

October Programme

Activity	Time	Venue
Saturday activities for families with children	10.30 am – 1.30 pm (every Saturday)	Sure Start Centre, Parnall Road, Harlow
English Course for beginners	Suspended, please see note below*	
Drop-in	1.30 pm – 5 pm Thursdays	2 Wych Elm, Harlow (Rainbow building)
Consultation and advice	By appointment only	2 Wych Elm, Harlow (Rainbow building)

HELPING REFUGEES, MIGRANTS, AND OTHER ETHNIC MINORITIES TO INTEGRATE SUCCESSFULLY IN OUR COMMUNITY

Coming soon!

Identity cards for foreign nationals

From 25 November 2008 the Home Office will begin to issue identity cards to foreign nationals applying for further leave to remain in the United Kingdom under certain categories. The first cards will be issued to migrants applying as either a student, or who are the husband, wife, civil partner or unmarried partner of someone holding permanent residence in the United Kingdom.

Applications under these categories are made by using application forms FLR(S) or FLR(M).



SOURCE: UK Border Agency

If you need any more information about the identity cards or help to fill any of the above forms please call our office for an appointment on Tel: 01279 639442

ISS Trustees/Volunteers Needed

Do you have a passion to work with the community? Do you want to represent your own community at our board meetings, by bringing their voice to us and making a difference? We need your experience, time and dedication to run our organization to the best possible standards. Give us a call for more information and we would be very happy to explain in more details the benefits and challenges of becoming a trustee or a volunteer.

Inside this month:

- Important news for migrants
- TUC Union and Refugee Council campaign – an update
- Two important celebrations in September



Office Address:
2 Wych Elm, (Rainbow building)
Harlow Essex
CM20 1QP
Telephone/Fax: 01279 639442
E-mail: info@integrationsupportservices.org.uk

***English Course**

Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances affecting our English course we have had to suspend the course for a short while. We are working hard to find a suitable and committed tutor to recommence the course. We are very sorry for the inconvenience caused by this interruption and hope to bring you positive news soon.

This newsletter can be forwarded to you by post monthly at the cost of £1 monthly or £12 annually per copy which includes postage charges. Simply contact us. Details shown above. Multiple copies sent to the same address would of course be cheaper, just let us know your requirements and we will offer you a quote. E-mail copies can be provided on request.
Marlene Brooks (Editor)

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And all those who helped and contributed towards the publication of this issue

Strict new jobs list for migrant workers

A strict new list of shortage jobs which targets migration better at the needs of British businesses, while reinforcing the selective approach of the new Australian-style points based system, was presented to the Home Office on the 8th of September by independent advisors. The recommended shortage occupation list would bring in a more flexible, larger set of work categories but would see the number of individual positions open to migrants reduced by 30 per cent.

The Home Office tasked the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), an independent panel of economists, with overhauling the current shortage occupation list and will now pressure test their recommendations carefully before publishing the final list in October 2008. The MAC's recommended list follows the most comprehensive study of its kind ever conducted anywhere in the world. It reduces the number of jobs open to migrants from one million to 700,000. The list also defines more tightly which positions cannot easily be filled by resident workers.

Border and Immigration Minister Liam Byrne said: "Our new Australian-style points system is flexible to meet the needs of British business while ensuring that only those we want and no more can come here to work.

This tough new shortage occupation list supports that. "This strict list means 30 per cent fewer jobs are available to migrants via the shortage occupation route.

"Those that do come will need to work hard, play by the rules and speak English."

The final shortage occupation list will be published by the Home Office next month ahead of the skilled worker tier of the points system - known as Tier 2 - coming on-line in November. Tier 2 will ensure that opportunities for British jobseekers are maintained by requiring companies to prove they cannot fill the post with a resident worker before recruiting from outside Europe. To get in under Tier 2 skilled foreign workers must have: a good grasp of English; prospective earnings of more than £24,000 or have a good qualification and enough money to support themselves for the first month of their stay.

The MAC report recommends that sectors should develop training strategies and look beyond migration for new recruits, which directly supports the Government's aim to upskill the British workforce and ensure Britain remains a global leader in skills.

Union leaders pledge to support TUC and Refugee Council campaign to let asylum seekers work

On Wednesday 10 September, leaders from many of the UK's main trade unions joined the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the Refugee Council's campaign to allow asylum seekers to work. The TUC will pledge its full involvement in the campaign by being the first to sign a call for the government to let people seeking asylum in the UK work and support themselves.

Currently, almost all asylum seekers are barred from working, despite many having no immediate prospect of returning home. This means they are either destitute, or being supported by the taxpayer.

Donna Covey, Chief Executive of the Refugee Council said "we know asylum seekers want to work. Many are highly qualified and had good jobs in their home countries, and are desperate to contribute to the country that has taken them in. It is an outrage that they are left to rely on handouts from the state when they have so much to offer this country."

Brendan Barber, General Secretary of the TUC said: "Asylum seekers can wait months and even years before decisions are made on their cases, so the bar on them working is causing severe economic hardship for their families. Forcing often highly skilled, highly trained individuals to sit idle for considerable periods of time is not only a personal tragedy for them but is also a huge loss to the UK economy, which is missing out on their many talents. The Government must think again and change the rules so that asylum seekers are allowed to work and are no longer forced to survive on benefits alone."

JOB VACANCY (Temporary/Part-time)

We are looking for a play worker for annual leave cover (9th of November 08 - 9th January 2009)
You must have at least NVQ 1 qualification for play work and min 1 year experience working with children.
CRB check is required for the chosen applicant.

Please call Marlene on 01279 639442 for an informal chat and application form

September: This was the month of two important celebrations for Muslim and Jewish Communities

Rosh Hashanah

(literally, "head of the year"), one of the few solemn days in the Jewish calendar.

Rosh Hashanah is observed in the beginning of the seventh Hebrew month, Tishri, for two days by Orthodox and Conservative Jews, and for one by Reform Jews.

Rosh Hashanah is the start of the civil year in the Hebrew calendar. It is the new year for people, animals, and legal contracts.

The customs and ceremonies of the home also reflect concern over the auspiciousness of the coming year:

- In addition to the recitation of Kiddush (the sanctification prayer said over wine) and the kindling of the festive lights on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, a piece of apple is dipped in honey. The person performing this symbolic act implores, "May it be God's will to grant us a good and sweet year."
- The person dips bread in the honey as well in the hopes that just as the bread is sweet, so may the experiences of the coming year be only the most pleasant.
- On the second night, a fruit that has not yet been eaten during the year is tasted and an appropriate benediction is recited.



The traditional greeting on Rosh Hashanah is "shana tova", this means in Hebrew "a good year," or "shana tova umetukah" for "a good and sweet year," because Jews are being judged by God for the coming year.

Rosh Hashanah table set with symbolic foods.

By Orit Granot

Eid mubarak



Each year, Muslims spend the ninth month of the Islamic calendar observing a community-wide fast. The annual fast of Ramadan is considered one of the five "pillars" of Islam. Muslims who are physically able are required to fast each day of the entire month, from sunrise to sunset. The evenings are spent enjoying family and community meals, engaging in prayer and spiritual reflection, and reading from the Qu'ran.

How is Eid al-Fitr Celebrated?

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims observe a strict fast and participate in pious activities such as charitable giving and peace-making. It is a time of intense spiritual renewal for those who observe it. At the end of Ramadan, Muslims throughout the world observe a joyous three-day celebration called *Eid al-Fitr* (the Festival of Fast-Breaking).

Eid al-Fitr falls on the first day of Shawwal, the month which follows Ramadan in the Islamic calendar. It is a time to give in charity to those in need, and celebrate with family and friends the completion of a month of blessings and joy.

Before the day of Eid, during the last few days of Ramadan, each Muslim family gives a determined amount as a donation to the poor. This donation is of actual food -- rice, barley, dates, rice, etc. -- to ensure that the needy can have a holiday meal and participate in the celebration. This donation is known as *sadaqah al-fitr* (charity of fast-breaking).

On the day of Eid, Muslims gather early in the morning in outdoor locations or mosques to perform the Eid prayer. This consists of a sermon followed by a short congregational prayer. After the Eid prayer, Muslims usually scatter to visit various family and friends, give gifts (especially to children), and make phone calls to distant relatives to give well-wishes for the holiday. These activities traditionally continue for three days. In most Muslim countries, the entire 3-day period is an official government/school holiday.

A family celebration and gift giving to the children



By Shareem Islam