



**Celebrating HFOF's 25th Year**

**HFOF Newsletter Autumn 2025**

**Annual Walk of peace and friendship, Sat 28<sup>th</sup> June**



The weather was perfect, and we were a group of about 40 people visiting 3 venues in Chiswick. We were joined by the Deputy Mayor and Cllr Gill. We Started at St Michael and all Angels Church, which was built by the Victorian architect Norman Shaw and consecrated in 1880. Its worshipping tradition was described to us as Anglo-Catholic. We heard that the Church has strong links with the local community and organizes social, cultural and charitable events.

The next venue was the Russian Orthodox Cathedral which is beautifully decorated with iconography in the ground floor and below ground chapels. We were told that the cathedral was consecrated in this building in 2018, but is the

seat of the Diocesan Bishop for the whole of Western Europe. Services are in a mixture of Church Slavonic and English languages. The congregation has grown recently with people leaving Russia. The community run a foodbank and the Sisterhood provide support to their community. We were delighted that the Sisterhood provided us with refreshments at the end of our visit.

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> venue was the London Buddhist Vihara. We were told it was founded in 1926 and follows Sri Lankan Theravada Buddhism. We were given an interesting introduction to Buddhism and explanations of the statues and practices. The Vihara is open to anyone who wants to participate in the meditation and classes. The Vihara has had strong links with HFOF and the Interfaith community throughout HFOFs 25 years. We were provided with refreshments to conclude our enjoyable visit.

### HFOF AGM 10<sup>th</sup> July



Once again we held our AGM at the Civic Centre, thanks to our partners at the Council who hosted us. The guest speaker was Rabbi Dr Miri Lawrence who gave a fascinating talk about her personal journey to becoming a Rabbi in the Progressive Jewish faith. She described the different sects in Judaism in the UK, ranging from Ultra-orthodox to Progressive. There are about 290,000 people in the UK (0.5% of the population) identifying as Jews. She said she was drawn to

Progressive Judaism due to its inclusivity, and flexibility to embrace change, within the strict precepts of Judaism. Dr Jackie Tabick, was the first woman to be ordained as a Rabbi in the UK in 1975, followed by Baroness Julia Neuberger. Both women are committed to social justice and Interfaith work, and were Miri's teachers when she was ordained 33 years ago.

The meeting was very appreciative of Rabbi Miri's talk and she was thanked by Zaheer Khan.



### **New HFOF Trustees**

We are delighted to welcome Shelagh Allsopp, chair of Refugees Welcome Hounslow, and Shamama Lateef, Director of Al Mustafa Welfare Trust, to our Trustee Board. We look forward to working together with them.

### **HFOF Knitting group**

Under the leadership of Lynda Imir, this highly successful, talented and productive group, is based at St Mary's Church Hall in Twickenham. It meets every month and there are 15-20 women attending. We are thankful to the church for their continuous support.

On Saturday 16th August, they had a wonderful Summer celebration, displaying their craft in making baby sets such as cardigans, hats, booties, blankets in a variety of colours and designs, all for charity and those in need. It

was good to hear them sharing ideas and thoughts as well as enjoying excellent food brought by the Interfaith contributors and knitters.

## Unity football match, 31 August



Al Mustafa Welfare Trust, in partnership with Hounslow Friends of Faith, proudly hosted the “Unity Tournament 2025” at Goals Gillette Corner, Isleworth, to mark World Peace Day. The football tournament brought together boys aged 16+ from across the community, creating an afternoon filled with energy, teamwork and friendship. More than just a sporting event, the Unity Tournament was a powerful reminder of how sport can unite people of all faiths and backgrounds

The event was attended by several distinguished guests, including Mayor of Hounslow, Councillor Amy Croft, Deputy Mayor Councillor Mujibur Rahman Junue, Councillor Samia Chaudhury (Cabinet Member for Children, Education, Employment & Skills at LBH), Councillor Farhan Rehman, Abdulrazzaq Sajid (Chairman, Al Mustafa Welfare Trust), Charanjit Ajit Singh (Chairperson, Hounslow Friends of Faith), Ajit Singh (Trustee, Hounslow Friends of Faith), and Shamama Lateef (Trustee, Al Mustafa Welfare Trust).

Guests and participants praised the initiative for its role in building bridges across communities and offering young people a platform to engage positively through sport.

"This tournament was not only about football but about celebrating unity, peace and friendship across Hounslow’s diverse communities," said Muzammil Ahmad, Youth Representative of Al Mustafa Welfare Trust. The Unity

Tournament 2025 was a resounding success, highlighting Hounslow's commitment to peace, inclusion and community cohesion. Plans are being discussed to build on this success with more initiatives in the future. Thanks to Shamama for organising the event.

### **London Dangoor Award for exceptional Interfaith work**

HFOF submitted an application for an award for an exceptional Interfaith project. The project we submitted was last year's Interfaith Iftar organised by Hounslow Friends of Faith, in partnership with Al Mustafa charity and West Thames College. We were very pleased to have been shortlisted from many applications, but didn't make the final nomination for the [London Dangoor Award](#) this year.

### **Osterley Library Garden Project**



The garden continues to be tended by HFOF and we are planning a music and poetry event based around the garden.

### **Community Energy Fund grant**

Hounslow Council is inviting local groups, including faith groups to apply for a share of its £150,000 Community Energy Fund – helping to cut carbon, lower energy bills, and future-proof community spaces. Now in its fourth round, the

fund offers grants of up to £40,000 for projects that improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions.

Projects could include:

- Retrofitting buildings with insulation and LED lighting
- Installing solar panels
- Upgrading heating systems with low-carbon heat pumps

Applications close 9 December 2025. To learn more, visit:

<https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/environment/hounslow-councils-community-energy-fund>

## Jalsa Salana UK 2025, Annual Convention of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community



The three day Convention ( 25-27 July), was held in a beautifully constructed marquee city at Oaklands Farm, Alton in Hampshire. It was attended by approximately 40,000 people from across the globe, as well as leaders from civic and religious institutions, aimed at promoting Islam’s message of Peace. In his address to the gathering, the spiritual head, His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, stressed the critical need for Peace amongst our diverse human family. He reiterated the Ahmadiyya values of loyalty, freedom, equality, respect and peace.

We attended on 26 July and it was a great experience to witness their motto in action, 'Love for all and Hatred for None.' We were looked after well and were also interviewed on Radio.

### **Air India disaster**

We were very saddened to hear that many of our local faith communities lost friends and family members in the air crash. Where possible, Charanjit and Ajit attended memorial services on behalf of HFOF

### **Laxmi Narayan Temple celebrates Pran pratishtha Mahotsav**



This sacred three day religious ceremony was aimed at inaugurating and consecrating the deities at The Laxmi Naryan Temple's first floor newly built shrine. The Mahotsav celebration included Hindu devotees as well as people from other faiths and civic leadership. It marked a truly historic milestone for the local and regional Hindu community.

Over the three day period that culminated in the main ceremony on Saturday 5th July, thousands visited and paid their respects to their deities – Lord Ganesha, Goddess Durga, Shiva, Rama Sita and Lakshaman, Radha and Krishna.

## **25<sup>th</sup> anniversary Celebration at the World Zoroastrian Organisation, Feltham**

Members of the Zoroastrian community came together to attend this magnificent event to celebrate 25 years of dedicated service by Ervad Fali Madon, who is also a HFOF trustee. We attended on behalf of HFOF and learnt much about the Madon family and their commitment to their ancient faith. Also how Fali in his unassuming style manages this UK wide, small but distinct community. The reception concluded with a delicious meal.

We pray that Fali continues this service for many years to come.

## **OM DAY Sunday 6 July at Buddhist Vihara**

OM Day celebrates the four Dharmic Faiths – Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, that originated in India, but are now spread worldwide.

Prayers of peace and for lost lives were chanted and the Unity Lamp was lit, Gayatri Havan Yajna was performed.

Bharti Tailor gave a short talk on Swami Nirliptananda the instigator of Om Day. The Head Monk of the Vihara, Venerable Seelawimala talked about the importance of interfaith dialogue for peace in the world. 'Buddha's universal declaration of loving kindness and unconditional love, is an important message urging us to work for the unity of our beautiful diverse society', he said.

DR Vinod Kapashi's talk about the Jain religion was read. Brahmacharini Jahanvi Ma, representing the International Vedanta Society, shared her experience of the Hindu faith as a convert. Charanjit spoke about the interfaith dialogue since the time of Guru Nanak in the fifteenth century and the acceptance and reverence of scriptures of other faiths by the Sikhs.

## **St Mary's University Twickenham celebrating 175 years**

Hounslow Friends of Faith were represented at two special functions at the campus on 8 May when religious leaders were consulted about their plans for St Mary's School of Medicine and then on 2 June when there was a 175th anniversary mass celebrated by the Cardinal Vincent Nicholls and the Vice

Chancellor Professor Anthony McLaren with staff and students, past and present. The beautiful service was followed by a sumptuous lunch.

We would wish to express our deeply felt congratulations and best wishes for the future growth and success of this Catholic University in London.

### **Halo project, Richmond Faith and Belief Forum**

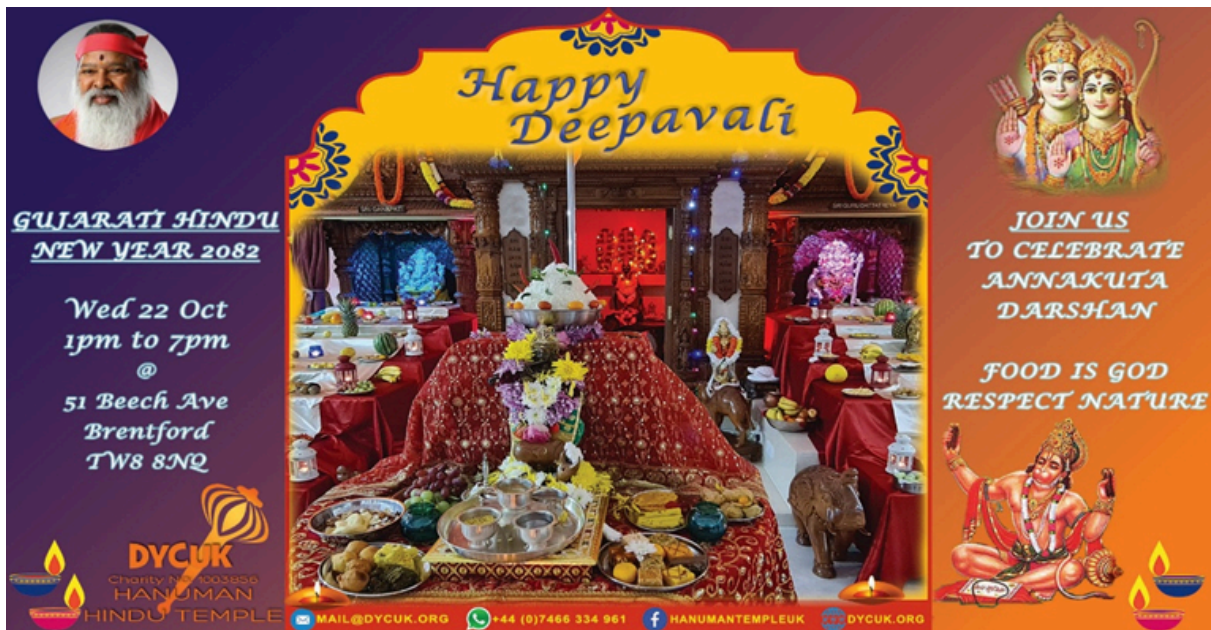
Shamama Lateef attended the Initial meetings of the HALO project, which started in September. The group was set up to work on Faith based understanding of mental health and wellbeing. They are looking at the different meanings of mental health for different communities and how interfaith collaboration can help build understanding and better support. She reported that the meetings were very meaningful and the start of an important and useful piece of work.

### **Met Police community crime fighting meeting held at Hounslow House 16 October**

Members of HFOF were present at an event run by the Met police aimed at building up trust with the community. There were many police in attendance ranging from the Assistant Commissioner to volunteer cadets. Senior officers described the training and HR measures which were being implemented in the force to weed out unsuitable personnel. Also they spoke about successes in reducing crime and focussing on areas the community were most concerned about. They were encouraging everyone to log on to MET ENGAGE.

## Upcoming events

### Diwali celebration at Hanuman temple



**Happy Deepavali**

**GUJARATI HINDU  
NEW YEAR 2082**

Wed 22 Oct  
1pm to 7pm  
@  
51 Beech Ave  
Brentford  
TW8 8NQ

**DYCUK**  
Charity for Disabled  
HANUMAN  
HINDU TEMPLE

MAIL@DYCUK.ORG +44 (0)7466 334 961 HANUMANTEMPLEUK DYCUK.ORG

**JOIN US  
TO CELEBRATE  
ANNAKUTA  
DARSHAN**

**FOOD IS GOD  
RESPECT NATURE**

### Interfaith week 9-16 Nov – Event at Mulberry Centre, West Mid hospital campus, 12 November 5pm

HFOF members are invited to a joint meeting at the Mulberry Centre – an independent organisation which supports people affected by Cancer. This event has been set up to raise awareness about the support available from the Mulberry Centre and to increase the take-up of the service, which is lower among minority communities.

### Event to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Nostra Aetate 28 October 7-9pm, Church of Immaculate Conception, Farm Street W1K 3AH

Nostra Aetate is the Vatican Council's ground-breaking document on interfaith dialogue. The event is followed by a reception in the London Jesuit Centre (next door to the church). RSVP by Wednesday 22 October.

## **350<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Event, 24 November 5-10pm at Alice Way Gurdwara**

The event marks the martyrdom (Shaheedi Divas) of the ninth Sikh Guru Tegh Bahadur who died in 1675. He was executed on the orders of Aurangzeb (6th Mughal Emperor) for resisting forced conversions of Hindus. His martyrdom is seen as a profound act of courage and religious tolerance and is remembered as 'Hind-di-Chadar' – shield of India, symbolising his protection of religious freedom for all.

You are invited to attend, and food will be served throughout the event

### **Faith Festivals**

**20 Oct** – Diwali/deepavali, Mahavira Swami Nirvana kalyanak (Hindu and Jain)

**21 Oct** – Bandichhor Diwas (Sikh)

**22 Oct** – Birthday of the Bab (Bahai)

**23 Oct** – Birthday of Bahauallah (Bahai)

**26 Oct** – Jashan-e-Abangan (Zoroastrian)

**5 Nov** – Guru Nanak's Birthday (Sikh)

**9-16 Nov** – Interfaith Week

**9 Nov** – Remembrance Sunday

**24 Nov** – Jashn-e-Adargan (Zoroastrian)

**25 Nov** – Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyrdom Day 350th anniversary (SIKH)

**25 Nov** – Day of the Covenant (Bahai)

**27 Nov** – Ascension of Abdul Baha (Bahai)

**30 Nov** – Advent Sunday (Christian)

**8 Dec** – Bodhi Day (Buddhist)

**14 Dec** – Chanukah festival of lights (Jewish)

**21 Dec** – Yalda (Zoroastrian)

**25 Dec** – Christmas Day (Christian)