



“For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease [i.e., relief] “

(Qur’an 94:5)

This is the last newsletter from me with the Diocese of Guildford—what a decade! Not to worry, you will continue to receive them but under ‘Surrey Ethnic Minority Forum’, read about it below and hope to be in touch with you next month with a new email address!

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Surrey Faith Links Transfer to Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum



Surrey Faith Links was launched as a partnership between Surrey County Council and Guildford Diocese in 2009, funded by Surrey County Council. Following discussions with Surrey County Council in recent months about sustaining the role of the Faith Links Adviser and ensuring continued delivery of the strategic objectives, it was mutually agreed to

transfer the project along with the Faith Links Adviser (Kawther Hashmi) to the Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF).

SMEF is a community organisation set up in 2009 to represent the needs and aspirations of a growing ethnic minority population in Surrey. A high number of people from ethnic minority communities are also people of faith so by transferring the management to SMEF there are key areas where work may be aligned and carried out efficiently, whilst ensuring the respective objectives and needs remain distinct and focused.

The county council remains committed to the Surrey Faith Links work and the important role faiths play in delivering the ambitions for the [Surrey Community Vision](#) 2030 and meeting the needs of communities.

The Guildford Diocese will continue to work closely together for better multi-faith understanding and inter-faith working.

Main Faith Festivals in April 2021

- 2: Good Friday (Christian)
- 4: Easter Day (Christian)
- 8: Hanamatsuri (Buddhist)
- 13: Songkran (Buddhist)
- 13: Vaisakhi (Sikh)
- 13-12 May: Ramadan (Muslim)
- 20-1 May: Ridvan (Baha’i)
- 21: Rama Navami (Hindu)
- 21: Adar Mah Parab (Zoroastrian)
- 25: Mahavir Jayanti (Jain)
- 26/27: Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu)
- 30: Lag B’Omer (Jewish)

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

Virtual Tour of the Shah Jahan Mosque & International Women's Day



The evening of 8th March was chaired by Kawther Hashmi of Woking People of Faith, Surrey Faith Links Adviser; she first introduced the excellent speaker, Muhammad Habib (who invited people to visit when safe to do so), who gave a very interesting and detailed talk on the origins and development of the Shah Jahan Mosque: due to the work of Dr Gottlieb Leitner, who established his Oriental Institute and with a donation from the Begum Shah Jahan, the Nawab Begum of the princely state of Bhopal, built England's first purpose-built mosque in 1889. Today there is a large hall where people can worship as the congregation has grown so much since that time.

Kawther then spoke briefly about International Women's Day and showed the link between the Shah Jahan Mosque and International Women's Day - the Mosque is named after a woman! Kawther said, Shah Jahan Begum improved the tax revenue system and increased state intake, raised the salaries of her soldiers

modernised the military's arms, built a dam and an artificial lake, improved the efficiency of the police force and undertook the first census after the state suffered two plagues (the population had dropped to 744,000). Shah Jahan Begum has been credited with the authorship of several books in Urdu. She was instrumental in initiating the construction of one of the largest mosques in India, the Taj-ul-Masajid, at Bhopal. She also built the Taj Mahal palace at Bhopal. She also contributed generously towards the founding of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, which developed into the Aligarh Muslim University. She also subsidised the cost of a railway to be constructed between Hoshangabad and Bhopal.

Imam Hashmi recited the opening prayer and also an overview of his role as Imam.

Over 70 people attended the online event and the Q&A at the end of the presentations opened to the attendees provided some interesting questions and Imam Hashmi was asked about how he became Imam!

The Chair of Woking People of Faith, Simon Trick, closed the meeting by thanking all the presenters for their hard work and excellent presentations and the audience for their support and participation.

A recording of the event can be [found here](#)

“Working together to get there”

With a roadmap that takes us back to a more normal way of life, it's more important than ever that current government guidelines are followed. COVID is still very much present in our communities and we must remain cautious and vigilant to stop the virus spreading.

We're still all in this together, and let's make sure we all play our part and stop any spread of COVID so we can see lockdown restrictions lifted.

Stay at home when possible

Stay local

Remember hands-face-space

Get tested for COVID

Read the Community Testing article for more information and advice.

Book your COVID vaccine

Read the Vaccinations in Surrey article for more information and advice

Relationships, Presence and Hope: University Chaplaincy during the COVID-19 Pandemic



Throughout the pandemic, chaplains and faith advisors have been supporting the isolated, comforting the bereaved, and providing pastoral and spiritual care to anyone who needs it.

In universities, chaplains have faced a massive health crisis among students. In November 2020, a [survey](#) of 4,193 students conducted for the National Union of Students found that 52% said their mental health was worse than it was before the pandemic, but only 29% of those people had sought any help.

This report captures the experience of higher education chaplaincy during the pandemic, drawing on interviews with 16 chaplains from universities (including University of Surrey) across the UK. It explores the unique contributions of chaplains during this time, the challenges they have faced, and what lessons can be learned by chaplains and employers.

Download the [full report here](#) and read an [executive summary here](#).

Dilemmas in Interfaith and Human Rights

There is a dilemma which runs through at least some interfaith programming, it has echoes in the rather British sensibility of “not talking politics or religion at the table”. It recalls too the now infamous remarks by Tony Blair’s Advisor, Alistair Campbell, who said, “We don’t do god” when the former Prime Minister was asked about his faith. That sense of unease is not unique to the British nor to Prime Ministerial advisors; I have seen this same tension creep in when working with people from around the world. Put simply, religion is a subject which for many people is a challenge to talk about. [Read the full blog here](#).

By Josh Cass, F&BF Development & Fundraising Manger

How does it feel to work in the NHS during a pandemic?

Frontline teams across our health and care system continue to go above and beyond for local residents. But how does it feel to work for the NHS during COVID-19? Find out in this short film from our staff across Surrey Heartlands. These teams need our ongoing support as the vaccination programme progresses and guides our path out of the pandemic - please continue to keep everyone safe by following the latest guidance.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUXU_6oPa6A

COVID-19 advice in different languages

Big Leaf Foundation have produced recent COVID tier rules in languages representative of displaced communities. They are available to download at: <https://www.bigleafoundation.org.uk/covid-19-advice.html>

They have also produced videos about fake news in different languages which can [be found here](#)

census 2021

With the upcoming Census 2021, the Surrey History centre takes a look at the historical importance of past censuses.

The 1911 Census took place against the background of a threatened boycott by the Women's Suffrage campaign. The returns offer historians an important and unique snapshot of civil disobedience in the fight for the vote, including by people in Surrey. Led by Esher's Charlotte Despard, the

Women's Freedom League advocated resistance to taxation and a boycott of the census, and suffragists were encouraged to write 'No Vote, No Census' across their census schedule. The penalty for refusal to complete the schedule was a fine of £5, or a month's imprisonment, so the only other option was to render oneself uncounted by staying away from home on the night of the 2 April, hence the famous story of Emily Wilding Davison hiding in the House of Commons' crypt.

Ethel Smyth, the eminent composer and suffragette, who lived at Hook Heath, Woking, wrote 'No Vote, No Census' across her schedule but the census enumerator, P. Macdonald, registrar of Woking, completed the form for her, recording 'Miss E M Smyth', along with two anonymous female servants (domestic cook and housemaid). With no forthcoming information about the property or its occupants, Smyth's residence is recorded as having 'probably 8' rooms. In the same year Smyth composed her suffragette anthem The March of the Women, dedicated to the Women's Social and Political Union.

Discover some of the other people in Surrey who boycotted the census on [Exploring Surrey's Past](#).

[View and register for online events here](#)

Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care System (ICS) nature-based wellbeing support

Surrey Heartlands ICS has secured £500,000 to help connect more people with nature to improve their mental and physical health.

People who live and work in Surrey are being invited to fill in an [interactive online map](#) to highlight the opportunities already available and help shape provision in future. People are being asked to map the activities and places where they experience nature – everything from green spaces, local parks, waterways and community allotments to walking, cycling and outdoor sports. The pins and comments on the map will feed into a project aimed at providing more opportunities for communities to get involved in their natural environment, in line with any Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time.

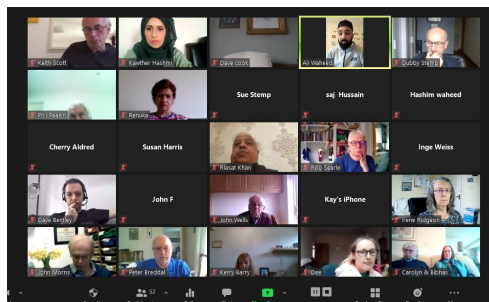
The ICS is among seven partnerships in England to have been awarded government funding for the initiative as a "test and learn" site. It's part of an initiative known as green social prescribing, which involves supporting people to take part in nature-based activities to enhance their wellbeing.

Residents are being invited to tell the project via the [Commonplace website](#) about outdoor activities or spaces they know about and how they feel about them – including the local park, feeding the ducks, walking groups, litter-picking groups, outdoor sports or any other opportunity. The website also has [more information](#) about the project and [accessibility details](#).

Community groups – whether resident associations, charities, friends of local parks, Scout or Guide groups or any other group which draws together local people – are being invited to get involved in designing and producing the project. Groups which are interested can visit the [Surrey Says survey](#).

Is knife crime and gang culture a growing problem in Woking? What is being done?

Woking Debate 20 March 2021



Ali Waheed is a NHS worker and runs Combat Sports League to promote a healthy lifestyle for young people. He listed the causes of why young people become involved in knife crime. They do not have the right mentors; family background; poverty resulting in fewer opportunities. In a gang you can make money quickly. Drill music glorifies crime. Social media can create depression and anxiety where people get judged very quickly. Materialism encourages

violence. One young person was stabbed for their designer jacket. Young people can feel untouchable and glorified if they go to jail. The school system is outdated for our society today with so much information so readily available. The last ten years have seen 70% cuts in youth services. It is easy for young people to get drawn into the wrong crowd.

David Bentley, the Borough Police Commander followed. He stressed that Woking is a safe place and the few incidents are blown up and give a wrong position. Knife crime usually occurs from when young people are scared. They take knives with them for protection but they can be used against them. Information is key to preventing it. Police need to be in the right place at the right time.

Dave Cook from the Prison Officers Association, the POA, is a serving prison officer for coming up to 30 years. Prison is a mini version of society and there is a massive problem in prisons with carrying knives. Prison is there to provide rehabilitation but in prison knives are made in their workshops.

Patrick Green from the Ben Kinsella Trust spoke about the work of the Trust. It is a national charity which concentrates its work in Nottingham and London. It was set up after the murder of Ben Kinsella. He was a 16 year old school pupil who was doing well in school and at school he was part of the anti bullying campaign. He was killed by a group out to do harm to someone, anyone. The offenders were caught and found guilty but the family found the case a bitter experience.

In response to what preventative work can be done Ali suggested seminars in secondary schools on the issue and the value of mentors. David B said early intervention is key. It is difficult for parents to get help and this needs to be improved. David C spoke about the unmet mental health needs and the need for investment in rehabilitation. The religious community has a part to play. Children need to be taught how to problem solve to avoid ending up in prison. Patrick spoke about the inadequacy of mental health services for children at school. At present you need to be at a very high threshold of mental distress to be referred. This has to be lowered enabling more to access the service.

Young people have access to social media where there is a lot of cyber bullying. "Social media gets away with murder literally". The social media platforms are too slow to tackle abuse.

In conclusion Patrick said that we all need to take responsibility. We need to reach out to young people and connect with them. Ali spoke of the need for more funding and early intervention. David B appealed for help in reaching young people getting into trouble to turn them in the right direction. He asked for people to contact him who wanted to help. David C said how he would love to be unemployed. "Stop filling prisons with people who could be helped before".

This was a powerful Debate. You can [watch it here](#) and read the [full report here](#)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Surrey Crisis Fund

The [Surrey Crisis Fund](#) is a discretionary fund run by Surrey County Council. It offers financial help to Surrey residents who have nowhere else to turn in an emergency or following a disaster.

Community Foundation for Surrey Donor Funds

Funding to support groups addressing the Community Foundation Priority areas:

- Health & Wellbeing – Advance people’s physical and mental health, wellbeing and safety
- Education & Skills – Improve life skills, education, employability and enterprise
- Disadvantage & Exclusion – Promote reduction of isolation and disadvantage and access to local services
- Stronger Communities – Maximise ability to strengthen community cohesion and build social capacity

CFS are currently accepting applications on a rolling basis with the next awards made in January 2021.

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

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](#)



Planning Grant Applications

Beverly Mann, Funding Advisor, Central Surrey Voluntary Action, will be running a Funding Surgery with Kate Peters, Director of Grant Making, at Community Foundation for Surrey and David McSween, Grants Officer, at Community Foundation for Surrey on

April 15th 2021.

The Surgery is to provide guidance on Preparing for a Grant Application.

The necessary planning that needs to be in place prior to producing a grant application.

The session will be held over Zoom. There are two time options:

Morning: 10.30am to 11.30am or Afternoon: 2.30pm to 3.30pm.

Please register your interest for the Funding Surgery by sending an email to: beverly.mann@csva.co.uk with your preferred time slot.

New Black and Ethnic Minority community-led foundation

Baobab Foundation will be “a new type of foundation, led by the communities it serves”, and aim to address the chronic underfunding of community organisations led by people of colour.

For more information please [click here](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Peace One Day 21: Sharpening Focus

From 2021 Peace One Day is marking a second critical day in the global calendar, 21 March, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. In doing so, Peace One Day is sharpening its focus on Anti-Racism as a key driver towards a more peaceful, diverse, equal and just world.

In order to reach its target of making 3 billion people aware of Peace Day by 2025, Peace One Day is focusing its activities on a total of four interconnected calendar dates, all driving towards Peace Day 21 September:

21 June, "Climate Action 21"

21 September, "Peace Day 21"

21 December, "Space Transformers 21"

Peace One Day are planning for the Anti-Racism Live Global Digital Experience on 21 March, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in association with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and are coming together in an exciting way. [Click here](#) to find the latest line-up, more information on the broadcast and a link to our new free education resources to accompany Anti-Racism Day on 21 March.

You can watch the Anti-Racism Live Global Digital Experience exclusively at peaceoneday.org. We hope that you tune in on the day and if you're doing anything to observe 21 March please do let us know on social media by tagging us and using the hashtags #peaceoneday #doyourpeace #fightracism #standup4humanrights

New Scriptural Reasoning Offering from Rose castle Foundation



Scriptural Reasoning (SR) is a unique and transformative method of inter-faith dialogue that improves understanding and relationships within and between faith traditions.

In SR, people of different faiths come together to read and reflect on their scriptures. Unlike some forms of inter-faith engagement, SR is not about seeking agreement, but rather exploring the texts and their possible interpretations across faith boundaries, and learning to 'disagree better'.

[Find out more here](#)

Working People of Faith Events 2021

Interfaith Football Tournament - Saturday 22nd May

Refugee Week Event - June, tbc

International Peace Day - Saturday 18th September

Interfaith Cricket Tournament - September TBC

Interfaith Week Event - November TBC



Working People of Faith

Woking Debates 2021 Programme

11.00 am—12.30 pm on Zoom

17th April—What value is arms and military expenditure to the UK?

15th May—Air Pollution: the hidden threat in Woking?

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



Guildford and Woking Humanists Talk on Artificial Intelligence

There is no charge for the talks. All are welcome!

For further information, and the Zoom link, please phone David Simmonds (01483 800397)

When Tuesday 13th April, 7.30pm

Title A wild ride through half a century of atheism with the Freethinker editor

Speaker Barry Duke

Where Zoom talk

Veteran journalist Barry Duke, born in apartheid South Africa in 1947, settled in the UK in 1973 after he was forced to flee the country for campaigning against racial segregation and censorship. He was granted asylum in the UK. He was a co-founder in 1979 of the Gay & Lesbian Humanist Association in 1987.

In 2017 Barry was handed a Lifetime Achievement award by the National Secular Society for his "spirited opposition to religious intolerance and irrationality" in his roles as a free speech advocate and his work as editor of the Freethinker. In 2017 he was married to his partner of 22 years, Marcus Robinson, in Gibraltar. The couple live in Benidorm, Spain

Countering prejudice and building cohesion: The More in Common way

A collaborative workshop, exploring how we can use social connection to counter prejudice within our communities. The session will be co-hosted by Co-Executive Director of Protection Approaches, Andy Fearn and Communities Manager Emily Danby from .

The Common Room brings together people from across the UK who share a passion for building stronger, more connected communities.

Tuesday 6th April, 7.00 pm via Zoom

[More information and register here](#)



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.

Free Online Learning

How to teach online, free course: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/teach-online>

National Emergency Library: <https://archive.org/details/nationalemergencylibrary>

Free online courses from top Universities: <https://www.classcentral.com/>

Free learning from the Open University: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue>

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/>

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell Virtual Easter Bunny Hop Fun Run – April 2021

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell are hosting our very first Virtual Easter Bunny Hop Family Fun Run this April 2021.

Throughout April, you can burn off all that chocolate and raise vital funds for Age Concern Epsom & Ewell at the same time. Whether you walk, run, hop, skip or jump, you can take part and complete a distance and course of your own choice.

The Easter Bunny Hop is a virtual event and is suitable for the entire family. Each participant will receive, upon registration, a pair of bunny ears which they can choose to wear either throughout their entire challenge or to submit their completion photo. Once we have received your completion photos, you will also receive a finishers medal.

The Age Concern Easter Bunny Hop is not just a virtual family fun run, but it is also a fundraising initiative to help our charity to continue providing vital services to older people in the Epsom & Ewell Borough. Although it is not compulsory, we do kindly ask that participants try to raise some sponsorship for this event, to assist Age Concern Epsom & Ewell in helping older local people to feel less alone.

To register for this event visit <https://ageconcernepsom.org.uk>



COALITION NEWS

Working together to promote equality of opportunity and independent living for disabled people in Surrey

Spring 2021—March, April, May—[Read online here](#)



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