



Croydon Interfaith Walk

Saturday 24th July 2012



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Background to the 2012 Interfaith Walk:

NEWS RELEASE

MULTI-FAITH SOUTH LONDON WALKING TOGETHER IN OLYMPIC SPIRIT

LONDON'S MAYOR is backing a series of inter faith walks being held across South London on the weekend of July 14/15 to showcase the multi-faith character of the capital. Boris Johnson has given his support to eleven inter faith walks immediately before the Games, from Hounslow in the west to Greenwich in the east and from Southwark to Croydon in the south, on Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 July.

The Mayor says "I am delighted to lend my support to the South London Inter Faith Walks in this summer like no other for London. The Olympic and Paralympic Games offer the most wonderful demonstration of togetherness, and it will be a joy to see athletes and visitors from all over the world, of all faiths and none, coming together in our capital where we are almost unique in being able to offer them all a home from home. That is something to celebrate and for which we can all give thanks, and I can think of no better way to do so than by joining one of these Inter Faith walks in that same spirit of togetherness and sporting endeavour."

Coordinated by South London Inter Faith Group and organised by local groups, each event is free and open to anyone of any faith or none. Participants will spend about an hour in up to eight different places of worship and can drop in and out at any part of the day. Participating boroughs are: Hounslow, Richmond, Kingston, Merton, Wandsworth, Lambeth, Southwark, Croydon, Lewisham, Bromley and Greenwich.

Sarah Thorley, organiser of 15 previous south London walks says: "Come and join in! Meet and walk and talk with your neighbours. Now is your chance to enter all those mysterious buildings you've never quite dared to go into. Visit temples, churches, mosques and synagogues all in one weekend. See for yourselves, the genuine inter faith cooperation that exists."

To find details of the walks in your area see:
www.southlondoninterfaith.org.uk/2012-inter-faith-walks

Event Report:

Saturday the 14th July was no exception to the unpredictable British summer 2012 - damp!

In complete contrast people happily gathered at CFER (Croydon faith resources centre) at 10am with the prospect of seven hours of walking and talking, listening and eating with fellow Croydon residents and guests while visiting , exploring and discussing faith traditions and worship sites in the northeast of the borough.

We were not alone, five or six other walks were taking place simultaneously in South London with a further six on Sunday the 15th July all celebrating the religious diversity and community cohesion of our great capital city prior to the Games.

The Croydon event was co-ordinated through Faiths Together in Croydon our local interfaith network (<http://www.faithstogetherincroydon.org.uk/>).



We spent the first half hour assembling and viewing the facilities and physical resources available to schools, faith and community groups and individuals at the Charity organised resources centre. By 10.30 we had achieved around 20 keen participants and set off for our next venue, St Marks parish church at Norwood Junction. A whole host of conversations

were in progress during the 30 min walk and we arrived somewhat damper but better acquainted with our surroundings and fellow travellers.



The Rev Tom Hurcombe and some parishioners greeted us with light refreshments, followed by a brief history of the church and an opportunity for questions and dialogue and a closer examination of a spectacular baptistry that could grace a Cathedral! But sadly time was pressing and we departed for a brief walk to our next venue The South Norwood Islamic Community Centre.

This is outwardly concealed in an ex-industrial building that was once a print works.

This fact came to light when one of the walkers declared that he had worked in this very building, but he was amazed how it had been transformed into a vibrant centre of worship and community development.



We were fortunate that the week prior was a local festival part of which was an exhibition of Islamic art at the mosque, which was still on display. We learnt that the mosque was originally established by Sufi Muslims but is now used by a broad range of Islamic believers resident in the area and operates an open door policy towards all local community members coming to the mosque.



Having finished our visit and light refreshments we departed for a 15 min stroll to the nearby Sri Sri Radha Krishna Culture Centre, tucked away behind a residential house. This location used to be a Jehovah Witness Hall until around 20 years ago when the Hare Krishna group purchased the site.



We heard about the simplicity of this style of Hinduism and it's broad appeal, but also the depth of teachings it is based upon. One key fact was that a vegetarian diet was an obligation to be observed, but given the food we were generously provided with that seemed no hardship. The flavours and textures were a delight to the palate and everybody was invigorated by this timely repast.

Soon it was off again on a challenging leg to the Sikh Gurdwara, the Nanak Community Centre at the end of Wellesley Road and St. James's Road. The option to hop on a bus was adopted by a few but those who walked made the journey faster due to a traffic problem causing bus delays.



We finally reassembled somewhat late for a brief visit and talk in the Gurdwara (literally the gateway to the guru) the key feature of which is a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib which is treated with respect as the eternal Sikh Guru.



The rain reappeared as we left and a short but wet trip got us to our final destination the Baitus Subhan Mosque where a refreshment area under cover in the grounds provided space to eat, drink and discuss the community aspects of the mosque, one of many London Mosques provided by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association.



It was a time of relaxation and reflection on the day before moving off in separate directions, having made some new friends and learnt a little about places and ideas we had not visited before.

Appendix 1:



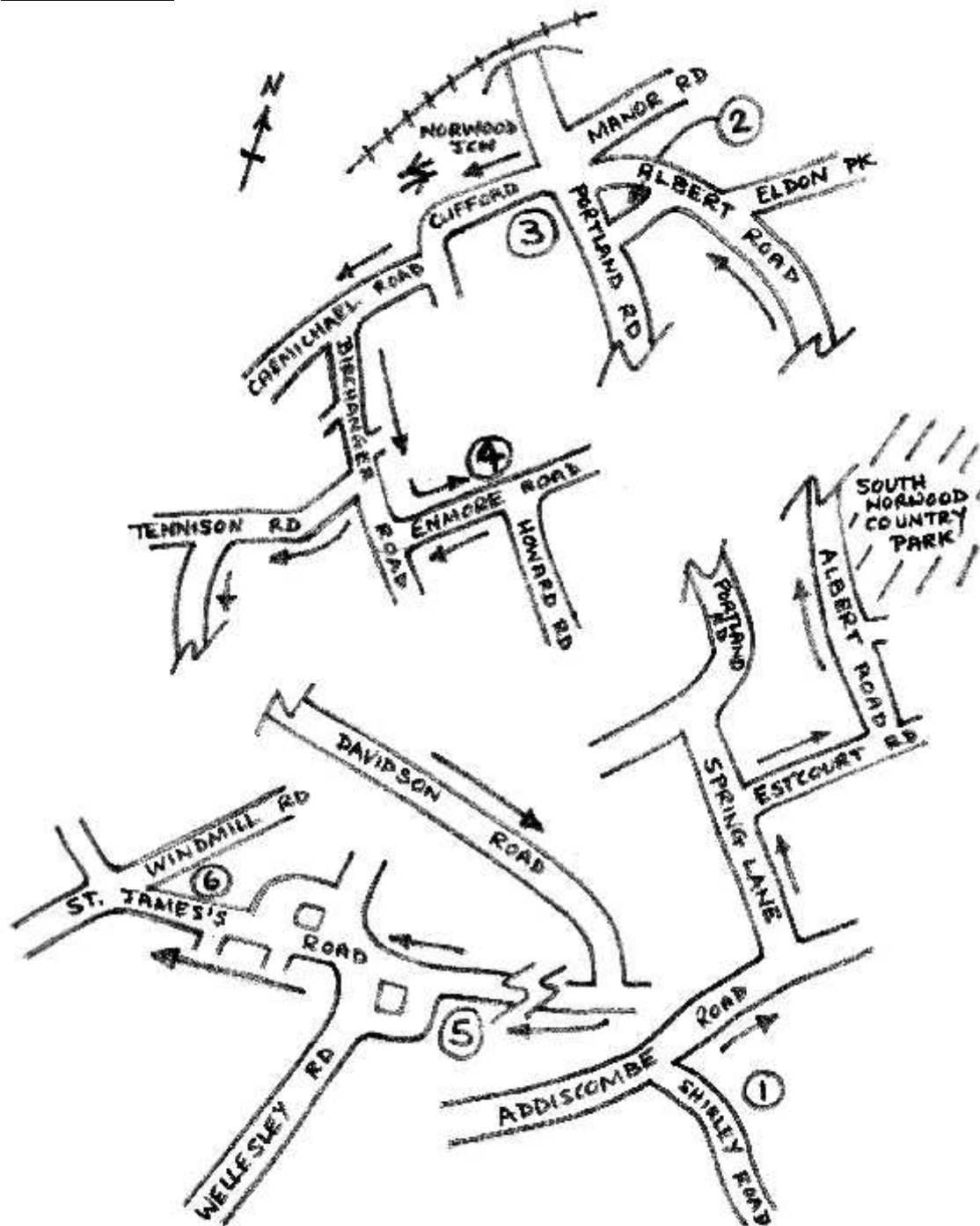
CROYDON INTERFAITH WALK SATURDAY 14th July 2012

Details of route, locations of places being visited and timings are as follows:

Location	Arrive	Depart	Venue	Details
1	10.00am	10.30	Croydon Faith Education Resources,CFER, rear of Oasis Academy & Ashburton Library, Shirley Road, Croydon CR9 7AL	Multi faith resource centre (charity) supporting schools, community and faith groups in Croydon www.cferinfo.org.uk
2	11.00	11.30	St Marks Church Albert Road London, SE25 4JE	Anglican Church with an interesting Baptistry
3.	11.40	12.40	South Norwood Islamic Community Centre 1-3 Clifford Road South Norwood London SE25 5JJ	A Sufi Mosque and community centre
4.	1.00pm	2.15	Sri Sri Radha Krishna Culture Centre 42 Enmore Road, South Norwood London SE25 5NG	Krishna Hindu Temple and community centre. Vegetarian lunch is being provided.
5.	3.00	3.50	Nanak Community Centre St James Road Croydon Surrey, CR0 2RJ	Sikh Gurdwara and community centre
6.	4.00	4.45	Ahmadiyya Muslim Association Baitus Subhan 59 St James' Road West Croydon CR0 2US	Ahmidiyya Mosque and community centre

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9/06/2012 ak.ljk@blueyonder.co.uk

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NB. MODEST DRESS PLEASE + HEAD COVERING
AND EASILY REMOVED SHOES

Enquiries/Bookings to Sarah Taylor Tel: 020 8253 7080
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Appendix 2: Additional photos







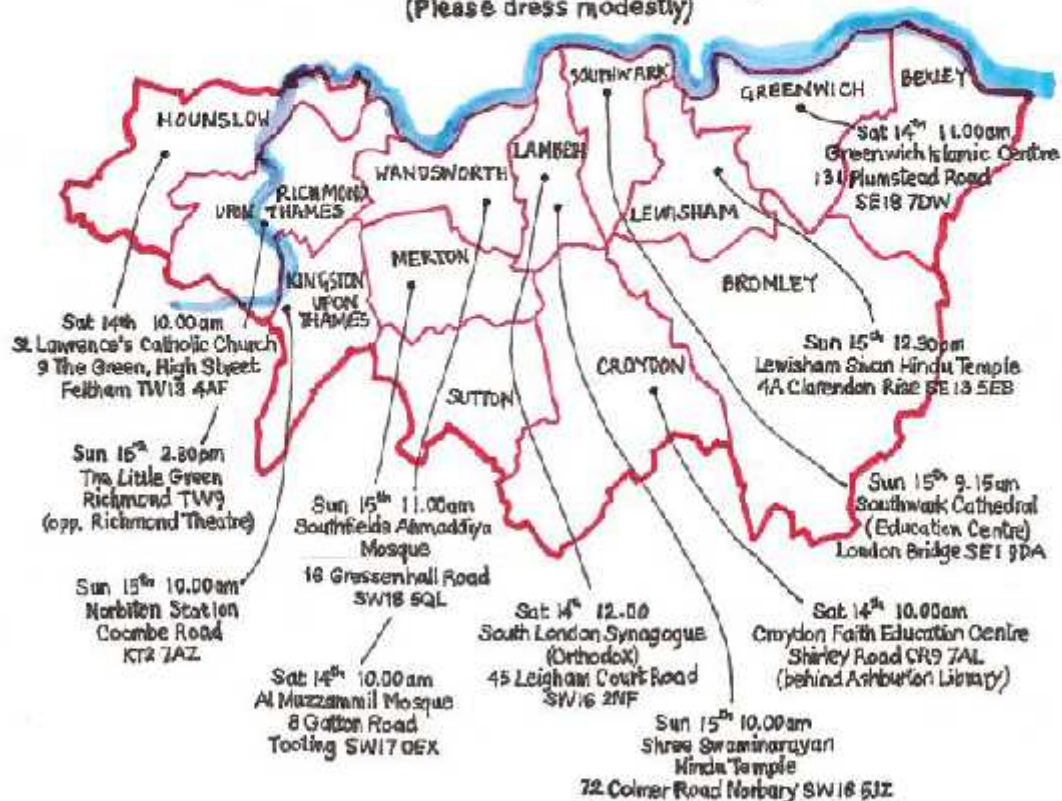
Appendix 3: SLIF event flyer/map

EVER BEEN ON AN INTER FAITH WALK?
NOW IS YOUR CHANCE!
Visit temples churches mosques and
synagogues all in one weekend

Sat 14th and Sun 15th July 2012
11 walks all over south London

Come and join in

Meet and walk and talk with your neighbours
(Please dress modestly)



Above are the locations and times of the starting points of each of the 11 walks. For more information contact:
SOUTH LONDON INTER FAITH GROUP
www.southlondoninterfaith.org.uk
or email secretary@southlondoninterfaith.org.uk