

Newsletter

March 2018

Keeping you up to date with
Hounslow Friends of Faith

International Women's Day

The Afghan and Central Asia Association (ACAA) are celebrating Nowruz on Saturday 24th March at Cranford Community College, High Street, Cranford TW5 9PD, 6 – 10pm, doors open from 5pm. Tickets £10 adult and £5 for child over age 5 – 16 available at the door or by email as above. Live music, entertainment and delicious Afghan food is promised.

Nowruz, also known as Iranian New Year, has been celebrated for over 3,000 years in Western and Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Black Sea area and the Balkans. It is also a major festival for Zoroastrians.

ACAA held an event for International Women's Day earlier in March at Heston Community School. It was an evening of entertainment with discussions on challenges, obstacles, and achievements of Muslim women in the UK.

Also on 8th March, Reach Hub Girls Group at Reach Academy in Feltham are hosting performances by local young people, food and drink and motivational speakers between 6 and 8.30pm. The event is open to the whole community although a large proportion of attendees will be young people aged 12-18 and their parents.

Tickets from Eventbrite
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/international-womens-day-event-tickets-43130169498?aff=es2>

Lent and Easter 2018

Christians are currently observing Lent, a six week period of abstinence and prayer running this year from 14th February to 29th March, It forms a preparation for the major festival of Easter which falls on the 1st April.

A number of Walks of Witness take place on Good Friday (the Friday before Easter Sunday) with members of different Christian denominations taking part together. The Walk in Feltham starts at The Green, next to St Lawrence's Church at 11am followed by refreshments back at the church hall. In Bedfont members of local churches meet at St Mary's Church at 10am.

Heston Churches hold their event, at 9.30am at the United Reformed Church, 309 Vicarage Farm Road TW5 0DR, 10am at the Methodist Church (opposite Heston School), St Leonard's Church at 11.45, finishing at Our Lady Queen of Apostles.

Vasaikhi Celebrations

Vasaikhi is a major Sikh festival which commemorates the initiation of the first five members of the brotherhood of the Khalsa on April 13, 1699, a significant date in the development of the faith. The date of the festival is 14th April when good wishes could be sent to our two local Sikh gurdwaras in Hounslow, the Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha in Alice Way and the Gurdwara Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha in Martindale Road.

The Nagar Kirtan, the procession which will be led by the Sikh Holy Book, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, which Sikhs consider as the Living Guru, takes place on

Sunday 25th March, starting in Alice Way at 1pm.

There may still be time for people of any faith to offer to train as stewards for this event and to apply to run food stalls (pre-prepared food only) along the route. See website <http://www.sgss.org/Default.aspx> or email Satwinder Ahdan on spsa@sgss.org.

Holi celebrations

Best wishes to local Hindus for the Hindu spring festival celebrated this year on 1st and 2nd March, known as the festival of colours. It signifies the victory of good over evil, the arrival of spring, end of winter, and for many a festive day to meet others, play and laugh, forget and forgive, and repair broken relationships. It is also celebrated as a thanksgiving for a good harvest.

Celebrations took place at the Hindu Mandirs locally in Hounslow. A sold out event planned for this spring festival at the Indian Gymkhana Club for 3rd March was postponed to 11th due to the snow!

Commonwealth Heads of Government

The Heads of Government of Commonwealth countries are meeting in London in April. Hounslow Friends of Faith was represented at a reception to mark the occasion which took place at Buckingham Palace in February.

Places of worship are among the educational and community groups who are encouraged between 12th March and 22nd April to host a 'Big Lunch' to bring people together and celebrate the rich diversity of people of Commonwealth heritage who live here in Hounslow.

West Thames College have a Commonwealth Culture and Celebration Week in mind for 26th – 29th March with art, fashion and food displays. Hounslow Jamia Masjid have a lunch planned for Thursday 19th April (not 18th as first considered). Members of as many Commonwealth countries as possible will be invited. Look out for your invitation.

Not to be outdone, the Mayor of Hounslow, Councillor Sue Sampson, is hosting a tea party at the Civic Centre on Commonwealth Day, 12th March to which council staff and Hounslow Friends of Faith members are all invited.

For more details of how your place of worship could get involved see <https://www.chogm2018.org.uk/get-involved/commonwealth-big-lunches>

Women's Group

We were very sorry that we had to postpone our session with DS Shabnam Chaudhri of the Met Police on 28th February due to the snow and ice. We will let you know as soon as a new date is arranged.

Exhibition Our Stories, Our Health

Hounslow Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Social Enterprise *Spark the Difference* invites everyone to their exhibition: launch on 12th March 2018.

They know that there are Hounslow residents who are less likely to approach local authorities and/or statutory services for advice and support for living and keeping well, particularly members of smaller or more recently arrived groups termed 'emerging communities'. The two organisations have been working together to better understand the

experiences and perspectives of people within these groups in the borough.

Views have been gathered from Somali, Nepalese, Afghan, Polish and Romanian people and the exhibition highlights the challenges they face in looking after their health and accessing the right health services.

The exhibition **Our Stories, Our Health** reveals positive and inspiring insights into how communities are improving their wellbeing and are receiving helpful support.

The exhibition will be launched on Monday 12th March, 4 – 5.30pm in the Library Cafe, Hounslow Civic Centre. It will be exhibited until Friday 23rd March at the Civic Centre, Hounslow Centre for Health and Feltham Centre for Health.

More information about the Emerging Communities Programme can be found <http://www.hounslowccg.nhs.uk/your-voice/emerging-communities-engagement.aspx>

Buddhist Psychology Course

The London Buddhist Vihara is running a series of sessions on Buddhist psychology at their centre in The Avenue, Chiswick W4 1UD. The next 5 day intensive course on mental factors begins on Thursday 8th March, 7.00pm – 9.30pm. To book and for further information about this and any future ones, contact 07848 036433 or email hpannavamsa@gmail.com

Understanding Islam courses May 2018

Understanding Islam is a well recommended short course for non-Muslims to help them understand the

beliefs and practices of Islam and how Muslims think and see the world. It is delivered by Dr Chris Hewer who comes from a background in Christian theology, education, Islamic, and interfaith studies. Dr Hewer has worked in the field of Muslims in Britain and Christian-Muslim relations since 1986, first at the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations in Birmingham and from 1999 to 2005, as the Adviser on Inter-Faith Relations to the Bishop of Birmingham.

He offers courses locally with the next courses taking place May 8th - 10th from 9.30 to 4.30 in Richmond and May 29th – 31st May 9.30 to 4.30, probably in Kingston. To sign up and find details of the course content go to <https://www.chrishewer.org/live/>

Two more arrivals from Syria

Two more refugees from Syria have now arrived in Hounslow and are settling gratefully into new homes with the support of volunteers from the multi-faith group Refugees Welcome Hounslow (RWH).

We are very grateful for the goodwill there is towards this project to assist just a few of the many millions of Syrians affected by this ongoing conflict. As each household has different needs, however, donations of money are more helpful than household items. Many thanks to Maswell Park Church who held a most enjoyable Quiz Night this month and donated the proceeds to RWH.

If you would like to organise a fundraising event or make a direct donation towards a few new things for the new arrivals or for the work generally please contact our treasurer on treasurer.rwh@gmail.com. To find out more about offering a property to rent or

to discuss becoming a befriender, email refugeeswelcomehounslow@gmail.com.

Drumming Workshops for Women

Sakina, one part of the renowned acoustic duo Pearls of Islam will be running drumming workshops for women and girls in Feltham on three Sundays during March and April. The dates are 18th March, 1st and 15th April. Classes for children age 6+ are from 1 – 2pm and cost £10. For ladies are from 2.30 – 4pm and cost £20. The classes take place at the Centre for Spirituality and Cultural Advancement, Manor Lane, TW13 4 JQ. To book ring 0208 587 0668 or info@spiritandculture.org.uk

General Data Protection Regulation

New regulations relating to Data Protection, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) come into force on 25 May 2018 in the biggest overhaul of data protection legislation for over 25 years. They introduce new requirements for how organisations process personal data. A key factor is that organisations must not use consent for holding personal details for one use for another without explicitly obtaining new consent. Any information retained can only be used for the 'legitimate interests' of the organisation e.g. addresses/emails for contacting members for the necessary administration of your group, not passing on to others.

Many faith groups will have had advice on compliance through their own networks. If you haven't and weren't able to get on the training provided by Hounslow Voluntary Sector Support Service, contact Iain Elliott iain@ealingcvs.org.uk to discuss how to get advice. Another organisation which might be able to give information and

training is the National Council of Voluntary Organisations. See their website: <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/>

Making Grant Applications

Near Neighbours is an organisation which facilitates joint working between places of worship of different faiths. The new contact is Elizabeth Fewkes, based just up the road in Southall.

There is a one day training on making larger funding applications on 27th March 9.30am – 3pm in Southall Town Hall UB1 3HA. Contact Elizabeth for more details and to book on efewkes@kingscentresouthall.org.uk

Membership Renewal

Hounslow Friends of Faith is a voluntary group with no paid staff. The group aims to increase knowledge and understanding about faiths; support equality and diversity; and promote contact and good relations between people of different religions and beliefs and people of no belief.

We apply for occasional funding for special project, but rely on subscriptions from members as our main source of income. Subscriptions from members run from 1 January, so now's the time to renew if you haven't already done so.

For those readers who are not members, do consider joining and supporting the work we do; £10 for individuals and £20 for organisations. Get in touch via email below for a form where you can also sign a gift aid declaration. Payment is also possible via Pay Pal on our website.

For further information on these stories ring **020 8560 5887 or 07812 833635**
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www.hounslowfriendsoffaith.org