



# Faiths engage

Monthly Newsletter—Issue 68—April 2025

## Welcome to the latest edition of Faiths Engage

This month you can read about the ahead-of-schedule progress of our oral history project “Memories of Living Well Together,” an event about Leicester as an intercultural city, our CARE Gold course, our busy programme of schools and corporate work and Cathryn’s visit to New Parks Methodist.

With every good wish.

Rev Dr Tom Wilson  
Director, St Philip's Centre

## Memories of Living Well Together Oral History Project

The rich and fascinating stories of some of the people who live in Leicester are currently being captured on audio recordings. We have recorded 85 stories so far out of a target of at least 100, hearing experiences of those who have been born and brought up in Leicester, moved here from other parts of the UK and from further afield.

A recent highlight was participating in the Heritage Exhibition at Leicester University. Our stall sat well amongst a vast range of other heritage groups who were celebrating all things historical and heritage related with connections to Leicester. Engaging with the other stall holders and visitors to the exhibition was a joy and enabled us to share our initial thoughts on some of the themes running through some of the stories.

Once we have completed our recordings then the exciting, but challenging, phase of re-visiting all the recordings in depth to notice and pick out the main themes for the exhibitions which will be delivered in 2026 at the Cathedral and Leicester Museum.

We are very happy to visit any groups to have a chat about the project. Please follow the QR code to book a visit or find out more.

Viv Froggatt



Memories of Living Well Together  
Oral History Project - What have  
we noticed so far?



# Leicester—Intercultural City

St Philip's Centre was pleased to support a community gathering to exchange thoughts and feelings and explore how Leicester can continue to grow as an 'intercultural city' at Leicester Cathedral on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

Sharing a vision for a city where people of all ages, backgrounds, and cultures don't just coexist but connect, more than 100 people came together to celebrate Leicester and talk about how we can embrace our diversity and shape a future of inclusion and belonging.

Speaking before the 'Together in Hope – building an intercultural city' event, Bishop Martyn said: "I love living in Leicester; yet I am aware that it is possible to live here and have very little contact with people of different backgrounds. This event is a first step in exploring how all businesses, charities, and public sector bodies in the city can take a fresh look at how they encourage people to mix across differences. This is likely to be a long journey but one that has the potential to be hugely rewarding for everyone who lives and works in the city."

A cross-section of the community through education and academia, the arts, faith, health, charity and the public sector, got involved on the day. This included around 20 school and college students from WQE, Gateway, City of Leicester, and Avanti Fields School; the Chief Constable of Leicestershire Police; the Vice Chancellor of De Montfort University; arts organisations such as the Centre for Indian Classical Dance and Inspirate; charities including City of Sanctuary and Wesley Hall; representatives from the health service; leaders from our Ukrainian and Polish communities; and representatives from our Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Christian communities.

The gathering began with a series of short and powerful speeches from a selection of young people aged between 14 and 18 years, who shared their hopes and dreams, their fears, pride, and lived experiences of Leicester. They spoke about the city's greatest strength being its diversity, a place of community spirit in times of need, its people generous in support of refugees fleeing war and their tolerance of other cultures.

But they also felt unsafe, unseen and unequal. They want to help build a bridge across difference that the people of Leicester can cross together, unified in purpose. Young people have gifts they want to give now, not just in the future.

Seeking a city where *everyone* has a place - and where everyone is invited to take part in each other's traditions and celebrations - the gathering split into relevant groups for more intimate discussions and were given five questions to discuss.

They were:

What hopes do you have for Leicester?

What do you imagine an intercultural city to be like?

What are the barriers that stop people learning to live well together?

What are the opportunities for people to learn to live well together?

What role might we play?

Suggestions that came out of the discussions have given impetus for moving forward, with people vowing to step out of their 'comfort zones' and join in with what's already happening in the city, collaborating, and sharing the tremendous resources they have in each other.

This initiative has been made possible through the support of Near Neighbours, a programme of CUF (the Church Urban Fund), with funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

This event is only the start of the conversation. We have follow-up conversations booked in and are already working on intercultural events that will take place in the next few months. Please email

[admin@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:admin@stphilipscentre.co.uk) if you would like to be informed of future activities. We invite all who share this vision to join us in conversation and action.



## Education

At the end of February, we had the pleasure of hosting a Roadshow at St Philip Neri with St Bede Catholic Voluntary Academy in Mansfield, where we received a warm welcome.

As part of each Roadshow, we invite children to sign our Pledge board, a symbolic way for them to commit to building positive relationships across different faiths and beliefs. By signing, they affirm the statement:

**“I, a member of St Philip Neri with St Bede Catholic Voluntary Academy, give my support to efforts to build and strengthen positive and lasting relationships across different faith and belief communities.”**

This initiative reflects the ethos of the Centre for Living Well Together, encouraging young people to encounter, understand, trust and co-operate with others in their daily lives. As you can see from the picture it was signed with enthusiasm!

In March, we had the pleasure of welcoming numerous school groups from across Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and Nottinghamshire. One highlight was the visit by students from Ranby House School, who had the opportunity to visit a Mosque, a Synagogue, and a Gurdwara, gaining first-hand insight into the beliefs, practices, and cultural heritage of these religious communities. Through these visits, children were able to deepen their understanding of faith diversity, ask thoughtful questions, and appreciate the importance of mutual respect and coexistence. Here are some pictures from their visit.



## Corporate Work

In March, we were pleased to host another CARE Gold Conference, for practitioners who had already completed the CARE Silver Course. We were delighted to have Will Baldet as one of our speakers. Will was a previous Prevent Co-ordinator at St Philip's Centre and is now Head of Research & Insights with the Commission on Countering Extremism.



Also in March, our Deputy Director accompanied Canon John Brown on a visit to the Jain Centre as part of his research at Goldsmiths – University of London. Canon Brown is from the Diocese of Chelmsford and has previously worked on promoting faith tourism.



On 24th March, we were pleased to welcome Sgt Joe from South Yorkshire Police to observe our 'Introduction to Religion & Belief' training day for new Leicestershire Police recruits. Later that day, Riaz attended Leicestershire Fire Rescue Service's Iftar event at their headquarters.

This month also saw us launch and deliver a new level 2 training course for the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland NHS Integrated Care Board on 'Culture and Faith in Healthcare—Ties that Bind'. This included a very informative talk from Professor Ivan Browne, Professor of Public Health at De Montfort University, which was followed by an equally interesting and informative visit to the Polish Roman Catholic Church.



NHS Integrated Care Board Level 2 Training

The month ended with a trip to Westminster. Riaz was invited to speak as a panel member at the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Safeguarding in Faith Communities meeting where discussions were held about implementing the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) recommendations which was led by Baroness Jay.

Thanks to ThirtyOne:Eight for the invitation.

# Church-facing Work

Last week I visited New Parks Methodist Church and, whilst meeting Lyndsey, Sarah, Vicky and Matt, found out all about the amazing projects they are involved in at the church.

The church team itself consists of just a few dedicated individuals; however, the transformative effect they have on their community shines out and is seen in the number of community users turned volunteers. Sarah told me that much of the work came from prayerful reflection on how the Church was to serve their community.

The week is incredibly busy; on Monday a small team are at the clock tower giving out food to the homeless whilst others run a youth drama group; Tuesday sees Tea Bags community café serving homemade cakes whilst on Wednesday the team drop off about 30 home delivery bags and sort out food ready for Thursday's Food Pantry. Vicky told me that people are so grateful – 'they come in crying and leave smiling. People get to know you and tell you their stories.' Lindsay and Lloyd are instrumental to Wednesday's Lunch Club which takes place at New Parks library whilst Matt oversees the Men in Sheds project on Tuesdays and Fridays.

The sense of community in New Parks is testament to how much can be achieved by the dedication of a few key individuals along with the gift of space and vision offered by a place of worship.

I'm excited to visit their projects again over the spring and summer along with some of St Philip's faith practitioners.



Cathryn Parsons, Churches Training Officer

## St Philip's Centre's Annual General Meeting



Our Annual General Meeting will take place on  
**Tuesday 17th June 2025 in St Philip's Church,  
Evington Road, Leicester LE2 1HN.**

Refreshments will be served from 5.00 pm.

Further details will follow soon.

## 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.

*All Saints' Educational Trust;  
The Anglican Diocese of Leicester;  
The Garfield Weston Foundation;  
The Home Office;  
The Keswick Hall Trust;*

*Leicestershire & Rutland Community Foundation  
The N C Bellefontaine Trust;  
The National Lottery Heritage Fund;  
The Northampton District of the Methodist Church;  
The 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: @SPCLeicester Facebook: stphilipscentreltd

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

Company registered in England & Wales no. 5657062

Registered Charity no. 1114686