

# Grassroots

... a different point of view

Newsletter Edition 3 – Autumn 2014

Working to build community amongst  
Luton's diverse people

In Partnership with Luton Council of Faiths & Ghar se Ghar  
(Home to Home)

## Welcome to the third edition of the GRASSROOTS newsletter!

Produced quarterly, we aim to stay in contact with friends far and near, give regular updates of what GRASSROOTS is doing and let you know about forthcoming events. We hope you enjoy the newsletters. Please let us know what you think!

## What is GRASSROOTS?

GRASSROOTS is a small Christian community organisation. Set up in 1991, we work with Churches and people of all faiths and cultures to build a strong community in the town of Luton and beyond. GRASSROOTS spearheads a variety of initiatives aimed at bringing diverse people together; the team can also be found behind the scenes of numerous events, supporting the work of our partners. For more information about our history and work to date, please see our website at [www.grassrootsluton.org.uk](http://www.grassrootsluton.org.uk)

## Can we Help?

The GRASSROOTS team welcome invitations to lead worship, give talks, deliver diversity training and support other groups. Please get in touch for more information.

## Getting Involved

If you would like to support our work, why not join the brand new 'Friends of GRASSROOTS'? Donations of time, talent or finances are always much appreciated. To find out more, call, email or visit our website:

[www.grassrootsluton.org.uk/  
get-involved](http://www.grassrootsluton.org.uk/get-involved)

We look forward to hearing from you!

*Greetings from the Grassroots Team! We do hope that you have had a lovely summer. Although the summer months bring a change in schedule, we at Grassroots have certainly been busy over the summer months! We hope you enjoy reading about some of the work we have been doing! Please do get in touch with any feedback.*

*Also the Friends of Grassroots group has been initiated. Please do get in touch if you would like to add to the ongoing work of Grassroots by Volunteering, Fundraising or Donating! All contributions, however little or large, in cash or in kind, are appreciated!*

*With our warmest greetings as we move into the autumn months.  
The Grassroots Team*

## What's Been Happening in Luton...

### Roma Young People Attend a Youth Residential

Devon Adventure Week is a youth residential taking young people from deprived urban areas to the North Devon countryside for a week of physical & spiritual adventure. This year, for the first time, 3 Roma youths from Luton were able to participate. The residential was a wonderful experience for the Roma boys; opportunity to socialise with young people they would never otherwise meet; engaging in Bible study & themed discussions at a depth that just would not happen at home in Luton. The boys loved it! They thrived.



*Roma Youth  
in Devon*

*Clacton Hosts  
welcoming Luton*

*Watford Captain Ejaz's  
friendly pose*

### Bury Park Beech Hill Council of Churches Summer Trip to Clacton

There were 2 highlights: first was the generous hospitality shown by Christchurch United Reformed Church in Clacton; second was the time of shared fellowship, including singing, reflections & poetry. Whilst enjoyable in itself, the trip was not simply a day for everyone to do their own thing, but an opportunity to further develop the sense of being the church together.

### Bishop's Cup Annual Inter Faith Cricket Tournament

On 3<sup>rd</sup> August in Watford Town Cricket Club, teams from Luton, St Albans and Watford played friendly cricket, with lots of family fun and inter faith fellowship. Watford were the winners, and Luton was runner up.

### Health & Wellbeing Day

In Luton's Blenheim Baptist Church Hall, a recorded attendance of 75, majority women, comprising of English, British, Irish, Pakistani, Indian, African/Caribbean and European ethnicities, enjoyed activities e.g.; Tai Chi, Yoga, Pilates, Meditation, Alexander Technique, Hand Therapy, Reflexology, Head & Hand Massage and Circle Dancing. Individual health checks relating to weight, body fat, body water and BMI (Body Mass Index) were also available. Ghar se Ghar (Home to Home) groups are also a place where women can meet regularly, feel part of a community, thus combating social isolation.

## Project Updates



*Near Neighbours Launch Event*



*Fairtrade Eid Hampers*



*Ann Hyde at Othona Residential*



*At the start of Annual Peace Walk*

### **Near Neighbours (NN) Programme Launch Event**

The Project was officially launched in the presence of MP Stephen Williams, Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Department of Communities and local Government on 6th July. Work with other NN Partner organisations is also developing. On 15th January 2015 GRASSROOTS Luton will host the NN National meeting. So far, out of 10 NN funding applications from Luton for small grants, 7 have been successful, 15 ideas are yet to be discussed and 11 activities are at the application stage. For more details please contact NN (Luton) Coordinator, Kim Greig on 01582-416946 or 07930601640 or [near.neighbours\\_luton@btconnect.com](mailto:near.neighbours_luton@btconnect.com)

### **Fairtrade Eid Hampers**

We created Fairtrade Eid Hampers for Mosques and other key Muslim organisations and individuals, ethically tackling poverty and empowering people on the ground in places like Palestine. Lots of these hampers priced £15, £25 & £35 were bought by various people. We also raised money to plant olive trees in Palestine.

### **“Embracing a Diverse Community” – A week Residential at OTHONA**

Othona is an open and welcoming Community in Bradwell on Sea ([www.othona-bradwell.org.uk](http://www.othona-bradwell.org.uk)) Essex. Through a daily rhythm of work, learning, worship and play, it seeks personal renewal and glimpses of the sacred. From Mon 28th Jul - Fri 1st Aug 2014, Grassroots led a week on OTHONA based upon our work across different faiths and cultures in Luton and its ups and downs. Ann says, “My session on ‘Darkness and Light- The Highs and Lows of Living in Luton’, attempted to give a balanced picture of the positives and negatives which are the reality of living in my hometown of Luton today. I also had a Circle Dance session, based on “The Creation”, a suite of dances choreographed to classical music and linked to Genesis.”

### **Annual Peace Walk**

The 18th Annual Peace Walk in Luton was held in Farley Hill, coinciding with the 30th International Peace Day. Over 200 people of all ages from different faiths and cultures enacted a model of peaceful co-existence, building resilience & community cohesion, not uniformity but promoting unity in diversity. A photographic presentation from the ‘Faith, Camera, Action, Luton’ project was popular. In it, Lyndsay Baker had shared some common themes emerging in pictures of Luton’s Central Mosque and All Saints Church. The day ended at St. John the Baptist Anglican Church with a magnificent spread of an English Afternoon Tea served by a multicultural team of volunteers from the Reconciliation Walk Community based at the Church. Fruit bushes were also planted at The Vicarage garden by representatives of different faiths.

## Dates for your Diary

**East of England Fairtrade Conference** is taking place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2014. With a Fairtrade producer, leaders in the Fairtrade movement and Fairtrade campaigners from across the region and country, this is an event not to be missed. Please do put the date in your diary!

**UN Day** is being organised by UNA-Luton Branch with support from GRASSROOTS and LUTON COUNCIL OF FAITHS, on 31 October 2014. The University of Bedfordshire has agreed to give a suitable venue free of charge. Sir Jeremy Greenstock, President of the United Nations Association, UK, has agreed to come as our keynote speaker.

**Community Archery Games** is taking place on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at Luton Sixth Form College. These games are intended to bring Luton’s diverse faith communities together preceded by a training workshop led by Danielle Brown MBE (double Para-Olympic gold medallist in archery and three times World Champion). The event will aim to attract those who do not usually engage in inter-faith work, in a fun filled competitive day of learning and sport.