

York Interfaith Group



June 2026

Welcome to the June newsletter

You will notice that the newsletter does not have as many reports as usual of the past month's activities, including a very significant omission: the Regional Interfaith Consultation. Given that there are two Interfaith items coming up in the next three days (see below, after the Contents list), we decided that it would be better to send this newsletter out as it is, and perhaps fill in the gaps later on in the month with a bulletin.

Rory Allen, Editor

Message from the Chair

As you may know, members of York Interfaith Group helped to organise, and participated in, the Regional Interfaith Consultation on 15th May, which was generously hosted by the Church of Latter Day Saints in Acomb. This is a time of great change, and it is excellent news that the ideas of a regional, and a national interfaith network, are being revived. We really need the support that it could provide, more than ever now. Meanwhile here in York the YIG cannot stand still when all around us is in flux. We are looking carefully at the options for the future of our structure and activities, but whatever is democratically decided by the group – which in the last analysis is run by its membership – the one thing that is certain, is that an organisation like ours is more essential than ever. At a time when powerful, or at least, loud, voices are telling us the opposite, we will continue to make clear our beliefs in the power of unity, and in the plain truth that people of goodwill have far more in common than separates them.

Best wishes,

Tina Funnell, Chair

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Jewish Culture Month: invitation to Pride Shabbat service, 29th May, 6.30 pm

The link to get your ticket(s) is here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ylic-jewish-culture-month-pride-shabbat-service-tickets-1989030821731>

Jewish walking tour: 31st May at 2pm (joint with Huddersfield Jewish Group)

The link is here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/york-jewish-walking-tour-tickets-1986451990377?aff=oddtcreator>

We warmly invite our interfaith friends to both events.
Sarah Hubbard

Planned future YIG talks and events

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month in the Council West Offices (in fully disabled accessible premises), normally in the Auden Room. The Meetings start at 7.00 pm with a moment's silence and finish around 8.30pm. People gather from 6.30-ish for drinks and a time to 'catch up'.

The full address is: West Offices, Station Rise, York YO1 6GA. There are a limited number of disabled parking spaces outside the front entrance to West Offices.

Next meeting: Planning our future programme



How the Meeting on 2nd June will be structured

We are looking forward to the annual planning meeting on 2 June. We really want to hear your ideas and suggestions. We will be running this consultation meeting as a carousel with three 'stations', which we will ask you to visit. At each 'station' you will be able to discuss your ideas and there will also be a facilitator who will write down your ideas on a large piece of A3 paper. Everyone will get a chance to visit all the 'stations'. At the end we will share and discuss ideas from each 'station'.

Station 1: Interfaith week ideas

We welcome your ideas for interfaith week 2026. These can be specific events from faith groups or something for YIG to organise generally aimed at a subject that affects everyone.

Station 2: Monthly Meetings

At this station, please share your ideas about topics for monthly meetings, along with suggestions as to possible speakers or contributors. Monthly meetings can be discussion-based or with an external speaker or an opportunity to share our personal faith journeys.

Station 3: Other activities

This is an aspect of our work that we are seeking to develop over the coming year and builds on the meeting that Mahmood led in April. It links to our ongoing discussions regarding refining and developing YIG's vision. Tina will outline some of her initial thinking about our vision at the start of the meeting on the 2nd June. Other activities also focuses on our engagement with communities across York and beyond, as well as our partnership work with local stakeholders, civic authorities, and similar organisations to ours. We would also welcome suggestions about activities that would emphasize the importance of **shared humanity** and collective action to build a peaceful, inclusive society.

We appreciate that some people may not be able to make it, so if you can't make it to the actual session but have some thoughts about something special to include, please email our Chair, or our Vice Chair Dee Boyle, with your suggestions. Please state which 'station' or area your suggestions relate to, so that they can be part of the discussion on 2 June.

Volunteers

We will be asking for volunteers to help us implement the ideas and suggestions we will gather on 2 June. We rely on volunteers to put our ideas into practice. We appreciate that everybody is very busy so please consider carefully before volunteering your time.

We look forward to seeing you on 2 June and listening to your suggestions and ideas.

Other planned meetings in 2026

YIG hugely appreciates the support of our members and friends and especially your attendance at our monthly meetings. Please see the table below which shows the programme for 2026. This year we have tried to build on the successes of last year, for example holding meetings in which members can share their personal experiences of their faith(s). We have also tried to include topics that enable us to connect with our local community as well as the wider world. We are distributing the organisation and chairing of meetings, as we now have a team of people who oversee meetings, which includes myself, Bessie and Alicia.

Sarah Hubbard

	Meeting topic
July	Sikh Temple visit
August	Picnic: venue TBC
Sept	Religious faiths in Japan (part 1) Chris Collingwood
October	Languages in faiths
November	Talk from Local Chaplain from the Fire service
December	AGM and bring and share of food from different faiths and cultures(social event)

Baha'i meditation, 8th June

Community Reflection Evenings

Inspiring passages presented in an uplifting and reflective atmosphere, enhanced by music.

Followed by open discussion and light refreshments

All welcome



Monday 8th June 7.30 - 9pm at the Super Sustainable Centre Derwenthorpe,
YO31 0RW

Programme for Refugee Week, 15-21 June



Refugee Week events

For links to any of these events and details of how to book please visit website.

There are additional events being planned, so please check back regularly.



www.refugeeactionyork.org/refugee-week





Refugee Week



Graphic Design by Ganna Bielcheva
<https://bielcheva.com>

15th – 21st
June 2026

Refugee Week YORK



13 June
Saturday

9.30 – 11.30am The Citadel,
Gillygate YO31 7EA.

Children's cooking class. Fun cooking class by York City of Sanctuary for 8–14 year olds (parents welcome), making a sweet treat to take home.

Kick-off 2pm York Sport Village,
University of York, YO10 5FG.

Join us to support RAY's exciting annual charity **football tournament** as teams of young people battle it out for the Sam Pegram Cup!

15 June
Monday

10 – 4.30pm Friargate Quaker
Meeting House.

Refugee Week: Courage, Community & Conversation. Information stalls & panel discussion organised by University of York Migration Network. Open to public.

16 June
Tuesday

1.30 – 4 pm York St John University Allotment,
Haxby Road.

Community Allotment **BBQ Event**.
Booking required.

7 – 9 pm Winning Post York, Bishopthorpe Road.

Pub Quiz - fundraiser for RAY. Teams of maximum 6. £5 per person, pay on entry.

17 June
Wednesday

11.30 – 2pm Yahala Restaurant, Gregg Place,
University of York West campus.

Falafel pop-up with homemade baklava.

12 – 12.30pm York Art Gallery.

Gallery Talk. A Tale of Two Ceramic Factories, with Dr Helen Walsh, Curator of Ceramics. Organised by: York Museums Trust.

2 – 5pm Online.

Panel discussion on UK asylum reforms. "The most sweeping asylum reforms in modern times"? Organised by University of York Migration Network.

Schedule of events



see website for full details and booking information for each event

www.refugeeactionyork.org/refugee-week



20 June
Saturday

1.30 – 4 pm The Mount School York,
Dalton Terrace.

Refugees and Rowntrees. The Mount School York is proud to host this Refugee Week event from The Rowntree Society, exploring how the Rowntree family, company, and Trusts supported refugees throughout the twentieth century. Three case studies bring history to life. This event will include an exhibition and talks from multiple speakers. Booking free, on Eventbrite.

18 June
Thursday

10 – 12pm York Minster.

Picnic. An event provided by York Minster for RAY Attendees only.

10.30 – 2pm York Museum Gardens.

Simple Acts of Courage. Explore the theme of courage through reflection, sharing, and committing to your own courageous act organised by York Museums Trust.

6 – 7.45pm Tempest Anderson Hall,
Museum Gardens.

York Refugee Week Film Evening. Film screening by University of York Migration Network: Escaping Libya's Detention Industry, No Release, and Armed with Words: Interpreting the War in Afghanistan. Booking on Eventbrite.

6.30 – 11pm The Fulford Arms, York.

Fundraising Gig. Live music fundraiser for RAY featuring Bite the Bullet, Strip, Mulch Messiah, Fatality & Recompense organised by FLK. Booking required.

7 – 8pm Online event.

Yahala cookery school event in partnership with York University. Learn how to make a delicious Syrian stew. Booking required.

21 June
Sunday

11 – 1.30pm Unitarian Chapel
in St Saviourgate, York.

York interfaith service. "**Courage**" with **refugee stories and faith reflections**, followed by a bring-and-share vegetarian lunch. All welcome.

10.30 – 2.30pm Coach pick-up
near Barbican.

Family Brunch at the Farm. An event by City of York Council for children and parents with a meal, activities, information sessions, animal interactions, and travel. Limited spaces available, bookable via Eventbrite.

24 June
Wednesday

6 pm The Citadel, Gillygate.

Cookery school. In person cookery school event By Yahala. Learn to make 5 different Mezze dishes from our chefs. Booking required.

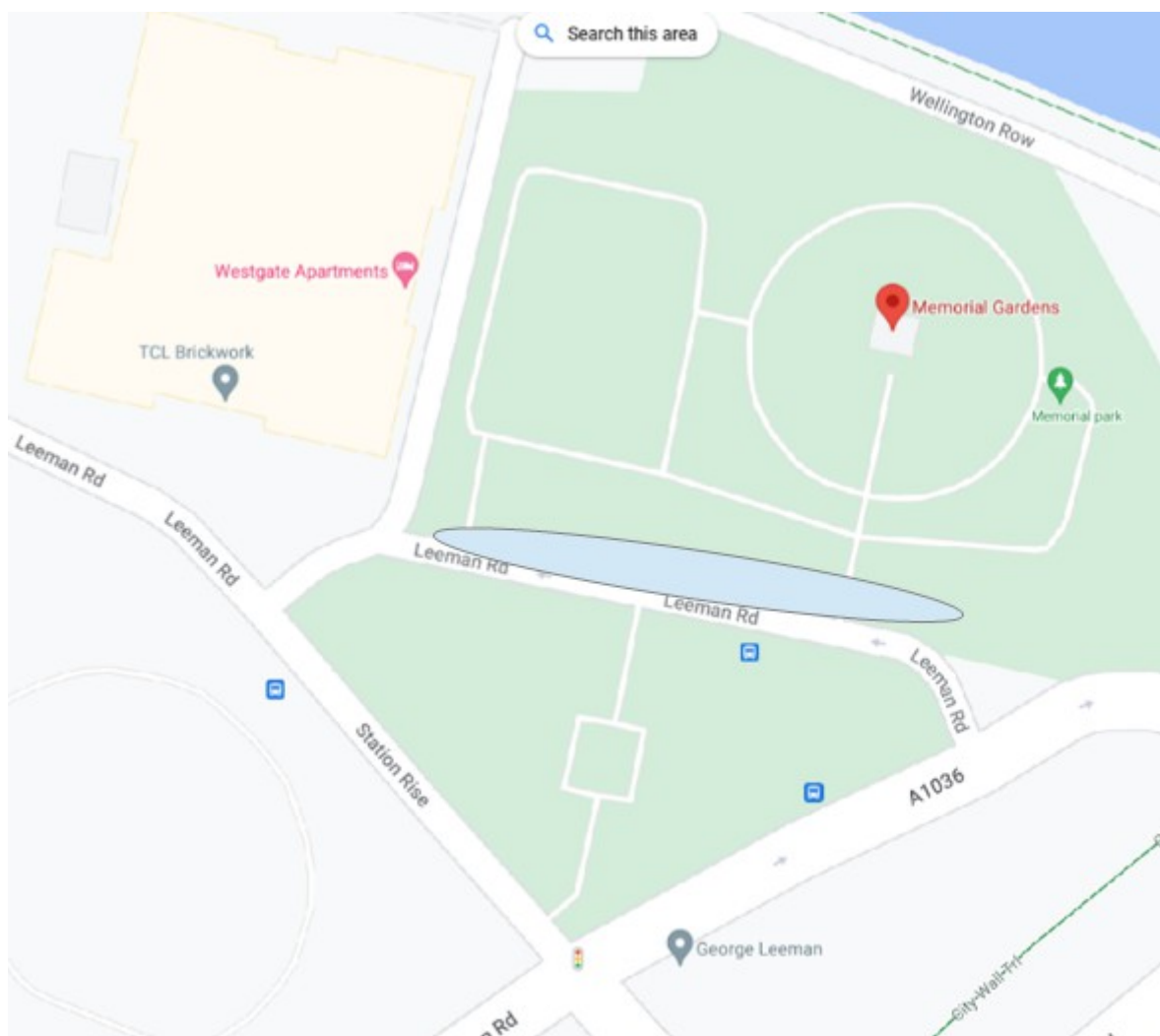


Advance Notice, July meeting: Tuesday 7th July excursion to Guru Nanak Niskam Sewa Jatha (GNNSJ) Gurudwara, Leeds

Our July meeting will be an excursion to Excursion to Guru Nanak Niskam Sewa Jatha Gurudwara (GNNSJ), Leeds. We will be shown the inner workings of a Gurudwara, a chance to see langar being prepared and listen to the wider activities taking place on site, such as the fully functional nursery and the building of 'care home' style accommodation.

As we will be hiring a coach, in order to gauge numbers, if you would like to attend then please contact Avtar Matharu (avtar.matharu@york.ac.uk). We are limited to 35 persons on the coach but anyone that wishes to go direct can do so. The excursion is free to YIG Members and a £5 donation for non-Members.

The coach will pick up from Memorial Gardens, Leeman Road, at 5.15 pm (see blue ellipse, below) and leave the Gurudwara at 8.45 pm with an expected return in York for 9.30 pm.



A notice on renewable energy advice

Free renewable energy support for York communities

Community energy projects allow communities to own renewable energy assets that generate income for local projects while helping the area decarbonise. With rising energy costs, there has never been a better time to explore what's possible - [find out more](#) and see [examples here](#).

Feasibly, a North East-based organisation, is running a pilot to help community groups get projects like this off the ground. As part of the pilot, communities across the region can access data on planning constraints and grid connections for their buildings and community spaces - information that would typically be very time and resource intensive - provided at no cost so you can understand what's genuinely possible before committing to anything.

Pilot participants will have the opportunity to shape the design of Feasibly's platform directly, feeding back on what works and what the tool needs to do to serve communities like yours. This is a chance to influence something that could help community groups across the UK develop the renewable energy assets they own.

If your community manages a building and has ever considered solar or other renewables, we'd love to hear from you.

Contact Anna at anna@feasibly.co.uk

This project is funded by David Skaith, Mayor of York and North Yorkshire, and the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Report on film and discussion on the climate crisis, 9th May

On the afternoon of 9 May, there was a screening in York of the National Emergency Briefing, 'a short film of scientists, health and security experts discussing the imminent risks we face and re-emphasising the need for us to work together as a City and a region to ensure the opportunities for a flourishing future are not lost.'

The film was a powerful summary of the evidence to show that climate change is genuine, and that it is happening as a result of the historical, and still increasing emissions of CO₂ into the atmosphere as a result of the burning of fossil fuels. Not only that, but the stuff is running out. There has been a lot of fanciful talk about making Britain self sufficient by spending more billions drilling in the North Sea for the last difficult reserves of oil and gas, but 90% of those reserves have already been extracted. We will be spending more and more to get less and less, being subject to one of the iron rules of economics: the law of diminishing returns.

Climate change is not a threat predicted for some future date, it is happening now, and is adversely affecting people's lives today. Alternatives to oil, gas and coal are available in most areas (one exception – so far – being aviation), and the renewable options are in all cases cheaper than the fossil fuels they replace.

Two significant points were not mentioned, though. One is the incredible but true fact that the world's taxpayers are subsidising the fossil fuel industry to the tune of \$7 trillion every year - trillion, not billion. The claim does not come from a some extremist eco-activism group; it is the estimate of the International Monetary Fund, and if anyone understands money, they do.

The second point is that the fossil fuel industry is quietly spending large sums of cash not just on running a well-orchestrated disinformation campaign to persuade the public not to take climate change seriously – that is only to be expected. But it is heavily subsidising political parties, in some cases supplying the great majority of their funds. It is no surprise when those parties make the rejection of Net Zero a central plank of their platform. The next time you see criticism that we 'can't afford net zero', it might be worth checking out where the speaker's money is coming from.

Meanwhile, the ongoing crisis in the Middle East and the spike in petrol prices reminds us that whatever venal politicians may say or do, one of the most powerful forces on earth, the power of economics, is pushing the world in one consistent direction: towards the replacement of dwindling, expensive and above all destructive fossil fuels by the clean renewable alternatives.

Contributed by Rory Allen

Regional Interfaith Consultation, 15th May

A full report will follow in due course, but meanwhile we have added a link below to the online survey for the regional interfaith consultation, to which other YIG members may contribute if they wish.

<https://forms.gle/pdyrkYwZdjDDbb8NA>

Corpus Christi procession in York, 7 June



On Sunday 7 June, Catholics will hold a Blessed Sacrament procession from St George's church, Peel Street, to St Wilfrid's church in Duncombe Place.

This year the feast of 'Corpus Christi' - Christ's Body - will be celebrated on Thursday 4 June and the following Sunday.

The feast was inaugurated in 1264, with support from the famous theologian, St Thomas Aquinas, following visions by saints. It reflects one of the most serious historic squabbles inside the Christian family, the debate over what Jesus really meant when He said, "Take and eat, this is my body. . . Drink, . . this chalice of my blood." The debate raged furiously in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and still goes on, but more quietly.

The official church declared the bread and wine do become what Jesus said, and deserve to be revered and celebrated. Every place must hold a public procession every year to honour Jesus in the consecrated bread, the 'Blessed Sacrament'.

In medieval times York Mystery Plays were performed on the feast of Corpus Christi, demonstrating Christian devotion to the Bible as well as the sacraments.

Contributed by Mary Callan

Remembering Guru Arjan Dev-Ji, 16 June

On 16 June 1606, Guru Arjan Dev-Ji, the fifth Sikh Guru, gave up his life for his beliefs of compassion, love, tolerance and respect.

On 16 June 2016, Jo Cox, MP, Batley and Spen, was tragically murdered for her beliefs of 'oneness' and 'unity'. Today, we still remember her maiden speech in the House of Commons where she said, "We have more in common than that which divides us".

In 1606, Emperor Jahangir ordered that Guru Arjan Dev-Ji to be tortured and sentenced to death after the Guru had refused to stop preaching his message of God as started by the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak Dev-Ji. Guru Arjan Dev-Ji was made to sit on a burning hot sheet while boiling hot sand was poured over his body.

This image, as shown below, has been depicted in many books on the history of Sikhism. After enduring five days of unrelenting torture, Guru Arjan Dev Ji was taken for a bath in a nearby river. As thousands watched he entered the river, never to be seen again.



Let us continue to remember both Guru Arjan Dev-Ji and Jo Cox, two people of different faiths, but the same belief for 'doing good', love, tolerance, respect and mutual harmony.

Contributed by Suki Kaur Matharu, York St John University, Sikh Faith Adviser