



“Recognise all mankind whether Hindu or Muslims, as one. The same Lord is the Creator and Nourisher of all; Recognise no distinction among them. The monastery and the mosque are the same; So are the Hindu worship and the Muslim prayer. Men are all one.” (Guru Gobind Singh)

With the easing of restrictions, interfaith forums are planning face to face events but with caution! Working people of faith managed to organise an interfaith football tournament, read about it on page 2. Plenty of events planned for you to join, and read about special days/weeks on page 4. If you would like to get involved please contact me. Thank you

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My Sikhism

Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum organised a zoom event to explore Sikhism on Tuesday 18th May 2021.



Mr Bahadur Singh who is a member of the Independent Advisory Group for Surrey Police and a Chaplain at University of Surrey spoke about the fundamental beliefs of Sikhism. He said Guru Nanak said ‘I don’t see the divisions, I see all humanity as one and we are all created by one Creator’ and this is a core belief for Sikhs. Bahadur went on to say that it is important to have a Guru in ones life, ‘if one does not have a Guru in their life, then he/she is not a Sikh and that Guru is Guru Granth Sahib’

Mr. Nirmaljit Singh who is a Prison chaplain & a presenter on Sikh media platform spoke about how Sikhism incorporates the teachings of the ten Gurus, Hindu and Muslim saints. ‘The Institute of Sikh Studies has said, ‘A Sikh is strict with religiosity, active in social life, aware of justice and is responsive to any injustice done by anyone’

Main Faith Festivals in June 2021

- 3: Corpus Christi (Christian)
- 16: Martyrdom of Guru Arjen Dev (Sikh)
- 21: World Humanist Day (Humanism)

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

Baljeet Kaur who is a Committee member of a Gurdawara spoke about women's equality and the Sikhi perspective.' She started her talk by quoting Guru Granth Sahib 'why call her evil who gives birth to the world leaders, from the woman is born woman, without the woman, there is none.'

'The concept of the role of women has played a vital role from the time of the founder of Sikhism, at a time when women were considered property and a distraction from the men's spiritual path as women were considered incapable of having their own spiritual journey.'

Baljeet said 'the Guru's do not consider God to be male or female because God is unborn. Men and women are equal in Sikhism and no post is reserved solely for men. Sikh baptism is open to both genders and a Sikh woman can become a Sikh priest, she can take on any job in the religion or outside of religion.'



There was an interesting Question and Answer session from attendees to the speakers panel. Some questions were 'what are the differences among Sikhs, the type of dress and requirements from a Sikh man and woman'.

It was noted that over the last year in particular, Sikhs have been of great help to those in need in various ways, and particularly with providing food at the Gurdawara's across the UK.

A recording of the event is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2VNKfDzLG4>

Interfaith Football Tournament

Woking people of faith organize an annual 'Interfaith Football Tournament'; this year it took place on Saturday 22nd May at Winston Churchill School.

There were two teams from Shah Jahan Mosque (A and B), a team from Emmaus/Light House, the Eagles, the Welcome Church, and a team from the Big Leaf Foundation.

The aim of the interfaith tournament is to promote community and religious harmony and mutual understanding, which was displayed both on and off the field.



Team A from the Shah Jahan Mosque won the cup against Emmaus and the Eagles won the platter against the Welcome Church. Prizes were presented by the Mayor of Woking Councillor Liam Lyons; each player received a medal.

It was a day mixed with rain and sunshine and everyone left with a greater sense of community spirit and sportsmanship.

For more information about Woking people of faith and upcoming events, please visit: www.wpof.org.uk

Coronavirus roadmap – changes from 17 May

This week marked a new point in the roadmap with the easing of some restrictions. The government has now eased the limits on seeing friends and family, wherever possible allowing people to decide on the appropriate level of risk for their circumstances. A full list of changes and what people can and can't do can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Air Pollution: a hidden threat to Woking

Woking Debate was held on Saturday 15 May 2021 on zoom.

Air pollution is a real problem. The World Health Organization estimates that 7 million people die from it a year and that 50,000 people die each year in the UK. The estimate for Woking is 40 deaths a year. Pollution from roads is estimated to affect 94% of our country, raise depression and anxiety and has been shown to increase asthma in infants.

Kevin Davis the Portfolio holder for the Environment and the Economy on Woking Council spoke first. Air pollution is a silent killer. Recently there has been a decrease in air pollution and the problem in Woking is not as bad as is generally thought. Air pollution is caused by human behaviour and we all contribute to it. In a car when you pull away is the most polluting time. As we move to electric cars pollution will go down. The Council is encouraging them and the new Red car park will have the capability for charging points at each bay when demand dictates. In Woking there are two spots where air pollution levels reach cause for concern. Changes are being made in these places to assist traffic flow and decrease pollution. Woking has passed a Climate Emergency Policy. Green walls have been established and taxi drivers are being encouraged to use electric vehicles. Kevin seeks to improve technology and public information to give the public the tools to change our behaviour.

Professor Prashant Kumar is Associate Dean (International), Professor and Chair in Air Quality and Health at the University of Surrey and Founding Director,

Global Centre for Clean Air Research (GCARE). In Guildford working with schools, stakeholders and Guildford Borough Council they have shown how practical steps can make a difference. Hedges, trees and green walls are important but they need to be located in the right places and contain the best plants for that location. Sandfield Primary School has two busy roads around it. By collecting evidence of the pollution levels and analysing the best measures to protect the children from the air pollution they were able to put in green walls which have lowered pollution levels. The work has spread to other Councils.

It was established that Woking does not monitor particulate matter levels and so we have no real grasp of the problem. The smaller the particles the further they can get inside us and the more damage they can do. It is expensive to set up and maintain the best monitoring systems costing over £100,000 but more basic can be set up for £15,000. National standards are based on the annual average emissions. Professor Prashant emphasised the importance of working with Councils.

Professor Prashant emphasised that all greening is good. A green cover can reduce air pollution by 10-20% and by busy roads by up to 60-70%. Air emissions are highest near busy roads. Levels can be reduced by 50% within 100 metres away from the road. To cut down emissions we need to question whether we can control the source of the emissions. Do cars have to go through these roads? How do we empower people to protect themselves? Electric vehicles and traffic lights are top down approaches.

Asked about cycle lanes Kevin admitted they are not good enough. At one time he used to cycle to work at Heathrow but had to give it up as it was too dangerous. The road by Winston Churchill school has a cycle route but it is often blocked by parents in cars waiting to collect their children from school. We need high speed cycle routes and the canal path is not suitable for this. Safe routes are needed for cyclists. Professor Prashant also supported cycling and he has moved from Camberley where there was better provision than Guildford which is improving. Cycling is a danger to health by breathing in polluted air faster but the activity provides an overall benefit to health.

Kevin committed to working with Prashant in the future. Woking is the smallest Borough in Surrey but it is trying to improve and become more green. We need to change our behaviour with people going back to their cars after lockdown. Should behaviour be encouraged by taxation or by not providing enough car parking although people will then park in places where you should not park.

A recording of the debate is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLBDWrheByY>

SPECIAL WEEKS/DAYS

[The Big Lunch](#) will take place from 5-6 June. Across the years millions of people from different backgrounds have joined together to take part through street parties, BBQs, iftars and picnics.

This year's Big Lunch will also kick off a Month of Community, offering a feast of opportunities to share friendship and fun, and make positive local connections where you live.

[Refugee Week](#) will take place from Monday 14 to Sunday 20 June. Refugee Week is a nationwide programme of arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK, and encourages a better understanding between communities. The theme for the 2021 Week is 'We cannot walk alone'.

[The Great Get Together](#), inspired by the late Jo Cox MP, is taking place from Friday 18 to Sunday 20 June.

[Srebrenica Memorial Day](#) takes place each year on 11 July. This year's theme is 'Rebuilding Lives'. It is organised by Remembering Srebrenica.

[National Hate Crime Awareness Week](#) takes place from Saturday 9 October to Saturday 16 October.

[One World Week](#) will take place from Sunday 17 to Sunday 24 October.

[Inter Faith Week](#) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, will take place from Sunday 14 to Sunday 21 November.

[Mitzvah Day](#) will take place on Sunday 21 November. It is an annual day of faith-based social action led by the Jewish community where people give their time to make a difference to the community around them. Many events and projects held for the day have an inter faith focus.

[Sewa Day](#) is a day of faith-based social action led by the Hindu community. It normally takes place on 4 dates across the year. Due to COVID there are currently no fixed days; rather, 'every day is Sewa day' and volunteers are helping people continually as they are able.

[VisitMyMosque Day](#) is a national campaign facilitated by the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) that encourages mosques across the UK to hold an open day to welcome in their neighbours from all faiths and none. Details on this year's date are yet to be announced.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Advice and Guidance Officer – Vacancy

This contract is until 15th April 2022. Continuation of the role after this time is possible, ongoing funding dependent. 10 hours per week over 2 or 3 days, with flexible working. £28,000 pa pro rata (£8,000 pa actual) + 5% employers pension contribution. Based in Burpham, Guildford, with frequent travel to the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames. For more information please [click here](#)

The Feast Guidelines for Dialogue

The Feast has been releasing a series of videos of its Guidelines for Dialogue in action to show how they are used and interpreted by young people. <https://twitter.com/the Feast project> The Guidelines for Dialogue can be found at <https://the Feast .org.uk/resources#guidelines>.

Faith Communities and COP26

The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) is scheduled to take place in Glasgow from 1-12 November. <https://ukcop26.org/> It will bring parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Together with the Environmental Issues Network of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, Faith for the Climate convenes a COP Faith Task Group to enable diverse faith groups to contribute meaningfully to climate action before, during and after COP26. Its priorities are: Transformation; Advocacy; and Hospitality.

<https://www.faithfortheclimate.org.uk/Our-work>

In the framework of the British presidency, in partnership with Italy, of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change COP26, the Embassies of the United Kingdom and Italy to the Holy See, together with the Holy See, will be convening a meeting of religious leaders and scientists in Rome in autumn 2021 to build momentum for COP26. The aims of the meeting will be for faith leaders to: “articulate our common duty to address climate change; encourage national governments to raise their ambition regarding their National Determined Contributions to reach the Paris Agreement goals; and show how the faiths are leading the way by greening their own operations at central and local level and making new commitments encourage the faithful to take action to slow global temperature rises.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/faith-and-science-towards-cop26> #Faiths4COP26

Interreligious Insight

The World Congress of Faiths (WCF), an IFN member body, publishes a twice-yearly journal, Interreligious Insight. This brings together articles from inter faith thinkers and practitioners around the world and is used as a resource by academics and many others. Contributions to the WCF’s annual Younghusband Lecture are reproduced (most recently, examining attitudes to science within Hinduism, Christianity and Islam); and there is a book review section, an editorial from WCF Director, Revd Canon Dr Alan Race, and a poetry section. Annual subscription rates range from £10 to £100 depending on whether the access is online or printed and whether membership of WCF is included. For more information, and to subscribe, visit the WCF website at www.worldfaiths.org.

Dealing with Grief video series

The Naz Legacy Foundation has launched a Dealing with Grief video series, which explores the impact Covid-19 has had on faith communities across England and aims to inform, educate and support people who are grieving. Throughout the series, they speak to different faith leaders and families on how the pandemic has impacted on the way they grieve. The series can be found on the Naz Legacy Foundation [YouTube channel](#)

Status Now 4 All

The Status Now Network is a coalition of over 100 organisations and community action groups which are campaigning for “Status Now 4 All undocumented migrants and migrants in the legal process.” They are seeking to make contact with faith leaders who may know people who are undocumented, seeking asylum, or otherwise without settled status. They are inviting organisations to sign their campaign letter which can be found at <https://statusnow4all.org/about-status-now/>.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Surrey Crisis Fund

Funding has been provided to the [Surrey Crisis Fund](#) which can help Surrey residents in emergency need. Depending on your circumstances which will be considered when you apply you could be eligible for some of the following support: - food and toiletries - essential white goods and furniture; please note we do not provide replacement items - certain utilities - emergency travel costs (hospital appointments, job interviews, etc)

Other financial support available in Surrey To find out more about these options and others provided by District and Borough councils please visit surreycc.gov.uk/coronavirusfinance or call 0300 200 1008 Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm. SMS 0786 0053 465 for Deaf and hearing impaired residents only (Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm)

Green Jump Surrey

Surrey has won a further £3 million to help more homes keep warm and lower energy bills. You could be eligible if you are living in a hard to heat home and are in receipt of an eligible means tested benefit or have a total gross annual household income of less than £30,000. As funding is time limited, please contact Action Surrey as soon as possible on 0800 783 2503 or via www.actionsurrey.org/enquiries to check your eligibility.

COVID-19 funding

The Charities Aid Foundation has collated a list of organisations which are supporting charities and voluntary groups at this time. [Click here to read the list](#)

Launch of Restart Grants Scheme

At the beginning of April, the government launched the new £5 billion Restart Grants scheme to be administered by local authorities.

Businesses in England in the non-essential retail sector will be eligible for one-off grants of up to £6,000, while businesses in the hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym sectors, which are reopening later, will be eligible for one-off grants of up to £18,000.

You can find full details [here](#)

Subsidised Fundraising Workshops

The Foundation for Social Improvement offers subsidised training programmes for small charities across the UK. The courses cover a wide range of subjects from event planning to leadership. Many of the courses focus on fundraising and sustainability skills in particular. Further information and dates for upcoming courses, now being held online, can be found at <http://www.thefsi.org/services/training>.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Refugee Week Event

Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum invite you to join them on zoom for an event for Refugee Week on Tuesday 15th June, 7.30 pm on zoom.

Neelam Devisher - Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum - Chair and Introduction

Ray Northcott - Refugees Welcome in Surrey, speaking about various initiatives in the County

Louise Baumberg, Godalming Unitarian - speaking about her experience as a foster parent and unaccompanied youth supporter as well as the research for her Masters in Refugee Care

Marilyn Jarrett -Working to keep Human Rights Universal

Elisabeth Mpyisi - SMEF, "We do not walk alone : we move together in UBUNTO Community"

For more information or for zoom details please contact Bibhas & Carolyn Neogi:

E: gg_interfaith_friends@aol.com | T: 01483 415773



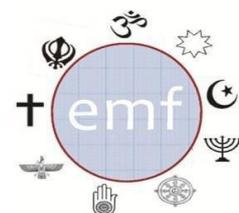
GGIFF

Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum AGM

Tuesday 22nd June, 7:30pm on zoom

Suzanne Akram, Executive Director, Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF) has been invited to talk about the 'History and Growth of SMEF'.

For Zoom access please email KawtherH@smef.org.uk



Woking People of Faith Events 2021

Faith in Action: A Conversation with Kayte Cable, Big Leaf Foundation

Thursday 17th June, 7pm on zoom

Kayte Cable is Co-Founder & Programme Manager of Big Leaf Foundation; she will talk about her faith in her everyday life.

For more information about Big Leaf Foundation, please visit their [website](#)

Faith In Action ... A Conversation With ... is a series of conversations with real people. These are interfaith conversations run by WPOF where individuals talk about their own faith and how it works out in practice in their everyday lives.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84328313042?pwd=QUhUNkUvWlpON3JUdndhT2NPNYXhIQT09>

Meeting ID: 843 2831 3042 Passcode: WPOF

More events on the next page.



Woking People of Faith

Upcoming Events:

Ladies' Coffee Morning - Saturday 12th June April, 11am

Join us for our next 40 minute session as we talk about how life has changed for us as restrictions have eased.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/91638794389?pwd=aGJvWXI5a1hkSEZmdXIDMEldldXc0QT09>

Meeting ID: 916 3879 4389 | Passcode: m1Pfp3

Bhaji Cookalong - Tuesday 29th June

Cook a bhaji from the comfort of your own kitchen. More details to follow.

Peace Day Event - Tuesday 21st September on zoom

Interfaith Cricket Tournament - September

Interfaith Week Event - Saturday 20th November

Do keep your eye on our [website](#) and Facebook page for further details of these events. Our Trustees also write a Thought for the Week which we hope you find inspirational. Please do let us know if you would like to contribute to these E: administrator@wpof.org.uk

'Month of Community' and 'Thank You Day'

[The Eden Project](#), which each year leads on The Big Lunch, is leading on organising a 'Month of Community', which runs from the beginning of June to the beginning of July. It includes:

- Volunteers Week 1-7 June
- The Big Lunch 5-6 June
- Neighbourhood Watch Week 5-11 June
- Carers Week 7-13 June
- Loneliness Awareness Week 14-18 June
- Refugee Week 14-20 June
- Small Charity Week 14-19 June
- The Great Get Together 18-20 June
- Thank You Day 4 July

The last of these, '[Thank You Day](#)', is a UK-wide initiative inviting people to get together to say thank you to one another, to family members, key workers, good neighbours and volunteers. It has a particular link to the pandemic and how people have responded. It is managed by the [Together Initiative](#).

NCVO Webinar: How to influence local elected officials

Marking Policy Day 2021, this interactive webinar on 16 June at 10am will be delivered in partnership with Small Charities Coalition (SCC) and will support small charities to influence decision-makers at a local level. The session will help participants know how to build relationships with and influence MPs and councillors.

Attendees will receive practical tools and resources from NCVO's Knowhow platform to support their future influencing work. For more information and booking please [click here](#)

Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum Programmes

Health Promotion Conversations

If you, your friend or a family member are interested in attending, please email jasminek@smef.org.uk. They are free and are facilitated by a GP or a Hospital Consultant. Conversations are confidential, informative, interactive, and non-judgemental. In addition to the listed conversations below, we are regularly organising Covid Vaccine hesitancy conversations to offer guidance.



May 22nd (Saturday) 18:30-19:45. Mental Health Conversation facilitated by Dr Chim Kalumbi, Consultant Obstetrics and Gynaecology. An experienced Mental Health Nurse will join us to speak about Pathways to Mental Health care and access of Mental Health services.

June 5th (Saturday) 15:30-16:45. Cardiovascular Disease Conversation facilitated by Professor Aftab Ala, Consultant Gastroenterology. A key priority is to tackle Smoking. The personal experience of a smoker of 30 years will be shared.

June 20th (Sunday) 16:30-17:45. Cardiovascular Disease Conversation facilitated by Dr Sudhir Rathode, Consultant Cardiologist. A key priority is to promote healthy eating. We will be joined by the Mayor's award-winning Guildford Restaurant for tips on Healthy Eating and further discussion.

For other SMEF events please visit: <https://smef.org.uk/events/>

Grow Social

Gardening can bring people together, helping to connect us with each other, ourselves and with nature. That is why RHS Wisley Gardens are encouraging you to make new connections in your community by growing together. For more information please visit: <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/competitions/grow-social>



Surrey Family Learning offer FREE online courses for parents, grandparents and carers who live in Surrey. New courses have been released for summer term. [Supporting Parents](#)

Anti Slavery Talk by 'Hope for Justice'

Saturday 23 October 2021. The talk will last for 45-50 minutes followed by at least 15 minutes discussion so it would be a different format.

For zoom joining details, please contact Keith Scott: keithsc_2000@yahoo.com or 01483 824980

For more information please visit: www.wokingdebates.com and/or follow on Facebook



Employability and Schools and Parenting course offer

WEA East Surrey works in partnership with East Surrey College. These courses (unless otherwise indicated) are for residents living in East Surrey districts (Epsom and Ewell, Mole Valley, Tandridge, Caterham, Reigate and Banstead).

To access the list of courses currently available please [click here](#)

To find other courses in your area please visit: <https://www.wea.org.uk/>

Latest job opportunities: <https://www.surreyca.org.uk/jobs/>

Surrey County Council's public health team offers the following training:

[COVID-19 related training](#)—Virtual Adult Introductory Mental Health First Aid Course

[Suicide prevention](#) to help improve understanding and confidence to intervene with people at risk of suicide.

[Wellbeing workshops](#) promote positive, emotional and mental wellbeing through six everyday actions

[Connect 5](#) – Ways to work with Mental Wellbeing in everyday practise. This course will enable people to have conversations about mental health and offer information on local service. Connect 5 is aimed at everyone.

[SafeTALK](#) - half-day alertness training that prepares anyone 15 or older, regardless of prior experience or training, to become suicide-alert.

[Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training \(ASIST\)](#) is a two-day interactive workshop in suicide first aid.

[Other training and useful resources](#) - including online training and training provided by other organisations.

Live Streaming of Religious Services:

A Church Near you: https://www.achurchnearyou.com/live-stream/?tags=Live_stream

Diocese of Arundel and Brighton: <https://www.dabnet.org/>

Surrey Muslim Association: <http://www.surreymuslims.org/Resources/>

Join Wat Phra Dhammakaya Buddhist Temple in daily meditation: <https://www.facebook.com/DMCtvLondon/>

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