



# Surrey Faith Links Newsletter

October 2019

**“He who has no faith in himself, can never have faith in God”**

**(Guru Nanak)**

September has been busy with some truly amazing events, many of which marked and celebrated the 800th anniversary of the meeting between Saint Francis of Assisi and Sultan Malik Al Kamil—more to come in November for interfaith week.

If you would like support in organising an event, please get in touch.

Kauther Akhtar  
 Faith Links Adviser  
 E: [Kausar.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk](mailto:Kausar.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk)  
 T: 01483 790334  
 W: [www.surreyfaithlinks.org.uk](http://www.surreyfaithlinks.org.uk)

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**7th Annual Peace Day Celebration in Woking**

Over 300 children entered the annual Peace Day Competition organised by Woking People of Faith in partnership with Surrey Faith Links.

This year’s theme marked the 800th anniversary of the encounter between Saint Francis of Assisi and Sultan Malik Al Kamil during the 5th crusade. Children were asked to write a poem or design a poster on how that meeting could be a blueprint for world peace.



Children from New Monument Primary school enjoyed performing a play about the meeting between the Saint and the Sultan. It portrayed a powerful message; to put differences aside and focus on what unites; to listen and learn from one another and respect people of all faiths and backgrounds to establish peace.

Kauther Akhtar, Faith Links Adviser, gave a background to International Day of Peace—it is the 20th anniversary of Peace Day and the 7th year since it has been held in Woking.

**Main Faith Festivals in October 2019**

- 1st: Jashn-e Mehrgan (Zoroastrian)
- 2nd: Gandhi Jayanti (Hindu)
- 9th: Yom Kippur (Jewish)
- 14th-21st: Sukkot (Jewish)
- 14th: Pavarana Day (Buddhist)
- 22nd: Simchat Torah (Jewish)
- 27th-31st: Divali (Hindu/Sikh/Jain)
- 29th: Anniversary of birth of Bab (Baha’i)
- 30th: Anniversary of birth of Baha’u’llah (Baha’i)

For description of festivals please visit: [Religious Festivals](#)



Simon Trick, Chair of Woking People of Faith (WPOF) spoke about the interfaith forum and how to get involved.

A group of Children from Shah Jahan Mosque sang a nasheed (Islamic song) followed by Mike Cope, a member of Christ Church, who sang a couple of anti-war and pro-peace songs.

The Mayor of Woking, Cllr Beryl Hunwicks spoke about Woking as a diverse and welcoming Borough; she then presented the prizes to the winners of this years Peace Day

competition.

Free henna painting of peace symbols was also available throughout the event. There was a display of books and resolutions about Peace run by Irene Ridgeon from Woking Action for Peace.

### 12 years to save the planet?

South East England Faith Forum's 2019 Annual Conference examined faith, belief and non-faith perspectives on climate change, and the influence and impact that faith and non-faith groups can and should have on the future of our planet.

The Conference opened by the SEEFF Chair Kauser Akhtar. Kauser invited the audience to a few minutes of silence to remember Charles Wallach, the Jewish member of SEEFF Board of Directors who recently passed away.

Speakers included: John Paul DE Quay from the Ecological Conversion Group, John Marder, Interfaith Officer for Network of Buddhist Organisations UK, Kamal Preet Kaur from the Sikh Missionary Society UK, Jeremy Rodell, Dialogue Officer for Humanists UK, Rabbi Jeffrey Newman, Founder of Shema and Emeritus Rabbi of Finchley Reform Synagogue, Kamran Shezad, director of Training for the Islamic Foundation for Environmental and Ecological Sciences (IFEES) and Dr Justine Huxley, the CEO of St Ethelburga's.



[Click here to read the full report](#)

### Christian Muslim Forum

Bishop Andrew Watson hosted the Christian Muslim Forum on 11th September 2019; Muslim and Christian representatives looked at the historic encounter between Saint Francis of Assisi and Sultan Kamil Al Malik and discussed principles that could be drawn out from this relationship.

Contemporary issues were discussed such as Kashmir, the link between the Diocese of Guildford and Diocese of Sialkot (Pakistan), the 25th anniversary of the massacre of Srebrenica, Bosnia and local interfaith engagement.

The forum will continue to meet regularly to improve Christian Muslim relations in Surrey and surrounding areas.



### Surrey Environment Partnership

The Surrey Environment Partnership (SEP) is made up of Surrey County Council (SCC) and the 11 district and borough councils in the county. It aims to manage Surrey's waste in the most efficient, effective, economical and sustainable manner.

The 11 district and borough councils are waste collection authorities (WCAs) and are responsible for the collection of Surrey's municipal waste which includes waste from households. The county council is the waste disposal authority and is responsible for the disposal and treatment of Surrey's municipal waste collected at the kerbside and waste and recycling from Surrey's community recycling centres (CRCs).

To find out more about how the partnership is working together, read our strategy, visit our projects page – which has details of a joint waste collection contract, and our communications page – which has results of our countywide campaigns: <https://www.surreyep.org.uk/about-us/>

### Who's problem is it anyway?

The Runnymede and Spelthorne Faith Forum organised an event to explore the faith perspectives on the climate emergency at St Pauls Hythe Centre in Staines on Sunday 15th September.

Rabbi Kath Vardi from the North West Surrey Synagogue, rev Chris Swift from St Nicholas Church, Shepperton and Imam Hussein Kazi from the Ashford and Staines Community Centre delivered insightful talks on their respective faiths. This was followed by Q&A and discussions on practical steps and personal pledges, which were written on leaf shaped paper and hung on a tree.

Attendees then enjoyed a diverse range of food, which was brought in by those attending from various cultures.

Visit the Surrey Faith Links Facebook page for more photos of the event.

For more information about the RSFF or future events, please contact Kauther Akhtar: [Kausar.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk](mailto:Kausar.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk)



### Catholicism and Islam – Encounter and Engagement

The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton organised a 'Dialogue and Unity Day' focusing on Catholicism and Islam.



Over 80 people attended this event held at the St Philip Howard Centre for Education, Crawley on Saturday 28th September 2019.

Fr Martin McGee, a newly appointed Inter Religious Adviser for the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton spoke about his experience in Algeria, the relationship between the Monks of Tibrhine in Algeria and the Muslim community. Fr Martin mentioned a number of Church documents including an address given by Pope Saint John Paul II ([available online here along with his talk](#))

Kauther Akhtar, Surrey Faith Links Adviser, delivered a talk about Islam, she explained the teaching and example of the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) with regard to interfaith dialogue, [available here](#) and [listen to the full speech here](#).

Interfaith groups explained about their challenges and achievements. These were Woking People of Faith, Crawley Interfaith Network and Brighton and Hove Interfaith Contact Group. Many people commented on the usefulness of seeing how these groups work in practice.

If you are interested in joining a get together for Catholics involved in or interested in interfaith groups, please email:

[Catherine.Martindale@abdiocese.org.uk](mailto:Catherine.Martindale@abdiocese.org.uk)



## Festival of Cultures

Despite the rainy day, we were delighted to welcome so many people of different cultures of SMEF. People of all ages and ethnicities came together to showcase their cultures with food, song and dance. The large hall at Ravenscote Junior School in Camberley was set up with stalls selling food, artefacts and cultural displays. The Mayor Cllr Robin Perry opened the event and distributed prizes to children of different age ranges who had taken part in SMEF's 'I live in Surrey' art competition.



This was followed by a delightful program of song and dance. Graceful Nepali women from the Camberley Nepali Society and the Woking Nepalese Community Services swayed to music celebrating nature and love. Four little girls from the Sayapatri Cultural Club won our hearts with their Nepali dance moves. Krisztina Paladi-Kovacs, a Trustee of SMEF and a dance teacher led her troupe of boys and girls in their national costume, entertaining the crowd with their energetic and rhythmic Hungarian folk dance. Our Bahai member groups ran a story telling session for children on the birth of the BAB, the founder of the Bahai faith. The Chinese Association led by Anita Ho also a SMEF Trustee did a graceful Tai Chi display and a sword dance. Nayayuva's young Nepali volunteers displayed their virtuosity on the guitar accompanied by a tuneful melody. Zareena Linney from Youthbox accompanied by her group of boys and girls did a Boxercise demo. The show ended with a Kathak dance performed by Marcina Arnold, from the Indian community, who convinced people to come to the floor and learn a few moves, ending our Festival of Cultures event on a happy note.

Krisztina Koch, Surrey Ethnic Minority Forum. For more information, please visit: <https://smef.org.uk/>

## A Celebration and Tea Party



The Guildford area third order Franciscans organised a tea party to mark the 800th anniversary of the meeting of St Francis of Assisi and Sultan Malik Al Kamil on Saturday 5th October.

All attending were invited to stitch a button onto a banner with the Franciscan and Sultanate flag as a permanent reminder of the meeting.

Young people from St Saviours Church, Guildford, performed a play about the encounter followed by short talks and the everyone joined in to sing 'make me a channel of your peace'.

Everyone was then invited to enjoy the tea party with some delicious cakes and continued conversation in a lovely atmosphere.

## Help to brighten up someone's day and become a Volunteer Befriender

### Loneliness is a national problem

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell strive to tackle loneliness in older people in the borough

### What we do

We carefully match all of our volunteers with our clients to help create a new friendship

### What you can do

Whether it's a cup of tea and a chat or sharing a crossword, just spending quality time with someone each week can make a difference

Want to know more?

Contact: Liz Hope. Volunteer Coordinator

T: 01372 732 458 | E: [liz.hope@ageconcernepsom.org.uk](mailto:liz.hope@ageconcernepsom.org.uk)

[www.ageconcernepsom.org.uk](http://www.ageconcernepsom.org.uk)

**AGE** Epsom & Ewell  
*Concern*

Helping Older People Feel Less Alone



## Interfaith Week 2019

Inter Faith Week is approaching fast. It is a great opportunity to strengthen and develop understanding and cooperation between people of different backgrounds.

Each year, hundreds of organisations and many thousands of people take part in all sorts of activities from open door days and exhibitions, through sports activities, inter faith volunteering to help local communities, and much more. You can find out more at [www.interfaithweek.org](http://www.interfaithweek.org)

### Want to hold an activity but not arranged anything yet?

There's still time to organise an activity! Check out the Resource section of the website for ideas, including ['quick activity'](#) ideas and the [Toolkit](#).

Some 'key messages' about Inter Faith Week at national level can be found at [www.interfaithweek.org/resources/key-messages](http://www.interfaithweek.org/resources/key-messages)

Media tips can be found at <https://www.interfaithweek.org/resources/media-tips>

Look out for Interfaith Week events in Surrey on page 7 onwards of this newsletter.



## Faith and Cultural Awareness Training for Staff & Volunteers

It has become evident in today's increasingly multicultural society that constructing and developing relations between people of all faiths and none is important for work life as well as social cohesion.

Employers should have a basic level of knowledge of different faiths to get a better understanding of staff/customer needs and requirements.

It is also good for staff to have some level of knowledge and awareness of faiths and cultures for a better experience with the people they work with.

For more information or to organize a training session please contact:

Kauser Akhtar, Faith Links Adviser, T: 01483 790334,

E: [Kauser.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk](mailto:Kauser.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk)



## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### Surrey Education Fund

The Surrey Education Fund provides funding to help disadvantaged children and young people up to 25 years to access education and training.

Grants are awarded to fund costs such as equipment, books, travel or tuition fees or support the costs of providing charitable educational facilities. Funding is also available for voluntary or charitable projects that provide training and skills development.

Grants of up to £5,000 are available.

More information here: <https://www.cfsurrey.org.uk/fund/surrey-education-fund/>

### Funding Available for Strategic Projects in Surrey

Community Foundation for Surrey have funds available where their donors are keenly interested in supporting the strategic development of charities in Surrey.

Grants of £5,000 – £20,000 are available to support strategic projects which strengthen charities, increasing your potential impact and encouraging long-term sustainability:

- Capital Expenditure – including equipment, new construction, renovation, and expansion which are critical to sustainability and achieving your mission
- Strategic IT Projects – including investments in hardware/software which will enable expansion or efficiency in service delivery
- Strategic Organisational Developments – including mergers and planning initiatives which use expert consultants to determine new, transformational paths.

Director of Grants and Impact, Kate Peters is available to chat through in more detail and would love to hear from you if you have a project – or a dream you can see this funding fulfilling! If you would like to contact Kate Peters, please email [kate@cfsurrey.org.uk](mailto:kate@cfsurrey.org.uk)

### Rebecca Cannon Vitality Fund

The Rebecca Cannon Vitality Fund is an in memoriam fund aimed to provide a lasting legacy, raising money in memory and offering a brighter future for the homeless and disadvantaged young people of Surrey.

The fund awards grants to individuals and non-profit organisations who provide support to overcome homelessness and help disadvantaged young people gain confidence and raise aspirations.

Grants of up to £5,000 are available.

For more information: <https://www.cfsurrey.org.uk/fund/rebecca-cannon-vitality-fund/>



## Are you Brexit Ready?

Please see below a message from Surrey County Council about Brexit:

"With the October 31st deadline for leaving the EU looming, residents, the voluntary sector and businesses are being urged to check whether they are ready for Brexit. The County Council is following government advice and has been planning for some time to ensure we are prepared, working with multi-agency partners like the Police, NHS, Highways England and Surrey Chamber of Commerce to help keep Surrey safe, moving, and preventing and minimising any impact of disruption to communities, traffic and the environment.

There are an estimated 78,000 EU nationals living in Surrey who can apply free of charge for settled or pre-settled status. The [step-by-step process](#) is applicable for all EU citizens living in the UK who have a valid biometric passport. It is also open to non-EU family members with a valid biometric residence card. The deadline for applying is 30th June 2021, or 31st December 2020 if the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

Businesses and all relevant organisations should also check they have the correct documentation and procedures in place to continue trading without any hitches once the UK has left the EU. This will apply, for example, to companies involved in any import or export activity to and from the EU. The farming community and agricultural businesses need to check whether any special measures will apply to them surrounding animal movements, for instance, or other regulatory procedures.

The Government has launched its own information campaign [Get Ready for Brexit](#) which contains all the information for residents, families, businesses and organisations, ranging from what's needed to take the family car on holiday to the EU, to a fact-checker for ex-pats living abroad. Additional information can also be found on the [SCC website](#)."



<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/brexit>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum Events 2019/20

**Remembrance:** Tuesday 12th November | 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm start

"Remembering the men and women from all the countries who fought for freedom"

St Andrews Church, Church Gate House, Downside Bridge Rd, Cobham KT11 3EJ

Dr Zafar Iqbal: From India to Woking – The role of Indian Army in WW1

The Commonwealth contribution, Indian Army and the Muslim contribution specifically including the history of Muslim Burial Ground and installation of the Peace Garden.

Victor Eyles & David Cooke Cobham Remembers: Accounts of local contributions.

Light refreshments from 7.00 pm. Free event, donations welcome to cover costs.

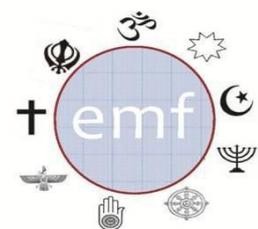
**Tuesday 21st January 2020: Sufi Dervishes (TBC)**

**Tuesday 21st April 2020: Guided tour of the Peace Garden, Horsell and Brookwood Cemetery.** More details to come soon.

For more information please email:

Secretary: [Kauser.Akhtar@cofefeguildford.org.uk](mailto:Kauser.Akhtar@cofefeguildford.org.uk)

For more information please visit: <https://www.elmbridgemultifaith.org.uk/>



### Surrey Heath Faith Forum

#### The Sultan and The Saint

It is the 800th anniversary of the meeting between Saint Francis of Assisi and Sultan Al Kamil—both men of God, who made efforts for peace during the crusades.

The film will be screened on Thursday 14th November at St Michael's Church, London Rd, Camberley during Interfaith Week at 6.30 pm

All welcome

For more information please contact Jayne Boitout

E: [Jayne.Boitout@surreyheath.gov.uk](mailto:Jayne.Boitout@surreyheath.gov.uk)



### Woking Debates: Film Screenings

The Woking Debates committee have decided to put on three film showings on peace and social issues this . After each film there will be a discussion on the film. They will be held at the Woking Quaker meeting house in Park Road

The last of the films for this year will be screened on 14th November, 'A Bold Peace'

A Bold Peace, the award winning feature documentary about Costa Rica's answer for world peace

See [www.wokingdebates.com](http://www.wokingdebates.com) for more details

or contact Keith on 01483 824908 or email: [keithsc\\_2000@yahoo.com](mailto:keithsc_2000@yahoo.com)

### Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum

Interfaith Service to mark Interfaith Week

The theme is: Saving our home—faith perspectives on the climate crisis

Sunday 17th November, 3 pm—5pm, St Nicholas Church, Bury St, Guildford GU2 4AW

Representatives of local Hindu, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, Sikh and Bahá'í communities will be sharing their Faith's teachings and devotions.

Cllr Penny Rivers, Mayor of Godalming will conclude the talks.

There will be shared food after the programme

Donations will go to 'Practical Action' (<https://practicalaction.org/>)

All welcome!

For more information please contact: Bernard Jones (Secretary)

T: 01483 424257 E: [bernard.jones10@btinternet.com](mailto:bernard.jones10@btinternet.com)

Or Carolyn Neogi: E: [carolynneogi@aol.com](mailto:carolynneogi@aol.com) | T: 01483 415773



## Baraka

Epsom and Ewell Interfaith Forum invite all to a film screening of the film Baraka to coincide with Interfaith Week.

Featuring no conventional narrative, this film presents footage of people, places and things from around the world. From chaotic cities to barren wilderness, the movie takes viewers around the globe to witness a variety of spectacles in both natural and technological realms. Detouring into former concentration camps, the production doesn't shy away from the dark side of humanity, and ultimately shows how much of the world is interconnected by both the tragedy and the vibrancy of life.

The event is to take place on Sunday 17th November 2019, 3pm at the residence of one of our members. Please RSVP to get more information and the address: [eeiff@outlook.com](mailto:eeiff@outlook.com)



## Guildford Action Sleep Out 2019

Please see below a message from Guildford Action about their upcoming Sleep Out to raise funds for homelessness in Guildford:

"Last November Guildford Action held our first Sleep Out event and through your participation and fundraising the charity has been able to provide support and practical help to vulnerable families and the homeless in Guildford over the past year.

We are excited to let you know that we are now organising Sleep Out 2019 on Friday 29th November and we are asking for your help to make this years event even bigger and better.

We will be holding the main Sleep Out event at the Guildford Spectrum car park but we would also like to encourage supporters to hold their own events at satellite locations, whether that's in a work place, garden or community venue. This will enable more people to take part and raise awareness of the work of the charity as well as secure vital donations.

Please consider taking part in this year's event and sharing our invitation with your friends, family and local community. We would love to have you there.

To book your place on Sleep Out 2019 at the Guildford Spectrum, the registration is via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/guildford-action-sleep-out-2019-tickets-74357678819?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

The charity page for our Virgin Money Giving account to collect donations is via the link below:

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/finalCharityHomepage.action?uniqueVmgCharityUrl=surreycommunity-6>

Thank you very much for your ongoing support for Guildford Action. It is greatly appreciated and makes a big difference to everyone who comes to us for help. "

When: 29 Nov 2019 until 30 Nov 2019

## Woking Debates 2020

**Climate Emergency- what can we do?** Saturday 11th January 2020

**Islamophobia** – Saturday 8th February 2020

**A Rock and a Hard place.** Journeymen Theatre play on domestic abuse – Saturday 14th March 2020

**Are we giving vulnerable children the help they need?** – Saturday 18th April 2020

**What good is football?** Saturday 9th May 2020

10.30 am Refreshments for 11.00 am start till 12.30 pm

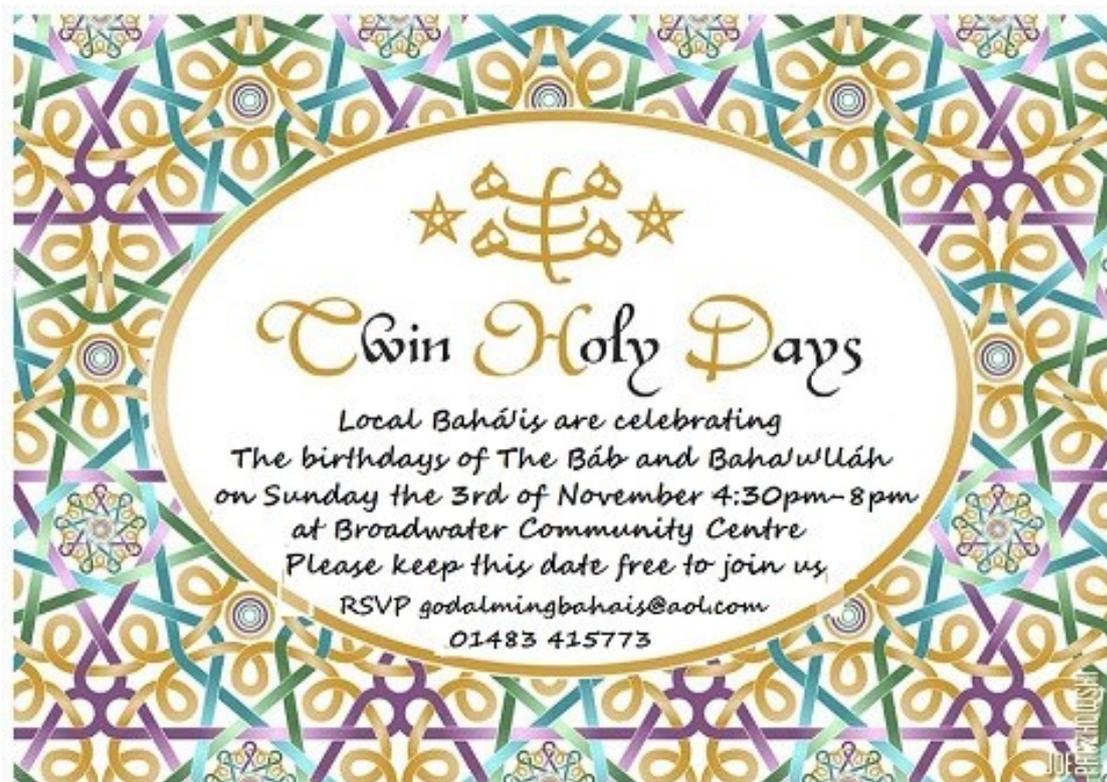
Christ Church, Jubilee Square, Woking, GU21 6YG

Entrance is free, donations welcome.

The Woking Debates are organised by: Woking Action for Peace, Friends of the Earth, Surrey Faith Links, Woking LA21, Woking Quakers and Woking People of Faith.

For more information please contact: Keith Scott: 01483 824980 | [keithsc\\_2000@yahoo.com](mailto:keithsc_2000@yahoo.com)

[www.wokingdebates.com](http://www.wokingdebates.com)



**Surrey Faith Links c/o CET, Diocese of Guildford**  
Church House Guildford, 20 Alan Turing Road, Guildford, GU2 7YF  
T: 01483 790334, E: [Kausar.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk](mailto:Kausar.Akhtar@cofeguildford.org.uk)  
W: [www.surreyfaithlinks.org.uk](http://www.surreyfaithlinks.org.uk)



Diocese of **Guildford**   
TRANSFORMING CHURCH  
TRANSFORMING LIVES  
Communities Engagement