully.

Attend the **Weir Link Breastfeeding Drop-In**, Clapham NCT's very own breastfeeding cafe. Every 2nd and 4th Thursday, 10am - 12noon (Weir Link Children's Centre, 33 Weir Road, SW12 0NU, weirlinkbreastfeedingdropin@gmail.com). Drop in for free support and information from qualified breastfeeding counsellors. You'll find a relaxed and friendly environment. All welcome.

Visit a **local breastfeeding counsellor**. Elizabeth Thompson (clinics at St Georges Hospital, Thurleigh Road Practice) has been recommended by several mums. **Lucy says** "she was amazing, I wish I had known about her earlier because I had horrendous problems with breastfeeding". Katherine Fisher (07949 176776 / 0208 662 0184) has been recommended and undertakes home visits.

Attend a **NCT postnatal tea group** - Clapham NCT volunteers host postnatal teas across the area for new mums. Contact postnatal@claphamnct.com for details of your nearest tea host.

Book an **NCT early days course** (www.nctpregnancyandbabycare.com) - the NCT offer postnatal courses which look at the issues affecting new mums such as decision making, adjusting to motherhood, coping with conflicting advice, changing relationships and returning to work.

Attend **health visitor postnatal courses** - contact your health visitor for details.

Go out for **coffee with your NCT group** as soon as possible after the course ends and keep on meeting regularly up to and after your babies are born. This could well be your best support network in the days, months and years to come.

Volunteering for the Clapham NCT branch is a great way to meet new people whilst supporting your favourite charity. We are always looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help in running our local activities. Contact claphamchair@claphamnct.com for further details.



Life with Baby

We asked mums what they wished they'd known in the first few weeks, their top tips on getting your life back on track after having a baby and what their favourite mum-time activities were. Here is what they told us:

What I wish I'd known in the first few weeks

"That a lot of women struggle with breastfeeding"

"That the NCT has breastfeeding counsellors and that they might be able to visit you at home"

"Feeding a newborn takes AGES – just go with the flow"

"Failing to get dressed by 4pm is not unusual, and it is ok"

"Not to get too obsessed by baby's weight. It's important, but not the only factor to be considered"

"Babies need naps, especially in the morning. Mums need naps"

"To rest up when I felt great. And to accept that the first 12 weeks are tough but it does get better, not to beat yourself up about routines for eating and sleeping."

"That you genuinely cannot/should not try to be a superwoman within days of giving birth (especially after a c-section, overdoing it then means recovery will take longer) – REST, REST, REST."

"That when you have two babies, you will look back and wonder what on earth was I making such a fuss about"

Getting your life back on track

"Routine and early nights"

"Time management, lowering expectations, childcare"

"Monthly nights out as a couple. Don't let baby stop you doing things you used to do e.g. nice lunches, spa weekends and lovely holidays – only difference is baby comes along too"

"Regular exercise (good to get into the gym the baby into the creche!). Continue with your own interests (even though you feel knackered at first). Make time for yourself & your partner - go to the theatre or cinema every month and regularly have people over for dinner. (The latter is great too because others can bring babies to you & vice versa so avoids the need for a babysitter)"

"Carry on with what you enjoy doing - but do it with a baby - and not be scared to take your baby along too - travelling, flying, galleries, cinema - especially when they are younger, portable and stay in one place."

"Your friends come round or you go round to friends rather than going out for dinner (so the babe can sleep upstairs)"

"Find a reliable babysitter! Make sure you and your partner get "quality" time together away from the house - dinner, afternoon out etc. - even if you do spend all night together talking about how amazing your new baby is!"

"Get lots of support from friends and family, do some exercise and if you can, only work part-time"

Mum-time activities

Set up a **babysitting circle** with your NCT group or simply with neighbours with kiddies of the same age. Sitters (www.sitters.co.uk), an online babysitting service, has also been recommended by mums.

Go to your **favourite salon** and get a treatment or two!

Leave the **baby with friends or family** and go for some retail therapy!

It might sound strange and it is certainly a slightly surreal experience, but both the Clapham (76 Venn Street, SW4 OAT, 0871 704 2055) and Ritz Picturehouses (Brixton Oval, SW2 1JG, 0871 704 2065) offer weekly **baby friendly film screenings** known as the Big Screen. These are great when the babies are small as the timings are perfect to feed them and let them snooze whilst you catch up on the latest releases. www.picturehouses.co.uk