



Fairness, Respect, Equality Shropshire (FRESH) Ltd **Press release – Councils fund a FRESH approach to** **cultural diversity in Shropshire**

Since the EU referendum Fairness, Respect, Equality Shropshire (FRESH) have been told about several hate incidents directed against people who live and work in Shropshire. This echoes the widely-reported national surge in hate crimes, and is a cause for deep concern.

FRESH is grateful to Shrewsbury Town Council and the Shropshire Hate Crime Reporting Group for providing funding to help make this year's Cultural Diversity Day possible. The theme of the Day is "Celebrating Our Shared Humanity". It's being held in the Square, Shrewsbury from 12.00 to 16.30 on Saturday 23rd July.

The Major of Shrewsbury will open this ever-popular event, which will highlight how different cultures contribute to our communities and how what we all share is so much greater than what may divide us.



Nachda Sansaar perform Bhangra at the 2015 Cultural Diversity Day: Photo Russell Davies

Councillor Dr Jean Jones, Chair of the Shropshire Hate Crime Reporting Group, said; "This event is an important part of Shropshire's cultural calendar and a celebration of the communities that make up and contribute to our beautiful county. It is even more necessary this year, with the threat of division and the increases in hate incidents which are emerging in the wake of the EU referendum."

There will be a range of exciting and diverse performances throughout the day, including dance, music, art and poetry, with displays of equality and diversity work from groups and organisations including Age UK Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, Amnesty, Riversway Elim church, Rainbow Film Festival, Refugee Action, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, Victim Support and West Mercia Police.

It's free, fun and fitting for the times we're living through. It will be a great event for regulars and newcomers alike, to be part of the whole event or to drop in for part of it. As an added attraction there will be a series of prize draws throughout the day!

Notes to editors

1. Fairness, Respect, Equality Shropshire (FRESH) Ltd is a registered society, set up to promote equality and diversity and to challenge unfair treatment and discrimination in Shropshire and beyond. We are managed by a board of volunteer directors and have around 30 members consisting of individuals, statutory, voluntary and community organisations.
2. For more information contact Jonathan Hyams on 0777 364 4714 or at fresh.shropshire@gmail.com
3. For additional information on hate incidents in Shropshire please refer to the FRESH research into the under-reporting of hate crime in Shropshire (January 2016):
 - Full report <http://www.freshshropshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Shropshire-Hate-Crime-Scoping-Research-final-report.pdf>
 - Executive summary <http://www.freshshropshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Shropshire-Hate-Crime-Scoping-Report-Executive-Summary.pdf>
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