

World Dream Day

Slough Community Networking Forum (SCN)

Slough Hindu Temple, 87 Keel Drive, Slough, SL1 2XU
Wednesday 25th September 2024, 10am -1:30pm

Report produced by Slough Council for Voluntary Service

Slough Council for Voluntary Service hosted the Slough Networking Forum at the Hindu Temple, where we began the day with an enlightening tour led by the Pandit (Hindu Priest). He shared fascinating historical insights about the first temple established in Slough and the largest temple in Berkshire - truly remarkable!



Following the tour, Vicki Atherton, Director of Operations for Slough CVS, provided an overview. She emphasised the importance of having a vision and dreams for Slough and how we can collaborate to build stronger, healthier, and safer communities.

Next, we were introduced to three innovative projects in Slough:

 	Meena introduced a new organisation, Community Calm, which provides nature-based activities for individuals facing social isolation, loneliness, and mild mental health challenges, all set on an animal therapy farm. Participants can engage in arts and crafts, light gardening, relaxation exercises, or simply enjoy the peaceful surroundings while interacting with farm animals. A supportive environment encourages sharing mental health experiences over a cup of tea or coffee. Sessions are held every Monday morning for two hours, with plans to explore additional green spaces in Slough to expand their offerings, encouraging community connections and promoting mental well-being. Contact: communitycalmberkshire@gmail.com
 	AWAZ Afghan Women in Slough “Awaz” meaning “voice for the community,” was founded to support Afghan women and other newly settled migrants, by providing a safe space where they can connect, form friendships, and overcome challenges such as isolation and loneliness. Inspired by Hangama’s personal journey as a refugee, she shared her experience of facing cultural adaptation, language barriers, and a lack of support network, which led to the creation of AWAZ. Although the group do not currently provide workshops, AWAZ focuses on promoting health and well-being through group walks and social activities, empowering community connections among women who share common experiences. Contact: awazwomen2024@hotmail.com
 	Domestic Abuse Stops Here (DASH) is a charity dedicated to combating domestic violence and supporting survivors. This organisation has recently been recommissioned to provide a service to Slough residents impacted by domestic abuse. DASH provides a range of services, including emergency accommodation, advocacy, and counselling, aimed at helping individuals escape abusive situations and rebuild their lives. DASH focuses on raising awareness about domestic abuse, educating the community, and promoting prevention strategies. Through partnerships with local agencies, they offer resources and support to ensure survivors have access to the help they need, fostering safety and empowerment in the community. Sobia and Ewelina, our Diverse Communities Support Workers, shared impactful case studies highlighting the transformative support provided to women in need from diverse

ethnic backgrounds, underscoring the vital importance of their work.

Contact: sobia@thedashcharity.org.uk



The afternoon consisted of a World Dream Day Workshop led by Asma Aziz, Head of Capacity Building, where each table discussed a vision for Slough.

The discussions included the following:

Dream for Making a Positive Impact:

The groups envisioned a community in Slough where every individual, regardless of age, background, or ability, has access to essential resources and opportunities for growth. They prioritised inclusivity, celebrating diversity, and improving residents' well-being. Key steps included: offering disability-friendly activities, encouraging youth leadership, partnering with local businesses and community/faith organisations for healthy food and life skills training, breaking language barriers through community translators, and expanding access to local green spaces.



New Ideas and Partnerships to Overcome Challenges:

Participants emphasised the importance of collaboration and innovative partnerships. They suggested working with healthcare professionals for culturally sensitive services, local authorities to reduce socio-economic inequalities, community leaders to build trust, local businesses for funding and employment opportunities, and further developing the existing Slough Directory of community services and disability-friendly locations.



Refer to the table below for a breakdown of the responses to the two questions noted on the flipchart paper.

World Dream Box Workshop

	Q1) What is your group's dream for making a positive impact in Slough, and what steps can you take to make it happen?	Q2) What new ideas or partnerships can help your group overcome the biggest challenges to achieving your dream for the community?
Health and Well-being	• Access to healthy food at suitable prices • Access to psychological therapy • Best health and well-being from start to end – early prevention work • Holistic Well-being • Prioritising health improvement opportunities • Reduce the harm created by alcohol and substance abuse • Highlight sexual health advice/clinics • Reduce the need for food banks • Life skills • Physical support activities including Disability gym/places of exercise – regular sessions on offer	• Health activities – more social prescriptions to improve well-being. • Live longer! Volunteer! – promoting health and longevity through community service. • More places inclusive of disability, ensuring accessibility for everyone.
Community Engagement and Inclusivity	• All voices heard • Break down language barriers • Celebrate diversity • Empower local voices • Encourage youth leadership • Inclusivity and empowerment • Support local business • More community translators – directory of translators	• Access to the target demographic to ensure services reach the right people. • Catering to communities' needs by tailoring services and addressing specific cultural requirements. • Engaging with faith organisations, community leaders, and trusted members to foster stronger ties. • Bringing services into community spaces to make them more accessible. • Dedicated youth centres and projects to empower younger generations. • Safe spaces for discussions to encourage open, inclusive conversations.
Social and Economic Improvement	• Improve employment and education • Improve poverty • Tackling barriers: language, cultural, social-economic • Reduce barriers for people accessing support in Slough • Resources: funding, workforce skills, training, personalising support • Overcome loneliness • Reducing inequalities	• More volunteers needed to support various activities and services. • Funding for activities to keep programmes running and accessible. • More options for transport to improve access to services, bringing people to key locations in Slough. • Tailoring services to meet the cultural needs of individuals ensures inclusivity. • Translators as part of inclusive services that break down communication challenges.
Environment and Public Spaces	• More access to local green spaces – free and sheltered • Protecting and developing our environment • Safe, fun spaces	• Community Hub – sharing resources and spaces to make better use of available areas for communal purposes. • List of free venues in Slough for greater access to public spaces.
Education and Awareness	• Development courses for everyone • Awareness of voluntary services available • To educate communities on nutritional choices and their impact on health and well-being	• Raise awareness to break stereotyping and cultural backgrounds, promoting education that combats biases. • Easy access to information for newcomers through a Slough Directory of Services • Working with SBS music service to increase young people's musical networks and development.

Collaboration and Partnerships	• Partnership working • Collaborations • Cultivate compassion	• Improved partnership between voluntary and statutory sectors through networking opportunities. • Finding the right partners to work with for greater impact. • Joining forces with NHS departments to collaborate on health initiatives.
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Dreams

- Build an inclusive, healthy, and supportive community.
- Reduce barriers to accessing support.
- Ensure all voices are heard and represented.
- Eliminate the need for baby and food banks, encouraging independence.
- Create a standardised flow of information for everyone.
- Promote physical activities, equality, mental well-being, and combat loneliness.
- Protect and promote a healthy population with continuity and integrity.
- Foster personal connections within the community (e.g. Slough Community Network).
- Reach diverse groups and improve food and health well-being.
- Expand youth clubs and create safe spaces.
- Enhance employment opportunities across Slough.

Solutions

- Encourage collaboration and improve communication.
- Use a WhatsApp group like the SCN for effective information sharing.
- Foster partnership working to share resources and tackle common challenges.
- Establish a central hub (e.g. SCN) for easy access to resources.
- Increase networking and use translated materials to overcome language and cultural barriers.
- Identify funding options to support ongoing initiatives.
- Ensure consistently commissioned services for continuity and community-specific needs.
- Improve accessibility to services and promote resource sharing to break down stereotypes and cultural divides.
- Focus on education about food, including growing it and nutritional knowledge.
- Promote collaboration and communication to overcome barriers and enhance inclusivity.

Conclusion

The Slough Networking Forum at the Hindu Temple highlighted the collective dreams for an inclusive and supportive community in Slough. Key themes included reducing barriers to accessing support, eliminating the need for food and baby banks, and ensuring all voices are heard. The forum also emphasised encouraging a healthy population with continuity and integrity, expanding access to green spaces, and promoting refugee and youth leadership and employment opportunities.

Farnham Road is evolving into the *"new Southall"* in Slough, a vibrant community space that brings families and friends together. There is a significant opportunity to enhance this area further, promoting healthier living and expanding its community potential.

The event showcased the value of the experience's participants brought to the table - not just representing their respective organisations, but also sharing personal experiences and collaborating to make a positive impact in Slough. Encouraging collaboration, networking, and partnerships were seen as key solutions to address the community's challenges, with initiatives like creating central hubs, using translated materials, and supporting community-specific needs. Through working together and enhancing communication, the community aims to break down cultural barriers and foster a healthier, more connected Slough.

Useful Links

Slough Community Directory:

Join today via: [Slough Community Directory – Activities and services to keep Slough residents fit and healthy \(sloughhealth.org\)](http://sloughhealth.org)

Slough Networking Forum WhatsApp Group:

To stay in touch and share community information please join:
<https://chat.whatsapp.com/HfDVcAXy0D3HaUeHSrHnSO>