

Grassroots

... a different point of view



Newsletter Edition 5 – Spring 2015

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 spring edition of the GRASSROOTS newsletter!

In this time of renewal and rebirth, we wish you Easter greetings from the GRASSROOTS team. This is the first newsletter of 2015 and as you will see, we have already been busy engaging in activities within Luton and beyond. We hope you enjoy reading about what we have been doing over the last few months!

KEEP IN TOUCH!

We hope you enjoy our newsletter but there are many other ways you can keep up to date with GRASSROOTS news, upcoming events and more about the work we do. You can contact us via:



www.grassrootsluton.org.uk



01582 416946



admingrassroots@btconnect.com



www.facebook.com (then search "Grassroots")



www.twitter.com/grassrootsluton



47 High Town Road, Luton, Beds. LU2 0BW

Cohen's Yard Park Green Clean Day

On Saturday 7th February the Medina Mosque, All Saints Church and the Church Related Community Work (CRCW) project joined forces to revitalise Cohen's Yard Park in Shaftesbury Rd, and to support community members in reclaiming the park as a local family resource.



Karen Campbell from the CRCW project in Cohen's Yard with Muslim volunteers

Supported by the Near Neighbours Fund, the 'Green Clean Day' saw over 40 people, including residents and community partners, cleaning park equipment and picking litter, while local children planted seeds in pots to take home and nurture. The seedlings will be transplanted into the ground during a planned Cohen's Yard Action Day on 23rd May 2015.

CRCW Fifth Year Anniversary

More than 100 people attended a celebration of the Luton Church Related Community Work (CRCW) project on Saturday 21st February at the Holy Ghost Parish Centre. The project, which works in partnership with GRASSROOTS and Bury Park Beech Hill Council of Churches, was five years old in Jan 2015.



Colleagues cutting the celebration cake at the CRCW 5th year event

With the CRCW project entering its second phase, the event sought to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements so far and re-commit the partners to the adventures ahead. We felt very blessed and honoured when attendees described the display of work undertaken over the last five years as 'breathtaking'. We look forward with thanks and hope to the future.

Precious Pearls Celebration

Around 90 women from different faiths and cultures attended our annual 'Precious Pearls' event to celebrate International Women's Day 2015. Held at Bury Park Community Centre on Thursday 5th March, the event explored the theme "Woman, who is your Neighbour?"



Over 90 women took part in a variety of activities for our Precious Pearls celebration

The gathering heard stories about different neighbours, talks on issues such as human trafficking and modern day slavery, and presentations from local Near Neighbours projects. These were interspersed with a range of dancing, singing and poetry items, provided by the talented women present. The evening concluded with a lot of talking and eating!

Other GRASSROOTS News

Near Neighbours All Partners Meeting

GRASSROOTS hosted the Near Neighbours national partners meeting on Thursday 15th January. Over 20 partners attended this very productive gathering with key focus on the evaluation of the national Near Neighbours Programme. The meeting also welcomed visitors from Leicester University's research department who will be undertaking a further evaluation with the aim of creating a community learning toolkit for local hubs to monitor and evaluate Near Neighbours projects locally.

Quran & Radicalisation – A Discussion

Around 25 people attended a discussion at the United Reformed Church in Harpenden on Tuesday 20th January looking at the theme of Quran & Radicalisation, exploring where, how and why things have gone wrong within the Muslim community and in the western world. Led by Luqman Ali, a scholar and Imam who also runs a Theatre Company called 'Khayal' (meaning 'thought') and Mohammad Ryad Khodabocus, Community Relations Development Officer from Luton Council of Faiths, the session considered questions such as what hope there is for humanity's peaceful co-existence.

NEHEMIAH Community Workers' Training

With the support of GRASSROOTS and Kim Greig, the local Near Neighbours coordinator, four Nehemiah community workers are now in place and working in the High Town, Dallow and Biscot/Saints areas of Luton. Monday 2nd February was the workers' first day in their new roles, with orientation training at Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church, followed by a day of training covering the role of the Near Neighbours Coordinator and the work of both GRASSROOTS and Luton Council of Faiths.

Women's World Day of Prayer 2015

Women's World Day of Prayer is an annual Christian ecumenical event, celebrated across the world. This year's event took place on Friday 6th March and was written by women from The Bahamas under the theme "Jesus said to them 'Do you know what I have done to you?'". In Luton, an afternoon service was held at Wigmore URC/Methodist Church and another in the evening at St Augustine's Anglican Church, featuring a number of activities including Circle Dancing led by GRASSROOTS' Ann Hyde!

Faith Talks event on Hinduism

With so much turmoil in the world blamed on religion, now is the time to learn more about other faiths. With this in mind, Sr Maire Hayes and Maureen Borbone (GRASSROOTS team member and Trustee) worked together to organise a talk on Hinduism on Thursday 12th March at St Martin de Porres Catholic Church, delivered by members of the local Hindu community, and supported by the Near Neighbours programme. More than 70 people from different faiths and Christian denominations attended the talk, which aimed simply for people to feel better informed about real people from different faiths rather than just knowing *about* a faith or belief.

Dates for your Diary

CATALYST - Youth Leadership Training (part of Near Neighbours Programme) at All Saints Church (Luton) on 30th March to 1st April (Bronze), 9th May (Silver) and 16th May (Gold) – please email near.neighbours_luton@btconnect.com for details

Faith Talks event on Sikhism on Thursday 16th April 2015 from 7.30pm at St Joseph's Catholic Church (Luton)

Faith Talks event on Islam on Thursday 23rd April 2015 from 7.30pm at Holy Ghost Parish Centre (Luton)



Circle Dancing at the Women's World Day of Prayer Service at Wigmore URC/Methodist Church



Women attending Women's World Day of Prayer service at St Augustine's Church



Over 70 people came to learn about Hinduism at our first Faith Talks event



Guests from different faith backgrounds gathered together for our Faith Talks event

