



Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 20— April 2021

WELCOME

Welcome to the latest edition of FaithsEngage. As Spring gathers strength, and the days get warmer and lighter, it is easier to feel optimistic about the future. We at the Centre continue to innovate and adapt our work to meet the needs of the present situation. This includes developing a new course, RISE, further details of which are below, as well as different offers for schools and colleges as part of our education programme (more details on page 4). This month also saw a lot of extra activity for Near Neighbours, as well as our annual CARE Gold programme.

We sadly said goodbye to Sadaf at the end of March; she has moved on to develop her own wellbeing business. We will miss her, and wish her every success in her new venture.

With every good wish,

Revd Dr Tom Wilson
Director

Empowering Young Leaders

This March we began our first RISE (Resiliency Interfaith Skills Employability) for 20 students at Gateway College. The programme is theme based so we have run sessions on critical thinking, job skills, minority world religions and beliefs, self-confidence, democracy and voting, leadership and presentations skills! RISE was delivered online and builds on our previous life-skills programme, Catalyst, which we ran in different areas of the country.

Riaz Ravat



Farewell to Sadaf



Last month we said farewell to our Prevent Projects Officer, Sadaf Akhtar, who is leaving the St. Philips Centre to pursue self-employment. Sadaf has been a valued member of the team for the past 18 months and deserves credit for the way in which she has supported our Prevent projects.

Prior to joining us she was a strong voice in the local community through our Leicester Women's Forum and Community Reference Group. She will be missed and although we are sad to see her go, we're excited for the opportunities that await her and we wish her all the very best.

Sean Arbuthnot

Near Neighbours Surge Funding

Between January and March, we received extra funding from Near Neighbours to facilitate a range of community responses to the covid-19 pandemic. We decided to focus part of our efforts on enabling communities and groups to have conversations about the vaccines, both to understand the reasons why people might not want to get vaccinated and also to answer any questions and concerns that they have. I discussed this briefly in the last newsletter; this article gives some of the highlights of what has been achieved.

We have worked with a grass-roots Somali activist, who has organised at least five Facebook live conversations about the covid vaccine and other related issues. He has worked internationally, and has impacted the Somali community across Leicester, the UK, reaching also Italy and Somaliland. Each broadcast has been viewed hundreds if not thousands of times. He was especially pleased that an internationally recognised Imam agreed to give a Friday khutba which focused on the vaccine, its safety and the religious obligation on Muslims to take it.

We have worked with two local mandirs who hosted webinars for members of their community to speak in Gujarati with a trusted GP, who answered their questions and concerns. This has resulted in more people getting vaccinated.

We arranged for the Leicester Director of Public Health to speak with people from the Afro-Caribbean community. Parts of the interview have been broadcast on Leicester Community Radio, a local Afro-Caribbean focused community radio station, and the DJs have all agreed to share messaging encouraging vaccine uptake.

The Redeemed Christian Church of God and the African Network LLR both hosted webinars aimed at their communities. The panel of speakers at each came from Leicester, further afield in the UK and also from Atlanta, Georgia. We also held discussions with staff and young people from Eyres Monsell Club for Young People.

Yasmin Surti did a Facebook Live Broadcast of an interview with someone from her community who has learning difficulties, in which they discussed the individual's experience of being vaccinated. It can be viewed at <https://www.facebook.com/ysurti/videos/10158782070698186> It has been viewed 3300 times.

The Punjabi translation of a film we produced answering people's questions about the vaccine was played in local Gurdwaras, resulting in many conversations about the vaccine and encouraging people to attend their appointment when it was their turn.

We are very grateful to all the individuals and groups that have helped with this project, which has impacted thousands of people across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, and made a positive difference in the response to the challenge posed by covid.



New projects to keep people connected


In our most recent round of grant funding, we have funded 10 projects. These projects are supporting a wide range of people of different ages to keep connected and slowly engage with people face to face again. All projects are following current government guidance. Please see below a snapshot of some of the different projects.

House of Hope Enterprise Ltd




House of Hope works with asylum seekers and refugees newly arrived to Leicester. Their project will bring people together to share correct information and understanding about taking the vaccination and government guidance. This information will be provided in different languages to aid understanding.

Together Everyone Achieves More Ltd



This project gives young people a space to stay connected and positive by talking with youth leaders and other young people. The sessions will allow the young people to discuss their issues, feelings and concerns about coming out of lockdown. These sessions will help to improve the self esteem and wellbeing of young people.

Leicester Jamaica Community Service Group



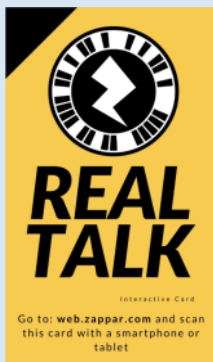
This project is all about helping elderly people become more comfortable using technology to get online. The sessions will include myth busting bingo about the vaccine. There will be cooking and recipe sharing as well as wellbeing activities in the sessions.

Prevent Programme News

Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN)

Our Prevent Coordinator Sean Arbutnot participated in an online Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) event focusing on youth participation in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). RAN connects frontline practitioners from across Europe with one another, and with academics and policymakers, to exchange knowledge, first-hand experiences and approaches to preventing CVE in all its forms.

Sean delivered a well-received presentation on how Leicester approaches youth participation despite the challenges of the Covid pandemic and lockdown. Many of our projects have adapted their delivery and Sean demonstrated how our **Real Talk** project uses augmented reality technology to reach people remotely through scannable cards that participants can use with their own phones/tablets to complete the workshop. He also talked about how **Leicester City in the Community** have developed an online mentoring programme because physical sports engagement was prohibited by lockdown.



CARE Gold

Every year, practitioners who have successfully completed our CARE (Confidently Addressing Radicalisation and Extremism) Course are invited to attend a free, one-day seminar to update their learning and delve a little bit deeper into the issues raised by extremism.

This year's seminar took place online and was thoroughly enjoyed by all attendees thanks to an array of fantastic speakers from our partner agencies, projects and local communities.

The keynote speaker was Figen Murray who sadly lost her son Martyn Hett in the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in 2017. Figen now devotes her time to studying terrorism, promoting peace, kindness and tolerance in Martyn's memory. She is also the driving force behind Martyn's Law - legislation requiring entertainment venues to improve security against the threat of terrorism which could form the basis of the government's proposed Protect Duty. Figen's presentation was incredibly impactful and had a profound impact on attendees.

Prevent Services Officer Vacancy

We currently have a part time vacancy to work in our Prevent team at St. Philips. We are looking for a Prevent Services Officer to support local delivery. This is a great opportunity to make a positive difference in the community and safeguard vulnerable people from radicalisation. The closing date for applications is Friday 9th April.

Full details can be found here:

<https://www.stphilipscentre.co.uk/node/44>

Financial support for places of worship, faith, voluntary and community groups and organisations

Over the course of the year, lots of places of worship, faith, voluntary and community groups and organisations have been affected by the pandemic. Many have experienced a downturn in donations and other income, at the same time as having to find ways to cover any ongoing financial commitments.

To help with that, the Council is able to use some discretionary funding that has been made available to us to support a range of locally-run public facing businesses and groups. Places of worship and charitable organisations who have experienced and can demonstrate a significant income loss, at the same time as showing that they have had to keep up with ongoing premises and other non-payroll related costs, may qualify for some support and assistance from the Council.

If you're interested in finding out more about whether your group or organisation might qualify for this support please take a look here for more information and to find out how to apply - <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/coronavirus/advice-and-support-for-businesses/coronavirus-business-support-grant-funding/additional-restrictions-grant/>.

Religion & Belief Programmes for Schools

Here at the St Philip's Centre we have been busy developing our Religion and Belief programmes to keep in line with the current Covid situation which has meant moving many of our favourite programmes online.

Presently we are offering the following online programmes:

- ◆ Foods of Faith
- ◆ Meet the Faith
- ◆ Multi Faith Carousel
- ◆ Multi Faith Mosaic
- ◆ Faith Assemblies

A brand new 'Celebrations' range of programmes are currently being developed and will be available later in 2021.

*If you would like information about any of these programmes, please get in touch:
education@stphilipscentre.co.uk*

Nottingham Judaism & Hinduism Programmes

In March, Judaism and Hinduism programmes were delivered at a Church Academy in Nottingham online.

The programmes helped children have a better understanding of a faith they are learning as part of the curriculum. They were able to meet someone who lives the faith and were treated to an enriched experience which cannot be obtained from textbooks.

Later this month we will be delivering a Multi Faith Mosaic workshop online for a school in Nottingham.



Ramila Chauhan

Funding Support

St. Philip's Centre is grateful for the funding it receives from the following and from many individual supporters, Friends, Associates and Member Churches

Allchurches Trust
Anglican Diocese of Leicester
The Baptist Union
Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham
The Dunhill Medical Trust
Home Office
The Laing Trust
Leicester College

Leicestershire & Rutland Masonic
Charity Association (LRMCA)
Leicester City Council
Leicestershire Police
Masonic Charitable Foundation
Methodist Connexion
N C Bellefontaine Trust

Near Neighbours—(MHCLG)
New Normal Fund (DCMS)
Northampton District of the Methodist Church
Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner
Open Society Foundations
P & C Hickinbotham Charitable Trust



faiths engage is the newsletter of St Philip's Centre Ltd

2A Stoughton Drive North, Leicester LE5 5UB

Tel: 0116 273 3459

admin@stphilipscentre.co.uk

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Website](#)