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REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM LOOKING FORWARD

Women's Interfaith Workshop 28th February 2018 1.00-3.00 pm

St Andrews Church Hall, The Drive Ilford IG1 3PE

Weddings: - Ceremony, Custom & Tradition

Having heard about Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh wedding customs in other, recent workshops, this workshop is the last in this very interesting and stimulating series. We will be learning about Christian and Muslim wedding ceremonies, customs and traditions from knowledgeable Christian and Muslim women speakers. You will also be able to ask questions and join in the informal discussion.

Our women's workshops are free to attend, and are generally very informal with plenty of opportunity for discussion, questions & answers in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.

We do hope you can join us - Refreshments will be provided - a voluntary contribution towards costs would be appreciated

For more information, and to reserve your place contact:
Saira/Karen on 020 8708 2478 or email: faith.forum@redbridge.gov.uk

CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 8TH MARCH 2018

Inspirational Guided Walk Learning about the "Strong Women of Bow"

THURSDAY 8th MARCH 10 am – 12 noon

(Open to Men & Women)

Follow the path of political pioneers, philanthropists, suffragettes, social reformers and legendary figures, all associated with Bow in the East End of London. Visit the setting for the legendary match girls strike and see the prime minister with their blood on his hands (Meet at 10 am outside Mile End Underground Station, Central Line – walk will finish at Bow Church/Bow Road station).

£5 non-returnable cash deposit required to secure your place – balance due on the day.

Cost £8 for RFF Members - £10 Non-Members – places are limited so first come first served and we will operate a waiting list if need be.

Email faith.forum@redbridge.gov.uk as soon as possible to arrange to secure your place or phone 0208 708 2478

REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM LOOKING BACK

Routes out of Poverty" a Redbridge Faith Forum Network Meeting

Held 23 January 2018

Redbridge Faith Forum held its January network meeting in the Gloucester Room at Central Library on the topic of "Routes out of Poverty"; to give members of the public the opportunity to hear about some of the support services available in Redbridge.

The first speaker was Bindu Surish, Redbridge Job Centre Operations Manager who explained that universal credit will be going live in Redbridge from 20th June 2018. Universal credit is a benefit that will be paid monthly to people of working age (currently defined as 16-65 years) who are actively seeking work. Universal Credit will replace six existing benefits - Housing Benefit; income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA); income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA); Child Tax Credit; Working Tax Credit; and Income Support. There will be just one application to be made rather than having to make separate claims as now and it will be possible to manage the process online including reporting change of circumstances.

Being supported to find employment is one route out of poverty and the next speakers Elizabeth Hannam, Work Redbridge Manager and Dawn Cove, Benefits Operations Manager described how their teams can assist.

Work Redbridge offers assistance to any Redbridge Resident aged from 16 year of age to find employment. It can take someone 3-5 years to work through the process of preparing for and successfully obtaining employment and there are intensive services available for more vulnerable residents with partnership working with Redbridge CVS Volunteer Centre and the Redbridge Institute College.

There are online resources available on the LBR website which gives guidance on completing application forms, compiling CVs, information about work experience opportunities, apprenticeships and employment vacancies. Additionally Work Redbridge runs a Work Club on Wednesday mornings from 10-12 noon at the Salvation Army in Clements Lane. Four qualified advisors offer a 40 minute consultation including addressing their expectations and possible barriers to work to job seekers and then provide further assistance.

Some residents will require additional support to transition successfully to universal credit so Work Redbridge has an ongoing project "preparing for work" in partnership with the DWP which is a 8 week course covering topics including how to budget for monthly payment, healthy eating on a budget, accessing childcare, digital support.

Work Redbridge is also keen to support local residents to start a business and they want businesses to grow and stay in the borough see website link <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/jobs/work-redbridge/help-to-start-or-grow-your-business/>

Dawn Cove explained that the LBR Welfare Benefits Team offer a range of advice and support around benefits including Attendance Allowance and Personal Independence Payment. The local authority have a discretionary housing payment fund which is available to address the shortfall between the housing element of universal credit and housing costs and applications are welcomed for this fund. Currently residents have to pay 15% of their council tax but from April 2018 this is increasing to 20% so this is a very useful discretionary fund.



A new customer contact centre is currently being built at Lynton House to enable residents to have easier access to advice and the audience was reminded that there is free access to computers at all Redbridge libraries for 90 minute sessions.

There followed a short refreshment break to enable networking and this was followed by a presentation from the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Mark Kirk, CEO and Stephen Young, Manager of Redbridge Citizens Advice Bureau were proud of the 75 years of service that the organisation had given to the people of Redbridge and stated that during 2016-17 generated £16.89 for every £1 invested in their services. Redbridge CAB offers independent and impartial advice around debt, employment, housing and welfare benefits and receives funding from London Borough of Redbridge, BHR Trust, Macmillan cancer support and the Big Lottery. Services are ran by volunteers but the CAB is completely inundated. Volunteers would be warmly welcomed to join the CAB which offers a nationally accredited training programme and especially values local volunteers who understand local issues.

Nationally the CAB campaigns on issues after collecting evidence from local branches – these have recently included problems with private sector landlords withholding deposits, employers issuing sessional contracts with no holiday pay, the 6 week wait for universal credit.

Redbridge CAB has 4 professional solicitors who perform pro bono work around immigration, employment and housing issues. Additionally the CAB runs drop in sessions on Mondays and Thursdays from 10am-2pm but demand outstrips supply and people are regularly turned away with queues building outside the building from 8am. Between 3000 and 3500 clients are seen each year and many of these present with an issue connected to debt – a face to face interview with an advisor enables underlying issues to be unpicked and dealt with.

Members of the audience completed evaluation forms which demonstrated that the workshop had been very informative and helpful.

Redbridge Faith Forum will be continuing this theme of routes out of poverty at our next network meeting on Tuesday 24th April when we will be hearing from local organisations who provide practical support to those living in poverty or on low incomes. Please save the date and come and join us – all are welcome.

“Making Our Communities Safer” a Redbridge Faith Forum Event

30th January 2018

This public meeting was organised by Redbridge Faith Forum (RFF) at Holy Trinity Church, Mossford Green, Barkingside to give local residents the opportunity to share views on what makes them feel safe or unsafe, discuss ideas on how to make them feel safer, and work with local services to identify and tackle issues of concern.

After enjoying a light lunch everyone settled into groups to share experiences, concerns and perceptions about living in Redbridge. This was followed by feedback from each group to the full group, which gave rise to more discussion about perceptions of the fear of crime as against the actual recorded incidents of reported crime.

RFF was delighted to have the participation of two metropolitan police officers, John Humphry and Mohammed Patel, from the Redbridge Safer Transport Team. The officers explain that the team regularly patrols bus routes and bus stops in Redbridge and also works to improve safety on the roads. They gave an example of supporting residents in the Clayhall area to form a Road Watch scheme where residents were trained in using speed guns to act as a deterrent to speeding vehicles. This has been very successful with the result of a marked decrease in the speed of vehicles following the project.

Many attending the workshop were concerned about the issue of domestic burglary. The officers stressed the importance of locking UPVC doors properly and drew attention to the many helpful leaflets and booklets they had brought with them that gave practical advice on how residents can reduce their risk of becoming a victim of crime.

They also gave examples of how residents can work with their safer neighbourhood teams to report concerns such as loitering cars to the police as there has been an increase in residential burglaries in Clayhall – the registration numbers of these vehicles can then be checked against the police intelligence database. Many attending the workshop were concerned about the issue of domestic burglary. The officers stressed the importance of locking UPVC doors properly and drew attention to the many helpful leaflets and booklets they had brought with them that gave practical advice on how residents can reduce their risk of becoming a victim of crime.

The contact details for Safer Neighbourhood Teams is given on the metropolitan police website and the teams carry a work mobile when on duty and hold regular drop in sessions for the public.

Calls to the police should be made on 999 for an emergency response or 101 – all calls are graded and the operator will pass reports of crime onto the relevant Safer Neighbourhood Team. The Team stressed that they are keen to be notified of issues in their ward area and they do conduct regular street briefings.

Onesimus Luto, Redbridge Enforcement Officer then introduced himself and explained the role of the Enforcement and Community Safety Teams in Redbridge Civic Pride's department. The officers work borough wide dealing with issues such as noise nuisance, licensed premises, overhanging vegetation, fly-tipping, dog fouling, highway obstruction unlit skips, untidy front gardens, litter, begging, spitting and urinating in the street. They are able to issue on the spot fines for offences. Problems can be reported online on the council's website and by telephone to 0208 478 4679. There is also a general enquiry line telephone 0208 554 5000. The telephone lines are manned Monday-Wednesdays 8am to 10pm, Thursday 8am to 11pm and Friday 8am to 3am following day, Saturday 9am-3am the following day, Sunday 9am-1am the following day.

Noise complaints should be responded to within 1 hour and other matters within 10 days.

More information about the work of the Borough's Enforcement Team is available by

signing up to their free newsletter '[Taking pride together](#)'



PCSO Kaser Aleem Faith and Community Liaison Officer introduced himself and explained his role within the boroughs of Redbridge, Havering, Barking & Dagenham. PCSO Aleem along with his colleague PC Shahnaz Meah act as community liaison officers between faith communities and the metropolitan police. They are happy to come and attend events and meet with members of faith communities to discuss any areas of concern and are also able to signpost residents to

their local safer neighbourhood teams.

All the officers then answered questions from the floor. Councillor Bellwood reminded everyone that all residents have access to their ward councillors as well as their safer neighbourhood teams and encouraged residents to get to know them so that everyone can work together to improve the safety and wellbeing of residents.

Redbridge Faith Forum would like to thank the four officers for their helpful and informative participation in the event.

REDBRIDGE FAITH FORUM

What is it and what does it do?

RFF hold regular public meetings to discuss social issues affecting faith communities such as education, health, and give people the opportunity to meet and share with other faiths.

RFF was set up in 2003 following a faith conference set up by Redbridge Council, which brought faith leaders together to talk about their communities' needs.

- RFF bring together local members of different faith communities.
- RFF promote social harmony.
- RFF foster a community spirit within Redbridge and the local area.
- RFF recognise the important contribution that religion and spirituality makes to the lives of Redbridge residents.
- RFF lobby relevant organisations that affect faith communities.

Current Trustees

RFF is an independent organisation with a charitable status (1118675). RFF has a board of trustees composed of representatives of different faiths :

Christian: †

- Phil Butcher (Co Chair)
- Rev Bernardino Mandlate

Hindu: ॐ

- Vinaya Sharma
- Appathurai Ramkumar

Jewish: ☆

- Rabbi Lawrence Becker
- Angela Banner

Muslim: ☪

- Imam Rafiq
- Mo Dedat (Co Chair & Treasurer)

Sikh: ੴ

- Harbans Singh Seehra
- Harmander Singh

Baha'i: ☼

- Carol Khorsandyon

Buddhist: ☸

- Rev P Hemaratana
- Dr Suhasini

Jain: ॐ

- vacancy

Zoroastrian: 𐬰𐬀𐬎𐬎𐬀

We hope that you will understand that in order to continue our work to the benefit of all living in Redbridge, the Faith Forum needs to raise funds to cover the various activities we organise. Membership is open to all and there are a range of options available.

Associate member: (open to everyone) receives all e-mail updates, a membership certificate, invitations to all events, able to vote at AGM – suggested donation £10 per year.

We are proposing two other membership scales for large groups and businesses as follows:

- **Place of Worship:** full membership (open to recognised faith groups and their designated representative) all rights as above; additionally such representative may be nominated for election to the Management Committee and - £30 per year.
- **Business member:** receives all e-mail updates, invited to all events, able to attend training sessions organised by RFF, able to vote at the AGM and provided with a copy of the RFF charter for display at the business premises. Business Member rates: small business £25 (less than 10 employees); medium business £50 (less than 200 employees); large £75 (more than 200 employees).

If you would like to become a RFF member please email faith.forum@redbridge.gov.uk

DID YOU KNOW!

*Online counselling improves local teenagers' Mental Health *New**

It's not easy being a teenager and it can be hard to open up to someone about how you're feeling. But a free, safe and anonymous online counselling is helping young people in the Redbridge feel happier

This Children's Mental Health Week (5-11 February) the local NHS is encouraging people to improve their mental health, by talking to someone about their feelings.

Whether teenagers are struggling to cope with bullying, feeling lonely, down, lost, angry, upset or confused, <https://kooth.com/> the online counselling service, is being used by teenagers across Redbridge to get help.

EVENTS TO COME IN REDBRIDGE

*Redbridge Local Forum" *New**

Monday 26 February 6.30-8.30pm at Redbridge Institute, Gaysham Avenue IG2 6TD

Invitation from the London Borough of Redbridge to attend a Local Forum and talk to them about ideas and issues in your local area. Raise questions and concerns about Council services that affect you.

You can put questions to Councillors and senior Council officers. Questions can be submitted in advance using the form at www.redbridge.gov.uk/localforums or asked on the night.

Local Forum meetings are held every month at venues across the Borough.

This forum is the more formal Question Time element only and does not include a Market Place, but please check here as this sometimes changes without notice.

Building Ilford Exhibition at Redbridge Museum, Central Library, Clements Road

New

On display until 9 June 2018

Over the last 150 years, Ilford has constantly transformed itself. Today, just as in the 1800s, thousands of new homes are being built for new residents. Rail links will bring the town closer to central London than ever before. Ambitious plans are being developed to create new civic buildings and streetscapes.

This new exhibition by Redbridge Museum explores these changes, why they happened and what they mean for local people.

From Edwardian expansion to post-war rebuilding, from the Ilford Palais to Pioneer Point, including the grand schemes that were never built, the exhibition explores the building challenges and opportunities that continue up to the present day.

Using a wealth of historic photographs, building plans, architectural models and the views of town planners and local people, the exhibition shows how the past and present continues to shape Ilford's future.

Exhibition of Paintings *NEW*

Vine United Reform Church, Tuesday 20th February – 18th March

There will be an exhibition of paintings about the Life and Journeys of St Paul, on display at Vine URC Ilford from Tuesday February 20th, until Sunday 18th March.

On Weds 21st February there will be a special open day of the paintings, at Vine URC Church Ilford, Riches Road, IG1 1JH. This is also described in the attached leaflet

For further details see below

<https://petermusgrave.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/st-paul-comes-to-ilford-publicity.pdf>

For more information contact: petermusgrave1950@gmail.com

Talk about the National Gardens Scheme *New*

Tuesday 20th February 7.30pm at Valentines Mansion

Tickets £5 members £7 non members. Tickets available by sending cheque and stamped addressed envelope to FoVM 115 The Drive Ilford IG1 3JD.

Redbridge Music Lounge

12.30-4.30 pm – Wednesdays 14 & 28 February & Thursdays 8 & 22 February at The Cranbrook Centre in Valentines Park – Melbourne Gate, Melbourne Road IG1 4SB (for directions see

www.cranbrookcentre.london)

The venue is for musicians and anyone interested in playing music, who are retired, in part-time work, unemployed or semi-professional, even if committed to bands/group already but have time and expertise to offer and share mainly, for daytime projects, events and local festivals. Feel free to bring along your instruments and perform – rehearsal equipment and performing facilities are also available. For further information contact Chris Wyatt mob 07929 071155 email criswyatt@aol.com www.rmluk.org. Registered Charity 1151132

Working with nature /Thinking like a tree

*A 2 day Introduction to Permaculture
17th and 24th February 2018 in Ilford*

A natural system, like a woodland, keeps itself going. It doesn't need weeding, or fertiliser. How does it do that, and can we learn from it? Can we work with nature to create truly sustainable systems?

The principles of permaculture can help you design your garden, your balcony, your lifestyle – even a community group. The idea of Transition Towns is based on Permaculture.

Permaculture can help you to choose when to tread lightly and when to leave your mark.

This course will be led by Phil Mason and Ros Bedlow, and will be held at a private address in Ilford.

The address will be provided when you have booked.

It is essential to book, and to attend both days of the course.

Fees: £60 waged, £30 unwaged. We will send you a booking form, with details of how to pay.

To book or for further information, please contact Ros Bedlow: rosbedlow@hotmail.com

or Phil Mason: hiphil@btinternet.com

The link below explains the approach to permaculture that will be taken on the course

<https://www.permaculture.co.uk/what-is-permaculture>

EVENTS ELSEWHERE

Wednesday 21st February 2.00pm

Fasting and Feasting in the Christian Tradition *New *

Presented by John Parry/Laurence Hillel, Co-Directors of LIFC

AT London Inter Faith Centre
St Anne's and St Andrew's
125 Salusbury Road NW6 6RG
<http://londoninterfaith.org.uk/>

This event is part of a new series on Food and Festivals in World Faiths – advance booking not required. Email for information: laurence.hillel@londoninterfaith.org.uk

HAVE YOUR SAY

Community Cohesion Network Meeting - consultation *New *

Redbridge Council is working with our partners to set up a **Community Network** to engage better with communities in Redbridge.

We are inviting community leaders to come and talk to use about how we can work together to improve the lives of our residents and communities.

The **Community Network** will be a forum for you to talk to partners about any challenges or opportunities your communities have identified within your local area.

It will also be a chance for you to have strategic conversations with a cross section of representatives from different communities about how we can work together to strengthen and support our residents.

The focus will be on challenging and important community-related issues such as community cohesion, hate crime and how we bring our diverse communities together. However, we want the exact issues that we discuss in this network to be determined by **you**, so please come along to have your say.

The first meeting is on **19 February 2018** from 3:30-5pm at City Gates (25-29 Clements Rd, Ilford IG1 1BH). Please RSVP at <https://consultations.redbridge.gov.uk/s/communitynetwork/>

SOME CELEBRATIONS TO COME

Faith Festivals February 2018

8th February or 15th February is Parinirvana or Nirvana day for our some of our Mahayana **Buddhist** friends. Nirvana Day is an annual festival that remembers the death of the Buddha when he reached Nirvana at the age of 80. It is celebrated by some Buddhists on February 15th. Nirvana is believed to be the end of the cycle of death and rebirth. Buddhism teaches that Nirvana is reached when all want and suffering is gone.

Buddhists may celebrate Nirvana Day by meditating or by going to Buddhist temples or monasteries. On this day, Buddhists think about their lives and how they can work towards gaining the perfect peace of Nirvana. Buddhists believe that loss and change are things to be accepted rather than causes of sadness. They remember friends or relations who have recently died and reflect on the fact that death is a part of life for everyone. The idea that nothing stays the same is central to Buddhism. In monasteries Nirvana Day is treated as a social occasion. Food is prepared and some people bring presents such as money, household goods or clothes. As with other Buddhist festivals, celebrations vary throughout the world. More at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/buddhism/holydays/parinirvana.shtml>

13th February Shrove Tuesday Christian (Western Churches). 'Shrove' relates to absolution from sin. Nowadays it is a day for eating and enjoyment. In Britain it is called 'Pancake Day', as pancakes use up all the rich foods before Lent. Elsewhere it is known as Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday), and is a time for carnivals and fairs.

13th February is MahaShivaratri/Shiva Ratri for our **Hindu** friends. Maha Shivaratri or Shivratri, the night of the worship of Lord Shiva, is a major festival which occurs on the 14th night of the new moon during the dark half of the month of Phalguna. It falls on a moonless February night, when Hindus offer special prayer to the Lord Shiva. Shivaratri (Sanskrit 'ratri' = night) is the night when he is said to have performed the Tandava Nritya or the dance of primordial creation, preservation and destruction. The festival is observed for one day and one night only. People often fast on the night of Shivratri and sing hymns and praises in the name of Lord Shiva. Hindu temples across the

country are decorated with lights and colourful decorations and people can be seen offering night long prayers to Shiva Lingam. Wood apple leaves, cold water and milk are offered to the Shiva Lingam on this day as they are believed to be Lord Shiva's favourite. Shivratri is considered especially auspicious for women. Married women pray for the well-being of their husbands and sons, while unmarried women pray for an ideal husband like Shiva, who is the spouse of Kali, Parvati and Durga. But generally it is believed that anyone who utters the name of Shiva during Shivratri with pure devotion is freed from all sins. He or she reaches the abode of Shiva and is liberated from the cycle of birth and death. For more see

<http://www.calendarlabs.com/holidays/india/maha-shivratri.php> and <http://hinduism.about.com/od/festivalsholidays/p/mahashivratri.htm>

14th February ASH Wednesday Christian (Western Churches) This first day of Lent recalls the temptations Jesus faced for forty days in the wilderness. In Catholic and some Anglican churches, worshipper's foreheads are marked with a cross of ash made from burning the palm crosses of the previous year – hence 'Ash Wednesday'

14th February – 31st March LENT Christian (Western Churches) A period of forty days fasting and self-discipline (not counting Sundays) that leads up to Easter. Traditionally Christians give up something during this time to mark the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness. Many Christians feel it is a time for study groups, prayer and Bible reading. Source:

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/religious-festivals>

16th/17th February LOSAR Buddhist. Tibetan New Year festival, often observed in Nepal as well. It celebrates the miracles performed by the historical Buddha at Saravasti, the capital city of the kingdom of Kosala.

19th February FIRST DAY OF LENT / THE GREAT FAST Christian (Orthodox) This is the beginning of the Lenten Fast, which involves abstinence from meat, fish and dairy products until Easter. Source:

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/religious-festivals>

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