

Conversation Club Leeds

Newsletter

Number 6 January 2023

Conversation Club is a place for asylum seekers and refugees to meet, make friends and practise English.

Tuesdays 1:30 – 3:30pm, The Holbeck Social Club, Jenkinson Lawn, LS11 9QX;

Thursdays 1:30 – 3:30pm, Mill Hill Chapel, City Square, LS1 5EB.

Happy New Year!

As we start a brand new year we at Conversation Club would like to wish all our guests, volunteers and supporters much health and happiness in 2023. We hope it will be a better one for those in the UK asylum and refugee system; as ever we will be trying to make life just a little easier for those who live with the reality of the system every day.

And look out for great events coming up this year – see page 3 for details of some of them!

Christmas Party



Ten days before Christmas, Conversation Club invited all its guests and volunteers to our annual get-together. It was wonderful! Phil and Sean played folk music and special Christmas songs (carols); there was just enough space for some of us to do traditional dancing; the room was beautifully decorated with a small tree, holly, ivy, tinsel and festive lights; some people played games and wore silly hats; and there was all kinds of good food for everyone to try. There was no Father Christmas this year but there were some small gifts for the children. Thanks to all who brought things to eat and helped with the clearing up. Roll on next Christmas!

Christmas elf at Mill Hill Chapel

Theatre Project



On January 12th we had another visitor - Duncan from a group called Threadbear Theatre. They will organise 10 drama workshops for us over the next 3 months. The idea is to prepare a



small show, which we will perform at the Fell Edge Farm weekend festival at the end of April. Their theatre style is a lot of fun: there are no lines to learn; you make it up as you go along! This is called improvisation theatre.

If you are interested to join the group, please talk to one of the volunteers. The first workshop is on Jan. 19th, then they will happen each week after that, on Thursdays.

Why not give it a try?

Language quiz:

What are these letters called? There are 5 of them.

And what are all the others in the alphabet called?



Healthy Eating Project



Last autumn we were lucky enough to receive funding from Community Champions to run a Healthy Eating Project at both our venues, The Holbeck and Mill Hill Chapel.

The aims of the project were to share information about the benefits of eating healthy food and also to provide opportunities for practising English.

We had great fun getting the message across ... we sang about healthy food with Community Music worker Nicky Bray, we held fresh fruit and vegetable tasting sessions and we shared recipes for healthy food from different cultures. One of the highlights of the project was when we were treated to dim sum freshly made by one of our regulars Fai who was a professional chef in Hong Kong.

The project finished with a brilliant cookery workshop led by Leticia. She demonstrated how to make guacamole using a traditional Mexican recipe. The results were delicious!

Many thanks to Community Champions for making it all possible!

Upcoming Events

Leeds 2023 City of Culture



Leeds will be hosting a wonderful year of cultural events, performances and workshops this year, to celebrate our great city and its history, art and diversity.

On 7th January, a fantastic show was held at Headingley Stadium to launch the Year of Culture – this was a huge, colourful and lively performance of music and dance by well-known groups and Leeds people.

This was just the beginning – look out for many events in the coming months. Conversation Club is hoping to be able to take our guests along to some of them!

Highlights of the year ahead:

- A mobile observatory will [tour the city](#), inspired by the legacy of Austhorpe-born civil engineer and astronomer John Smeaton
- A mass-participation event is [gathering 1001 stories](#) from those aged 60 and over in Leeds, with new artistic works based on the shared tales
- A Mexican-inspired nine-day "celebration of life and death that reimagines [Day of the Dead](#) with the people of Yorkshire".
- [Making a Stand](#), a new piece of public artwork in Leeds City Square, inspired by the city's history as the Forest of Leodis
- Launch of [The Magician](#), a film set in dystopian Leeds with professional and citizen actors
- Volunteers will build the [Women of the World \(WOW\) Barn](#) - a temporary structure on Cinder Moor hosting a fortnight of discussion, music, performance and workshops.....

Conversation Club winter outings

We have obtained some funding to take guests out for some trips during the winter, so these will be coming up soon – look out for information at the meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Some of the trips will be a couple of hours, but some will be longer.

Places we are planning to visit are:

- the National Railway Museum in York,
- Leeds Discovery Centre,



- Leeds Abbey House Museum (Kirkstall Abbey)
- the National Science and media Museum in Bradford.

Let the volunteers know if you would like to go on one of the trips – don't miss out!

Sue's Solstice



I was out for a walk in a local country park on a beautiful sunny winter's day, when I came upon a group of people dressed all in black and performing a dance to music being played on a flute. It was 21st December, and they were celebrating the Winter Solstice. This is a time when the earth's axis tilts away from the sun, creating the shortest day and longest night of the year, which some see as the symbolic death and rebirth of the sun.

The ancient monuments at Stonehenge are aligned with the setting sun on this day, which may also be referred to as midwinter. The unexpected delight of witnessing this traditional ritual will stay with me for many winters to come.

Contact us

Remember to follow us on Facebook and Twitter!

Website: <https://cc-leeds.org.uk>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Conversation-Club-Leeds-2115973768685100/>

Twitter: @cclmct91

Mill Hill Chapel: <http://www.millhillchapel.org>

The Holbeck: <https://www.slunglow.org/what-is-the-holbeck/>

Buses to The Holbeck: 1, 1b, 86, 87, 55, 55c, 65, 75, 86, 87, 51, 52.



