



Surrey Faith Links Newsletter

June 2021

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"Turn yourself not away from three best things: Good Thought, Good Word, and Good Deed." (Zoroaster)

We had some truly amazing events covering Refugee Week this year, please do take time to read about them, recordings are also available under each article.

Interfaith forums are busy planning their events, the next big one is 'Interfaith Week', read about it on page 8 and please get in touch if you would like to get involved.

Kawther Hashmi

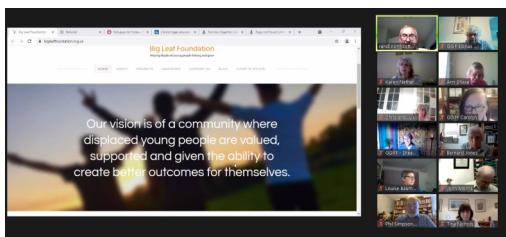
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"We Cannot Walk Alone"

Guildford and Godalming Interfaith Forum (GGIFF) organised the zoom event based on the theme for this year's Refugee Week 'We cannot walk alone' on Tuesday 15h June 2021.



It was very enlightening and informative evening with Panellists from differing backgrounds highlighting the work being done to help refugees build new lives in the U.K.

The meeting was chaired by Neelam Dervisher who gave a brief account of the role of '[Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum](#)' (of which she is Chair) to support ethnic minority communities, before introducing Ray Northcott from 'Refugees Welcome in Surrey' who gave details of an impressive number of local organisations who are helping in different ways, including 'Care4Calais' who as well as taking supplies to camps in France also provide practical help to those refugees who manage to enter the U.K. (these organisations are listed at the end of this report)

Louise Baumberg then spoke enthusiastically about her personal experience of fostering unaccompanied youth and working with 'The Big Leaf Foundation', showing slides of happy times enjoyed by displaced youth at Summer Camp and other activities. She told us that whilst younger children are placed in Local Authority care there is a need for supported lodging, which involves less responsibility than fostering.

Main Faith Festivals in July 2021

- 1: Jashn-e Tirgan (Zoroastrian)
- 7-16: Fravardigan (Zoroastrian)
- 9: Anniversary of Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i)
- 11: Ratha Yatra (Hindu)
- 14: Chokor (Buddhist)
- 17: Navroze (Zoroastrian)
- 18: Tisha B'av (Jewish)
- 19-22: Eid ul Adha (Muslim)
- 22: Khordad Sal (Zoroastrian)
- 24/25: Dhamma Day (Buddhist)

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



Marilyn Jarrett from 'Guildford & District Amnesty International' spoke about Amnesty's aim to re-unite separated families and gave many statistics including the fact that only Denmark & the U.K., within Europe, do not allow families to sponsor family members. We were listed 7th among the EU countries in the numbers of refugees accepted. She spoke hopefully of a number of M.P's from across the Party spectrum who are trying to improve this situation. She shared a very [insightful and emotive video](#) about keeping families together.

Elizabeth Mpyisi of 'UBUNTU Mindfulness Community', a Human Rights lawyer for 25 years, spoke about the therapeutic work that is needed to help asylum seekers,(and the Law Whole Clinic Network), as they navigate their way towards full citizenship of their new country whilst processing the situations that had caused them to flee their homeland and undertake arduous journeys. She showed a video titled '[Every Refugee Matters](#)'

The evening ended with an efficient Q&A based on comments left in the zoom 'Chat' during each presentation. The participants were left with the feeling that they can help positively through some of the organisations that had been highlighted.

A recording of the zoom event is available [here](#)

Local and national organisations that work with refugees:

- www.care4calais.org
- www.dorkingrefugeesupport.org
- www.epsomrefugeenetwork.org
- www.elmbridgecan.org.uk
- www.bigleafoundation.org.uk
- www.refuaid.org
- www.refugeesathome.org

Faith In Action: A Conversation With Kayte Cable

'Faith in Action' is a series of conversations with real people; these are interfaith conversations run by Woking People of Faith (WPOF) where individuals talk about their own faith and how it works out in practice in their everyday lives.

22 participants attended on zoom 'A Conversation with Kayte Cable' who is the co-founder of Big Leaf Foundation. Kayte was interviewed by Simon Trick,

Deputy Chair of WPOF on Thursday 17th June at 7pm. Kayte explained that though she was raised in a partly Church of England home, faith wasn't spoken about openly, and now she finds it hard to define exactly what her faith would be. She listens to music and sometimes feels that there must be presence, God is the great works. She is also very taken by the thoughts of Einstein when he stated that since many scientists conceded that actual knowledge of the forces of nature was still imperfect, for many there remained a belief in the existence of an ultimate spirit. She has had 2 epiphany moments in her life and made us all quite emotional when she described them. Kayte works with Big Leaf foundation supporting displaced young people in Surrey. WPOF has committed to working closely with Big Leaf in the future. A recording of the event is available [here](#)

A recording and report of the 'a conversation with Hilal Al Shareef', a Syrian refugee will be available in the next newsletter.



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 [here](#).

My Journey

Syrian refugees who have settled in Woking talk candidly about their personal journeys and the help received from the council and other partners. The video has been commissioned by Woking Borough Council, to watch the video please [click here](#)

Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum (EMF) AGM

The EMF AGM was held on Tuesday 22nd June on Zoom. Margaret Hicks, Chair of the forum, ran through the AGM formalities, which was followed by a talk ‘the history and growth of Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum’ by Suzanne Akram, Executive Director of Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF).

Suzanne explained how historically there was no central coordinating body to address minority ethnic issues and gave an overview of some of the minority ethnic communities residing in Surrey. SMEF currently has 48 ethnic minority member organisations.

‘Our mission is to engage and empower BAME Communities to work together to actively find solutions to the social and economic challenges they face’

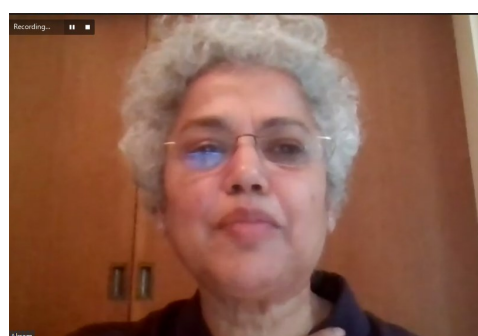
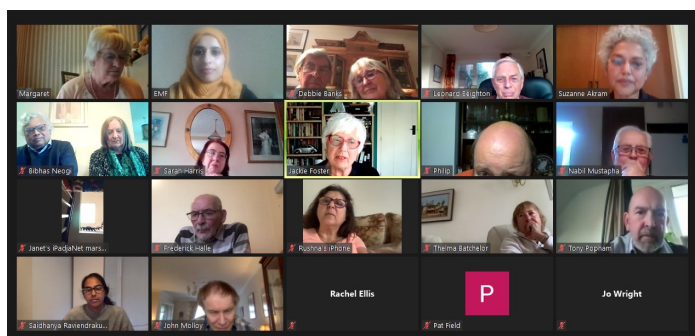
Suzanne Akram, Executive Director, SMEF

SMEF’s work continues to expand and currently includes address health inequalities, integration, empowering women, increasing youth aspirations, working with faith communities, capacity building, keeping communities safe and supporting elders.

Suzanne highlighted some of the challenges, which include: segregated communities, low educational achievement, specific health conditions, high needs of old people, high unemployment and general challenges such as domestic violence and alcohol and substance misuse. She spoke about how ethnic minorities were disproportionately affected by Covid-19 and that they have poorer health outcomes and life expectancy.

For more information about SMEF please visit: www.smeff.org.uk

The recording of the event is available [here](#)



Job Vacancy: Mental Health Outreach and Engagement Officer

Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF) is recruiting a Mental Health Outreach and Engagement Officer. To support and develop a stakeholder reference group that will influence and develop mental health services that are relevant to the needs of Black and minoritised ethnic communities suffering from mental illness.

Do you have experience of working with minority ethnic groups? Are you able to empathise with other's needs? Do you have experience of supporting volunteers with lived experience of mental ill health? Have you initiated and developed partnership working? If so, contact Suzanne Akram by email (suzanneakram@smef.org.uk) for further information, or for an informal discussion on 07711944265.



Salary: £26,317 | Full Time: 35 hours/week.

Deadline –5pm on July 21st, 2021

Interview- week beginning July 26, 2021

Positive Action PC Recruitment Info Evening

It is always immensely satisfying knowing that your work serves a greater good. Working in the police offers so many personally rewarding moments but the knowledge that what you do can literally change or save someone's life is perhaps one of the most powerful and exciting rewards.

Surrey Police are proud to serve a beautifully diverse community, and they know that to authentically support these communities, they need to reflect this in their officers. That's why they have a brilliant Positive Action initiative that supports those from diverse groups to receive support, encouragement and motivation as they embark on this life changing career.

On 8th of July, members of Surrey police will be hosting this brilliant event. If you or someone you know has considered a career as a police officer why not come along and hear about the application process, learning process and positive action support. Hear from operational officers about their honest experience of policing and ask questions about their wonderful apprenticeship programmes.

To register visit: <https://lnkd.in/d/JhZpU>

NHS App available to use as a vaccine passport

The [NHS App](#) is now available to use as a vaccine passport. Owned and run by the NHS, the NHS App is a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet.

There have been many queries from patients and the public of how to use/download the app, so commissioners have now produced a [guide](#) to help.

Good neighbour schemes open again

There are over 100 voluntary [good neighbour schemes](#) in Surrey. Most of the groups take people to and from hospital, GP and other health appointments. Some groups offer befriending, shopping, library book and prescription collections, or run lunch and social clubs.

After suspending their services due to the pandemic and lockdowns, the majority of volunteer Good Neighbour schemes have re-opened now. Some schemes are reporting a fairly low take up of requests compared to the old "normal" so if you are a professional don't forget to let any elderly people that your organisation may support know that their local scheme can provide transport to GP surgeries and hospital appointments and more.

Don't let your story of Covid-19 remain untold: take part today!

- How has Covid-19 and the lockdowns affected you?
- Has the pandemic impacted your work, finances, housing, health and education?
- Have you experienced racism or religious discrimination during the pandemic?

E V E N SEVIDENCE FOR EQUALITY
NATIONAL SURVEY

Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS) would like to hear your stories.

EVENS is the UK's first, largest and most comprehensive survey of its kind to document the impact of the pandemic on the lives of Black and ethnic minority people and religious minority groups.

Available in 14 languages, the survey will take 30 minutes of your time and you will receive a gift voucher on completion as a thank you. The findings will affect change on racial justice and inequalities and will help ensure that your experiences aren't erased from history. To access the survey please [click here](#)

2023 Review of Parliamentary constituencies

HAVE YOUR SAY The independent Boundary Commission for England is reviewing the number and size of Parliamentary constituencies in England.

Proposals include increasing the number of constituencies in the South East from 84 to 91, or put another way, increasing the number of MPs that represent the South East region. You can review the proposed changes and comment of the Commission's final recommendations here: <https://www.bcereviews.org.uk/>

The consultation closes on 2 August 2021.

Surrey Community project Funds

What would you do with £100 million in Surrey?

What does your local community need? A new community centre? A local swimming pool? Collaborative work space? New football pitches? A community food growing space? A space to train and learn?

Please take a look at some of our current project proposals and have your say!

[Click here](#) for more information

Near Neighbours – Diverting2Digital

The Near Neighbours programme of the Church Urban Fund is offering a pair of free workshops on 'Diverting2Digital' to help groups to make the move online and harness the platforms and tools available. The Introductory Workshop is designed for individuals with little experience online. The Advanced Workshop is aimed at organisations that use online tools and services but who feel they could be upskilled or use these more effectively to grow their audience. For more information, please [click here](#)

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: 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)

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](#)

Tackling Inequalities Fund from Sport England

A £20 million [National Lottery Fund](#) has been created to try and help reduce the negative impact on activity levels with a specific focus on:

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, Lower socio-economic groups, Disabled people, People with long term health conditions.

The fund will enable community groups working with the above audiences to continue to exist and engage with their communities.

Places Called Home

TNL Community Fund have opened a new funding programme called 'Places Called Home' which is a partnership between The National Lottery Community and the world's largest home furnishing retailer. Places Called Home will offer eligible groups funding awards of between £1,000 and £5,000 for activities and equipment that meet at least two of the following criteria:

- Build on the relationships created during the COVID-19 pandemic to increase community activity and the number of people taking part.
- Encourage people to work together, creating opportunities for communities to live in a sustainable and healthy way.
- Raise awareness amongst the public of the importance of connected households, neighbourhoods and resilient communities.
- Develop a new idea, activity or way to come together that has emerged in response to the pandemic.
- Revive or redesign community and common spaces to encourage shared community activities.

Places Called Home opens for applications on 22 June 2021, and will close to applications when we have received 1,500 applications or on 6 July 2021, whichever comes first.

You can apply online from 22 June, following this link <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding> or you can email placescalledhome@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk to request a pdf form to complete offline if you'd prefer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Guildford & Godalming Interfaith Forum Events

Annual 'Walk & Talk' by the River Wey - Living Waters from a Faith perspective on Thursday 15th July, TBA

Annual Interfaith Week multi-faith event at St. Nicolas Community Centre, Bury Street, Guildford.

Sunday 21st November at 3.00p.m.

Details from Carolyn Neogi : gg_interfaith_friends@aol.com tel. 01483 415773

New members are welcome at our bi-monthly meetings

Details : bernard.jones10@btinternet.com. tel. 01483 424257



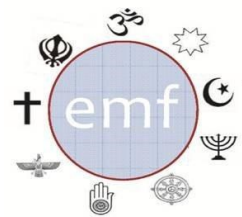
GGIFF

Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum AGM

My Hinduism: Differences among Hindu

EMF have been organizing a series of events looking at variations among different faiths. Earlier in the year there have been two events looking at Buddhism and Sikhism. This will be the third such event in the year. Date and time to be confirmed in the next newsletter, the event will take place on zoom in September.

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



Woking People of Faith Events 2021

International Peace Day - This year's theme is 'Climate Action for Peace'. We have asked children to produce a poster or poem in answer to the question: 'What is causing climate change and what can people of faith do to help solve it?'

We would normally hold an event to mark the occasion and invite the Mayor of Woking to give prizes to the winners at Woking Town Centre, along with other activities. However, this year, we are having to do things differently and are working with RHS Wisley Gardens to mark the event on Zoom on Tuesday 21st September 2021 at 6.30 pm till 7.15 pm. Winners of the competition will be announced and a short talk from RHS Wisley Gardens. All welcome to join on zoom.

Interfaith Cricket Tournament - September TBC

Interfaith Week Event - November TBC

For more information please visit: www.wpof.org.uk or email: administrator@wpof.org.uk



Woking People of Faith

Inter Faith Week 14-21 November

The aims of Inter Faith Week are to:

- Strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels;
- Increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society; and
- Increase understanding between different people of religious and non-religious beliefs



This year [Inter Faith Week](#) takes place from Sunday 14 to Sunday 21 November. It's a Week for everyone – young and old and of different faiths and beliefs, including non-religious beliefs. Activities benefit those who take part; they also send a strong message that good inter faith relations matter and that there is appreciation of people's faiths and beliefs and how those inspire them to contribute to the community and live well together.

The Week is timed to begin each year on Remembrance Sunday to enable people of different backgrounds to [remember together](#) the service of soldiers and civilians of all faiths and beliefs and to reflect on peace. Lots of ideas for Inter Faith Week activity can be found at <https://www.interfaithweek.org/resources/ideas>

Follow the Week at @ifweek on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. The Week's hashtag is #InterFaithWeek. For further information, contact the Inter Faith Week team at interfaithweek@interfaith.org.uk.

'Thank You Day'

'[Thank You Day](#)', is a UK-wide initiative taking place on 4th July, 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](#).

SMEF Reflection and Devotional Meetings

Since the beginning of the Pandemic SMEF's Bahá'í Trustee, Hayet Shahrezaey, has hosted weekly SMEF Reflection and Devotional meetings for all SMEF member groups, meeting every Wednesday at 11.00a.m. on Zoom.

These are a relaxed space for taking a short break from our daily lives with all the challenges we face, and share prayers, inspirational readings, and video clips from a variety of sources, with time to stay and chat after the 30-minute programme. They would love to see new faces from the Interfaith communities.

Zoom details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82043959919?pwd=dE8zZE9OZUtoTXFocGtKbFFxTjQ1QT09>

Meeting ID: 820 4395 9919 | Passcode: 686479

For more information please contact: hayetaskri@hotmail.com

SMEF Health Promotion Conversations (on Zoom)

July 7th (Wednesday) 12:30-14:30. Cardiovascular Disease Conversation for Pakistani/Bangladeshi ladies facilitated by Dr Ayesha Ahmed. If you, your friend, or your family member are interested in attending, please email jasminek@smef.org.uk. Conversations are confidential, informative, interactive and non-judgmental. In addition to the listed conversation below, we are regularly organising Covid Vaccine hesitancy conversations to offer guidance and support.



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

Take part in NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers Day

The first [NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers' Day](#) will take place on Monday 5 July 2021 with a series of events involving every aspect of society and raising money for two excellent causes – NHS Charities Together, which supports 250 hospitals and their charitable trusts, and the National Care Association, representing 1.6 million workers caring for some of society's frailest citizens.



You can find out more about the events that are planned on the [dedicated](#)

Active Surrey Lunchtime Learning – June/July 2021

Active Surrey is pleased to announce that new webinars have been added to their popular [Activating Your Community – Lunchtime Learning Series](#). This series of free webinars bring together a host of expert speakers on a variety of topics to explore how it is possible to unlock the benefits of sport and physical activity for everyone, especially those that are least active.

If you wish to catch up on previous webinars, recordings can be found on [Active Surrey](#).

For more information please contact Laura White:

Email: laurawhite@surreycc.gov.uk



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/>

Eikon are looking for a temporary part-time, Grants Fundraising Manager. All the details can be found by clicking the link below.

<https://eikon.org.uk/jobs/grants-fundraising-manager/>

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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