

Newsletter

July 2017

Keeping you up to date with Hounslow Friends of Faith

Hounslow Friends of Faith wins prize!

HFOF were delighted to be chosen by a group of Year 8 students at Kingsley Academy as part of a competition run by the educational group First Give. Students researched local charities and shared what they discovered in front of their year group. A panel of judges marked them on the delivery and creativity of their presentations and their knowledge of their chosen charities.

Danish and his colleagues made a link between bullying and hate crime, vividly explaining how the scars of both remain long term. They made the case that Hounslow Friends of Faith brings people together and stands up against intimidation of people just for being who they are.

The presentation won the group a runner up prize and Hounslow Friends of Faith will receive £250. Thank you Danish and friends! The HFOF committee will be deciding how to use this money, to use words from the presentation, 'To make Hounslow a better place' where hate crime and bullying does not occur.

Award for the Shelter Project Hounslow

Congratulations are due to the Shelter Project Hounslow which has won the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service for 2017. This is the highest award given to

local volunteer groups across the UK to recognise outstanding work in their communities, the MBE for voluntary groups. The awards were created in 2002 to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee and winners are announced each year on the anniversary of the Queen's Coronation.

During the winter months churches across the borough give a friendly welcome to homeless rough sleepers of all faiths and none, offering them respect and dignity as well as food and a bed.

Two other Hounslow winners were the Bridgelink Centre on Ivybridge Estate in Isleworth and the Metropolitan Waterboard Railway Society which restored the Hampton and Kempton Steam Railway.

Women's Group Picnic 19th August Osterley Park

Hounslow Friends of Faith's Women's Group is planning a picnic in Osterley Park on Saturday 19th August. Meet at 12 noon by the steps to Osterley House or join us on the main lawn. Bring your own picnic. Full address Jersey Road, Isleworth TW7 4RB.

The car park on site charges £7 (free for National Trust members) or park on Jersey Road. Osterley Tube is 15 minutes walk or take Bus 91 or H28 to Osterley Library. From London Road it is 25 minutes walk up Thornbury Road.

If wet, meet at 13 Lingwood Gardens, TW7 5LY for an indoor picnic!

Ring 07812 833635 or 07931 944790 to check on the day if you are not sure.

Walk of Peace and Friendship

Our annual Walk of Peace and Friendship took place this year in Brentford and Chiswick. This enjoyable event was our regular opportunity to visit different places of worship, hear informal talks about faith and share with people from different communities in our richly diverse borough. Deputy Mayor Mukesh Malhotra joined us at the start of the day.

At the Hanuman Hindu Temple in Brentford we heard about the intricate carvings on the main doors and the shrines where the priest gave aarti, a Hindu prayer.

At the Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Chiswick we learnt about the beautiful icons in the upper and lower parts of the church building and the priest gave a blessing. We then had a most delicious lunch.

From there the Walk continued to Christ Church, Turnham Green, a lively Anglican parish church. We heard about their wide range of activities using their building in the heart of community and the value they find in prayer.

The final venue was the London Buddhist Vihara. We were told about the value of the Buddhist way and listened to uplifting Buddhist chanting.

Thank you to all the places of worship who opened their doors to us and to the 50 enthusiastic walkers who took part.

Learning from the leaders of the great religions

What can we learn from the leaders of the great religions, even if we are not of that faith? Rev Dr John Parry, a United

Reformed Minister who has studied Sikhism for over 30 years, shared his insights with a well attended multi-faith audience at the Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha in Hounslow on 13th July.

Guru Gobind Singh was the 10th and last spiritual leader and creator of the Khalsa, the observant Sikh community, in 1699. He was a man of vision, commitment and organisational skills, but also of humility. Although he inspired sacrifice from Sikhs as they stood up for their faith against the tyranny of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, he saw humanity as one. He wanted freedom of religion for all.

John Parry discussed the value to a faith of scriptures, the understanding of the concept of God and the obligation of service to others. It was Guru Gobind Singh who installed the Sikh scriptures as the final guru, always available and central to the life of the community and the family.

He saw the concept of God as too great for the human mind to comprehend. This inability to understand God fully has a parallel in Christian St Paul's words 'through a glass darkly'. Humans should always be selfless and give service to others.

This talk presented something new and different, a real soul searching for those who are at the chalk face of interfaith activities, having to deal with histories of strife between faiths and yet finding a way forward together as one diverse humankind.

The vote of thanks was given by Mr Gurmit Singh, President of the Gurdwara who presented John with a copy of the new edition of 'The Sikhs' by Gurinder Singh Sacha. John Parry's own book on 'The Word of God is not Bound' was available for sale at the event.

Changes to Hounslow Friends of Faith Committee

The AGM of Hounslow Friends of Faith (HFOF) also took place on 13th July. Abdul Majid was elected one of our two Vice-Chairs, taking the place of Rev Tom Gillum who is moving to Nottingham. Mr Majid is a trustee of the Hounslow Jamia Masjid. Charanjit Ajit Singh was re-elected Chair and Divya Din as our other Vice Chair.

The Church of England will be represented on the HFOF committee by Rev Anne Dollery, vicar of St Dunstan's Church in Feltham. Nimu Ladva is the new representative of the Brahma Kumaris on the committee and Bessie White returned to being a trustee in addition to continuing as Information Officer.

Get in touch if you would like a full list of our committee members who all serve for one year until the next AGM in 2018.

Our subscription rate remains the same at £10 for an individual and £20 for an organisation with the year running from 1st January. Contact us for a form or join via our website.

Brahma Kumaris Summer Events

The Brahma Kumaris centre for self-development are holding an Open Day on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd July at 216 Bath Road, Hounslow West TW4 7DE There will be workshops on positive thinking, anger management, meditation and self-esteem.

On Saturday 12th August their Enlightened Women's Group are holding an afternoon looking at the Four Faces of Women: Traditional, Modern, Eternal and Shakti. How much are they still

relevant for us today in the modern world?

To register ring 020 8577 9529 or email hounslow@uk.brahmakumaris.org.

Refugees Welcome Hounslow



Progress is being made to welcome up to 10 families from Syria coming to Hounslow borough as part of the Government's Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme. Refugees Welcome Hounslow (RWH) has been formed to offer support to these families who are being accepted by Hounslow Council. The group came from an initiative of Hounslow Friends of Faith who are continuing to work closely on this project.

Hounslow council has provided a one-bedroom flat in Bedfont and has applied to the Home Office for a referral of a couple, a single person or single parent. The household is due to arrive in 6-8 weeks.

Up to four more one bedroomed flats are being investigated, two flats in Feltham and two other possibilities in Brentford.

By October/November there could be four or five households in Hounslow. Each family will have a support group of volunteers to help them settle in. Get in touch if you are able to help.

Mohammed Bashar has taken up his post as case worker to help the refugees settle in. Members of the RWH Welcome Committee are meeting him

soon to explain where RWH fits in and what kind of support they can offer.

The next general meeting of Refugees Welcome Hounslow is planned for Monday October 9th. Details of venue to follow.

There are of course many asylum seekers from other countries already living in Hounslow, many of whom are also in need of friendship and support. RWH will also be looking at whether they can extend what they do to others in due course..

Meanwhile there is still a need for offers of one or two bedroomed properties which could be rented for up to two years. For information on how to get involved contact Refugees Welcome Hounslow on refugeeswelcomehounslow@gmail.com

If you'd like to run a fundraising event or make a donation, please contact the treasurer on treasurer.rwh@gmail.com.

Grenfell Tower Fire

We were all shocked by the tragedy of the devastating fire at Grenfell Tower in north Kensington in June. Prayers were said for the victims and survivors at various events here in Hounslow.

It was in addition very sad to learn that funeral prayers were said at the Hussaini Islamic Mission in Isleworth on 14th July for one of those killed in the fire, preceding burial in the Twickenham Cemetery in Powder Mill Lane.

The local connection brings it home to us the personal nature of the incident and the transitoriness of life. Let us hold the family in our prayers, and their

community too as they offer the family support at this difficult time.

Problem Solving Booth....on the Tube!

This brilliant concept took place in July on the Piccadilly Line between Hounslow West and Acton Town!

How does it work? Problem Solving Booths bring members of the community together to have conversations that they might not usually have, by helping each other with their problems. One chair is for the "Helper", the person listening to the problems, and the other for the "Helped", the person describing their concerns.

The aim of the Booth, however, is that people swap roles regularly as we all potentially have both problems as well as the ability to offer help. To the side of the chairs is a board where people can leave their ideas about other things that could help their communities with the "stresses in their heads".

Who were involved? Joining Hounslow Police on 14th July were founders www.owls.org.uk (a group supported by the Mayor of London) TFL, British Transport Police, West London Mental Health Trust, London Borough of Hounslow Mental Health Team, Holy Trinity Church, Goldsmiths University and others.

For photos of the Booth in action see the HFOF Facebook page (link below) or Hounslow Police Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/HounslowPolice/#>

There's room for more volunteers from faith communities to join the team. Contact Sgt Dave Turtle to find out more: Dave.C.Turtle@met.pnn.police.uk

OM Day Sunday 23rd July

Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Sikh belong to a common heritage and share values. These have been celebrated at annual conferences for the past 18 years as OM DAY, which reflect on non-violence, harmony and peace. Implementing these core values are the only way to achieve world peace for which peace loving people aspire.

The event takes place on Sunday 23rd July at the London Buddhist Vihara, Dharampala Building, The Avenue, Chiswick W4 1UD between 1pm and 5pm. The theme will be Spiritual Pathways to Harmony and World Peace. There will be talks and a cultural and spiritual programme. A vegetarian meal will be served.

This event is open to all. Please contact sevashramvision@hotmail.com or ring 020 8743 9048 if you would like to attend.

Knitting Group

The next session of the Interfaith Knitting Group takes place on Saturday 22nd July at St Mary's Church Hall (the Windsor Room) in Church Street in Twickenham at 10.30am. Bring some food to share for a summer lunch.

There will be a break in August and the group come together again on 16th September. The sessions are open to anyone who likes knitting. Projects include squares for blankets and jumpers for children which are donated to the Riverside Storehouse project in Feltham.

For more information ring Barbara on 020 8892 1731.

Summer events and festivals

Eid Mubarak to our Muslim colleagues who celebrated the end of Ramadan on 25th June. Several groups invited non-Muslims from the community to join them to break the evening fast at iftar during Ramadan itself or for the immediate Eid Festival on 25th June.

On 6th August the Laxmi Narayan Hindu Temple will be supporting the Shree Krishna Janamashtami Rath Yatra procession through Southall from King Street Shree Ram Mandir to Lady Margaret Road and back. This festival is the annual celebration of the birth of the Hindu deity Krishna, the eighth avatar of Vishnu.

Best wishes to all for a restful and peaceful summer holiday.

Social Media

Many places of worship now have Facebook pages and Hounslow Friends of Faith have also signed up. Do have a look at our page, like us or even follow us for regular (but not too frequent!) updates.

For those new to social media, Hounslow Voluntary Sector Support Service recently organised a very useful training on making the most of Facebook and Twitter. Get in touch with me if you would like a copy of the helpful handout full of useful tips and good advice.

For further information on these stories ring **020 8560 5887 or 07812 833635** info@hounslowfriendsoffaitth.org www.hounslowfriendsoffaitth.org or follow us on Facebook on <https://www.facebook.com/Hounslow-Friends-of-Faith-724712751039387>