

Community members of all faiths celebrate Iftar meal in Croydon

People from across the faiths and the community, gathered at the Croydon Minster's Church Hall in May to join an Iftar meal provided by The Dialogue Society.

The Society is a charity founded by British Muslims in the late 90s and seeks to advance social cohesion by connecting communities together and empowering people to engage with one another.

Breaking the fast

Iftar meals are held in Muslim families worldwide during Ramadan – a month of fasting commemorating when the Qur'an was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad; when the sun sets, Muslims are allowed to break their fast with the Iftar meal.

Increasingly these meals are being seen as an opportunity to invite non-Muslims to find out about Ramadan, to build social cohesion, and to enjoy good hospitality.

Friendships and food

The evening at the Church Hall included short speeches from community representatives such as Mayor Bernadette Khan, MP Chris Philps, Councillors, the Police, Reverend Allan from Croydon Minster and local charities such as the Nightwatch Croydon supporting homeless people which donation collected to. Once the sun had set, the eating began, as the conversations continued and friendships were built.

Rev Allan said: "This was such a wonderful occasion and great chance to make connections with those of other faiths.

"It was heartening to see the warmth with which inter-faith friendships were welcomed by Croydon's community leaders, some of whom hold to no particular faith themselves but all of whom understand the importance of such friendships for social cohesion and community flourishing.

Mayor Bernadette Khan says she is always delighted to meet with any faith groups interested in exploring interfaith work further, or developing friendships with their neighbours of other faiths, as the benefits to the community and to each of us personally can be significant.