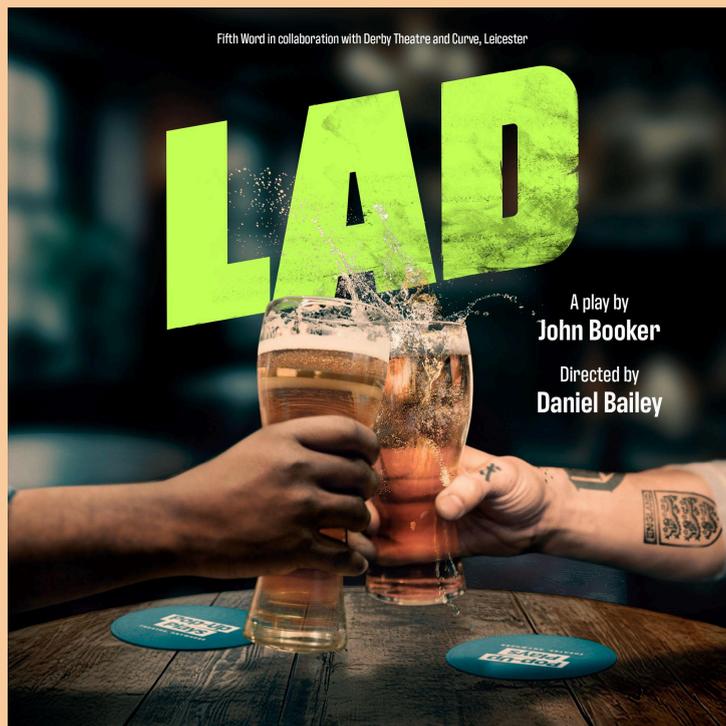


Audience Self-Care Guide & Content Warnings

LAD

A New Play

By John Booker



Pop-Up Plays by Fifth Word Theatre, *in collaboration with* Curve, Leicester and Derby Theatre *and support from* Fuel

2026

Fifth Word, Derby Theatre and Curve, Leicester

For pop up performances taking place in The
Brunswick Inn, West End Working Men's Club and
The Exchange Bar

Between 22nd - 30th March 2026



Welcome to LAD

This guide has been designed to help you plan your visit and take care of yourself before, during and after the performance.

LAD is a raw, funny and deeply human story about friendship, modern masculinity, class and emotional honesty.

The performance is staged inside the buzz of a pub and includes live noise, close proximity to performers and real pub atmosphere. Take what you need from this show, and leave what you don't.

We know this show might be challenging to engage with for some audiences, especially if you're affected by the content. We hope this guide provides the support required to experience the show safely.

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About the show

“I just wanna have a chat with you to be honest, Luke.”

England vs. Spain, Euro 2024 Final. Jack’s back from Uni, Luke’s back from doing time.

Two lads meet for pints. Their old local’s rammed and there’s three years of silence to catch up on. Best friends since school, Jack never visited, and Luke hasn’t told the whole story.

Between us mates, nothing’s off limits, right? But the pub’s shiny refurb can’t gloss over their shared history, as truth and emotion spill over onto the sticky carpet. Under the bravado, banter and bullshittery, is something tougher to tackle. When people say be kind, they mean to the people they disagree with?

As the tap opens and the pints flow, honesty hits hard, and when the final whistle blows can there be victory?

Funny, raw and heartbreakingly human, LAD strikes deep into the heart of modern masculinity, friendship, class, racism, and love.

Staged inside the buzz of your local boozier, get immersed in a bold new play about mates, mistakes and what it really takes to be a man – all set against the roar of the beautiful game.

Keywords: male friendship, masculinity, class, imprisonment and emotional conflict.

Content Warnings

Age Recommendation: 16yrs+

16-17 year olds must be accompanied by an adult.

The show contains:

- references to violence, misogyny and racism.
- strong language
- an immersive pub environment

Running time: Approx. 40 mins

Helplines and support

Some of the themes explored in *LAD* may feel personal or difficult for some audience members. If the show brings up strong feelings and you need support, you are not alone.

We would recommend looking into the organisations listed below where you can learn more about services that may be available for yourself or someone you know.

National Support

CALM – Campaign Against Living Miserably

Website: <https://www.thecalmzone.net>

Phone: 0800 58 58 58 (5pm–midnight)

A UK charity working to prevent suicide, particularly among men. CALM offers a confidential helpline, webchat and resources focused on mental health, loneliness and pressures around masculinity.

Andy's Man Club

Website: <https://andysmanclub.co.uk>

Email: info@andysmanclub.co.uk

Andy's Man Club runs free peer-to-peer support groups for men across the UK where men can talk openly about mental health in a non-judgemental environment. Local groups meet weekly and are open to any man aged 18+.

UK Men's Sheds Association

Website: <https://menssheds.org.uk>

Men's Sheds are community spaces where men can connect, talk and work on shared projects together. They help reduce loneliness and support wellbeing through friendship and practical activity.

Samaritans

Website: <https://www.samaritans.org>

Phone: 116 123 (free, 24 hours a day)

A confidential listening service for anyone experiencing distress or suicidal thoughts. Samaritans volunteers are available day and night to listen without judgement.

Shout

Website: <https://giveusashout.org>

Text: SHOUT to 85258 (24/7 text support)

A free, confidential text messaging service for anyone in crisis who would prefer to message rather than speak on the phone.

PAPYRUS – Prevention of Young Suicide

Website: <https://www.papyrus-uk.org>

Phone: 0800 068 4141

A suicide prevention charity offering confidential support to young people under 35 and to anyone concerned about them.

Local Support

Leicester

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Mind

Website: <https://www.llrmind.org.uk>

Phone: 0116 216 9544

Provides mental health support, wellbeing groups and advice for people across Leicester and Leicestershire.

Circulus for Men

Website: <https://hubofhope.co.uk/service/>

Circulus runs facilitated men's circles and group conversations in Leicester where men can talk openly about life, identity and emotional wellbeing in a supportive environment.

Derby

Team Talk @ Derby County Community Trust

Website: <https://www.derbycountycommunitytrust.com>

Team Talk is a men's wellbeing programme offering social activities, peer discussion groups and safe spaces where men can talk openly about mental health and life challenges.

Derbyshire Mind

Website: <https://www.derbyshiremind.org.uk>

Phone: 01773 734 989

Provides community mental health support, peer groups and wellbeing services across Derby and Derbyshire.

Self-care suggestions

If you're concerned about attending the show, there are a few things we'd suggest that might help.

Before the show

Read the content warnings before deciding to see the show.

Come with a friend

It might be worth seeing if you can book to see the show with a friend, family member or someone you trust.

During the show

There is nothing wrong with deciding that the show isn't for you, or that it's too much. During the performance, you're welcome to go to our designated break out space. Just ask the usher on site for directions.

If you start to feel tense but want to stay in the space, a grounding exercise may be helpful (e.g. mindful breathing), we've included some suggestions below.

After the show

If you've found the show has stirred up some strong feelings, we'd suggest talking to someone you're with, calling a friend, or contacting one of the support services listed on the previous page.

Grounding Exercises

If you begin to feel overwhelmed during or after the performance, a short grounding exercise may help bring your focus back to the present moment. These simple techniques can help slow your breathing and reconnect with your surroundings.

1. Box Breathing

Slow your breathing using a steady rhythm:

Breathe in for 4 seconds

Hold for 4 seconds

Breathe out for 4 seconds

Hold for 4 seconds

Repeat this cycle for a few breaths until your body begins to relax.

2. 3–2–1 Sensory Exercise

Gently focus on your surroundings by naming:

3 things you can see

2 things you can hear

1 thing you can feel

This can help shift attention away from overwhelming thoughts and back into the present moment.

3. Feet on the Ground

If you are seated or standing, place both feet firmly on the floor.

Notice the contact between your feet and the ground.

Take a few slow breaths and remind yourself:

“I am here. I am safe. This moment will pass.”

Thank you &

Acknowledgements

In creating this guide, we have drawn inspiration from the thoughtful approaches taken by other theatre companies and productions. We are especially grateful to the audience care resources produced for **Nouveau Riche's *For Black Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Hue Gets Too Heavy*** by Ryan Calais Cameron at Garrick Theatre, and **Travis Alabanza's *Sound of the Underground*** at Royal Court Theatre.

We also want to extend our gratitude to the organisations, helplines, and peer support groups listed in this guide. Their work supporting mental health, men's wellbeing, and communities affected by toxic masculinity is invaluable, and we encourage you to reach out to them if you need support.

Finally, thank you to you as the audience for reading this guide and for choosing to see the show. We hope it helps you engage with the performance safely and meaningfully, in whatever way feels right for you.