



A view from the edge

Doncaster Conversation Club Newsletter

04 February 2021

STANDING ALONGSIDE REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN DONCASTER

IN THIS ISSUE

Covid-19

يناير 4 2021

هذا هو أحدث بيان صادر عن الحكومة البريطانية

إلتزم بالبقاء في المنزل. يمكنك مغادرة منزلك فقط لشراء الطعام أو الدواء.

يمكنك الخروج لممارسة الرياضة ، مرة واحدة في اليوم. ابق على بعد مترين على الأقل من أي شخص آخر.

لا تقابل العائلة أو الأصدقاء الذين لا تعيش معهم.

لا يسمح بتجمع أكثر من شخصين.

يمكن للشرطة الآن أن تفرض عليك غرامة مالية إذا كنت لا تتبع التعليمات الأنفة الذكر.

إلتزم بالبقاء في المنزل وابق في أمان.



Town fields

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Knitting

Page 5

Latest update: 26/07/20 01:00



Charity 1067406

فيروس كورونا

Reference: www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/coronavirus-information/



ما هو فيروس كورونا (COVID-19)؟

كوفيد-19 هو مرض جديد يُؤثر على الرئتين
والمجاري التنفسية والأعضاء الأخرى



ويحدث هذا المرض بسبب فيروس
كورونا



علامة مرض



درجة حرارة عالية
($>38^{\circ}\text{C}$)



نوبة سعال حديثة
ومستمرة



فقدان أو تغيير في حاسة
التذوق أو الشم

ما الذي يجب فعلها إذا ظهرت عليك أعراض فيروس كورونا؟

فيجب عليك اتباع هذه الخطوات وبأسرع وقت ممكن:



1. العزل الذاتي:

ابق في المنزل لمدة **10** أيام على الأقل
كما يجب على أي شخص آخر في منزلك أو كان على اتصال
وثيق بك أن يعزل نفسه لمدة **10** يوما

2. اخضع لاختبار فيروس كورونا خلال الأيام الخمسة الأولى من ظهور الأعراض:



يمكنك إما طلب توصيل الاختبار إلى
المكان الذي تعيش فيه



أو يمكنك التوجه إلى مركز اختبارات

اخضع لاختبار فيروس كورونا

لحجز فحص كورونا أو لطلبه عبر الإنترنت،
تفضل بزيارة

www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test

إذا لم يكن لديك إنترنت، فاتصل بالرقم 119
في إنجلترا وويلز وأيرلندا الشمالية أو رقم

2816 028 0800 في اسكتلندا.

إذا كانت نتيجة الاختبار...

إيجابية:

- يتوجب عليك إكمال ما تبقى من فترة عزل ذاتي لمدة عشرة أيام
- ستصل بك خدمة التتبع tracing service في منطقتك لتطلب منك المساعدة بوقف انتشار الفيروس

سلبية:

- يمكنك التوقف عن العزل الذاتي في حال كنت بصحة جيدة ولم تعد لديك أعراض
- مكن أيضا لأفراد أسرتك الآخرين أو الذين كان لديك اتصال وثيق بهم أن يتوقفوا عن عزلهم الذاتية

Views of people seeking asylum on the COVID vaccines.

By Julia Burne

If I'm offered the vaccine, I will say 'Yes'. However, from informal remarks and comments, I know that my view is not shared universally.

To get a broader idea of how the vaccine is viewed by people seeking asylum, I have spoken to eleven people from the team of DCC Health Volunteers. I wanted to know their thoughts on having the COVID vaccine personally and also the likelihood that people from their communities would accept vaccination.

There were diverse views and only 4 were sure that, if offered the vaccine today, they would accept. Even these 4 were also very aware that many people in their own communities would refuse.

Many people seeking asylum rely on information from U-tube, social media, the internet or from television stations in their home countries. Access to UK television is not readily accessible and not necessarily trusted.

Some Health Volunteers told me that many people they know are 'scared' of having the vaccine. There are films showing doctors, some from the US, expressing concern about having the vaccine – or

videos of people having the vaccine followed by a devastating reaction. There are also videos about the possibilities of other substances being injected with the vaccine – substances which can decrease fertility or change behaviour or allow tracking of an individual. There are communities who believe the vaccine is 'not right for them' – people are not all exactly the same and that perhaps people from their background will react differently to the injection. There are concerns that the speed of development of the vaccine has compromised safety. There were suspicions caused by sudden changes in policy about the interval between doses of the immunisation. There are also concerns that people will be coerced into having it by threats of legal restrictions of freedoms for those who are not vaccinated.

I think many of these concerns will be held by individuals who have lived all their lives in Doncaster – and are not just held by people who have arrived more recently. I think all of these concerns are understandable – but I also find them worrying. I think that the divide between the health of those from an asylum-seeking background and those from the indigenous population will be increased if the injection is seen as just being for 'older white people'.

I have specific concerns about the safety of people from the asylum-seeking community. Many are living in HMOs (Houses of Multiple Occupancy) where self-isolation is not possible and maintaining cleanliness of communal areas is difficult. I am also concerned that there does seem to be a greater risk of serious illness from COVID to people from a BAME background. These 2 factors could combine to make people associated with DCC both more likely to catch the illness and to have a less favourable outcome. This is only mitigated to some extent by the general 'youthfulness' of the group.

From my medical background, taking the vaccine seems to be a pragmatic way forward for the country as a whole – and for myself as an individual. Above all, from everything I know and have heard, I believe it to be as safe as any other vaccine. It is true that everyone is an individual and will react to any medication as an individual. No medication is absolutely safe – even paracetamol can cause serious problems. On the other hand, the risks from COVID are real too – including the risk of developing long COVID. There have been occasional serious reactions – but this is why people giving the vaccines do so in a controlled environment with trained staff and emergency medications in place. I am not aware of deaths among young people.

I think that listening to peoples' fears is important. Personal views can be held deeply especially if that belief is shared widely within your own community and makes you part of that community. I think that it is important to have discussions about the vaccine – and being prepared to answer questions on it. I also think it is important that if you decide to have the vaccine it is important to talk about it and how you found it. This is something everyone from DCC can be involved in.

COVID-19 update | ARABIC [An English version of the statement on page 1]

4 January 2020

This is the latest statement from the UK Government

Stay at home. You may only leave your house to buy food or medicine.

You may go out for exercise, once a day. Keep at least 2 metres away from any other person.

Do not meet family or friends who you do not live with.
No public gatherings of more than two people.

Police can now fine you if you do not follow the rules. These rules will last for at least 3 weeks, and until the government states they are being relaxed.

Stay home and stay safe.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Reflection

Alex Zeldin (@JewishWonk) who writes for the magazine The Forward:

'Jews don't need you to identify with those of us who went through the Holocaust. Seeing yourself as the underdog is a tool to make yourself comfortable, not to challenge the injustice in the world you inhabit today. Ask yourself what you have in common with our persecutors.'

'Are you equipped to recognize and oppose those who wish to persecute and exterminate others? Do you understand who in your own society today shares assumptions and motivations that drove people to Nazism? Do you take ownership of your responsibility to oppose these forces?'



The numbers game

By Nic Burne

Something got me thinking about asylum numbers and made me realise why there is so much mixed up bureaucracy and so many delays.

In 2019 there were 35,556 asylum applications made.

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/868567/asylum-summary-dec-2019-tables.xlsx)

Per week $35,556 \div 52 = 684$

Per working day $684 \div 5 = 137$

137 people per day need screening interviews, ARC cards, ASPEN cards, Bail 201 letters, NASS accommodation, a grant of legal aid, a legal aid solicitor, SEF (main) interviews, decision makers.

And then if the grant (success) rate is a generous 50% (This is very difficult to quantify for very genuine reasons) a further ...

68 people per day can appeal (not all do) needing further legal aid, further solicitor representation, barristers, judges and court appearances.

We see only the tip of the iceberg and complain when it does not go well.

My knitting story

By Zarish Nadeem

Well knitting is great hobby to be busy as it is relaxing and creative in my case.



Knitting and crochet are 2 things which never get into my head and in my past life, a few years back, I thought it's a too difficult and complicated art which I cannot do or learn. There was no time and help/ guidance and teacher, someone who could tell me how to knit. It was like a mystery to me and when I came here in UK, I noticed that it's quite a popular hobby among ladies and every other friend talk about it, oh I'm knitting this for my mum, hubby, niece etc.

I was amazed and wondered whether I will be able to knit anything. One of my volunteer friends at Balby library is a great knitter who is always busy with different knitting projects. She is my inspiration and mentor/ teacher who taught me how to start. And just like a small kid, I ran to her every time I want to ask, show my knitting pattern, my mistakes.

She guided me, told and showed me how to cast on stitches, knit & purl, shown me books and told me to read the patterns and follow them.

My first knitting project was an angel which was a community project. Knitted angels were displayed in different library and here comes my time and opportunity to learn to knit. I joined the ladies art & craft group and everyone was helpful and guided me to knit. It's a beautiful hobby, I love it. It's like a puzzle to make/ knit one row then another and so on. It is therapeutic as well as its makes you forget worries and tension of life and it gives you joy, peace and happiness that you have created something.

I have knitted angels, traffic light hats for critical new born baby in hospital, then for a friend who was sending teddy bears to children in need, I have knitted teddy jumpers, teddy bear for my son and a jumper for him.

Right now I am knitting squares to make a blanket for a lovely grandson of my friend (who's like family to me). It's a great hobby and pastime activity which can be adopted by asylum seeking ladies as its relaxing and enjoyable thing to do.

Everyone should give it a go like me, with little help and guidance any one can learn to knit, just like me. 😊👍



CAST Young Writers' Club

Cast's Young Writer's Club is a creative writing project for young people aged 8 – 21 to develop creative writing and playwriting skills - the project with a showcase on one of Cast's stages! This will be a chance for budding young writers to express their voice, ideas and creativity, whilst developing confidence and writing skills.

Donny Doodles

1. As reported in the Doncaster Free Press

The St James Street estate, which sits on the edge of Doncaster town centre is officially the most deprived area in Yorkshire and was ranked 55th out of 32,000 places across Britain. [The source of the research was not quoted].

Also, more people in Doncaster are identifying as English than before the EU referendum (55%, up from 48%), while fewer say they are British. But Britishness is on the decline – 47% said they were British, compared to 60% in the year to June 2016.

Less reported news

1. Stanstead 15 acquitted

The Court of Appeal's judgment in favour of the 15 underlines a fundamental safeguard in the law: You can only be prosecuted for something you've actually done - and that means the evidence has to fit the wording of the offence. The crime the 15 were charged with had its genesis in the need to protect airports from terrorism - yet the prosecution didn't suggest at the trial that the incident was remotely that kind of attack. And the protesters insisted that despite their plan to stop the flight, they never intended to do anything that was likely to endanger safety at the airport. The three senior judges agreed that this critical test had not been met and so the prosecution was unjustified. The 15 may have created a health-and-safety risk by going onto the airport tarmac - but that was well below a genuinely dangerous situation that would have justified charging them with this very serious offence.

'Our actions were justified'

In a statement on behalf of the group, May MacKeith, one of the protesters, said: "The nightmare of this bogus charge, a 10-week trial and the threat of prison has dominated our lives for four years. "Despite the draconian response we know our actions were justified.

"Eleven people, including survivors of trafficking, who would have been deported that night are still in the UK.

"Mothers, fathers, colleagues, friends and family members are rebuilding lives the Government attempted to destroy."

Source: *The Guardian* 20 November 2020

2. Uyghur Genocide in China

The Uyghur Tribunal was launched on the 3 September 2020 with the support of the British-based NGO, the Coalition for Genocide Response.

This is not a formal tribunal, but a People's Tribunal. People's Tribunals exist to provide civil society with the means to investigate, amongst other things, international crimes. In this case, the crime is the alleged genocide by the People's Republic of China against the Uyghurs, including killings, serious bodily or mental harm, conditions of life calculated to destroy, measures intended to restrict births and / or forcible transfer of Uyghur children from their parents to other groups. More information about the Uyghur Tribunal can be found on their website

<https://uyghurtribunal.com/frequently-asked-questions/?fbclid=IwAR2fNWIUGHLG6OnYKqfxmOFsIRjtFG0R46OU1NqgHkePfrreEtwHO312-nY>

Source: *Briefing No 67 of Q-CAT, the Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture*

3. Alarm Phone: Western Mediterranean Regional Analysis

2020 was a difficult year for people all around the world. Travellers on the routes across the Western Mediterranean and the Atlantic were no exception. They faced numerous novel challenges this year. We witnessed unprecedented developments. In Morocco and Spain, not only has the Corona crisis served as yet another pretext to harass, intimidate and mistreat migrants, but the travel routes also changed significantly. Now large numbers of people leave from Algeria to reach the Spanish mainland (or even Sardegna). This is why we have

started including an Algeria section (see 2.6) in these reports. Secondly, the number of crossings to the Canary Islands exploded, particularly in the last three months. As in 2006, during the so-called "crisis de los cayucos", when more than 30,000 people reached the Canaries, boats are leaving from Western Sahara, but also from Senegal and Mauritania.

Read the full report at

https://alarmphone.org/en/2021/01/29/shocking-number-of-deaths-but-also-growing-struggles-on-the-ground/?post_type=release_type=post

4. Magid Magid and City of Sanctuary Sheffield



Sheffield's very own Magid Magid has become Co-Chair of City of Sanctuary Sheffield.

Magid has said he is "truly honoured to be taking on this role at such a crucial time. City of Sanctuary Sheffield is an exceptional charity that plays an integral role in supporting all those that are seeking refuge. We have a great team and an excellent vision, and I look forward to playing my part to continue to make Sheffield the warm and welcoming place it is."

Source: *City of Sanctuary Sheffield*

Donny Doodles

2. The Throne of Adulis

By Paul FitzPatrick

There I was, minding my own business, walking along Baxtergate. It was a Saturday morning, about five or six years ago. A group of Eritreans were having a celebratory coffee in Costa: one had recently received refugee status. They invited me to join them. After the others moved on, I remained talking to the refugee.

It was a memorable occasion. It was one of these times when the penny dropped, or indeed a few pennies dropped. Before then, I had never even realised the meaning of the name 'Eritrea', but he showed me how it was derived from the Greek word for 'red' which became in Latin 'Erithraeum' as in the 'Erithraeum Mare' – the Red Sea. The name Eritrea was only adopted in 1890, with the formation of the Italian colony of Eritrea. The name persisted over the course of subsequent British and Ethiopian occupation, and was reaffirmed by the 1993 independence referendum and the 1997 constitution.

This realisation led on to the discovery of our shared interest in the history of the ancient world and my introduction to the Kingdom of Axum and its engagements with neighbouring cultures. Even as one with some knowledge of the late Roman Empire, I felt so ignorant about

Roman involvement in Africa and in Arabia.

From talking about the influence of the Greek language, we moved on to Greek philosophy and the ideas of Plato in particular.

I was astonished to find myself sitting in a Doncaster café talking about ancient Greek philosophy. But my point is not about ancient history. The fact that such a conversation could take place demonstrated that he and I were not aliens to each other, that we in fact shared elements of a common culture. It demonstrated the falsehood of the claim, which continues to be made, that black, African, Muslims and white, European, Christians, can have nothing in common.

The conversation also initiated in me a desire to learn much more about the history and culture of Eritrea, and not only its more distant past.

But I can't leave the distant past without mentioning another thing I came to realise.

Ancient writers reported seeing 'thrones' around the Red Sea area. Some of these monuments were inscribed with the boastful claims made by their rulers about their own achievements. A sort of ancient form of twitter. Bases and blocks for twenty-six such thrones have been found in the old city of Axum. One of them is known as the throne of Adulis - the name survives in modern-day Bay of Zula in Eritrea south east of Asmara. This throne no longer exists, but its inscription was

recorded in a Greek text of the 6th century CE.

The inscription details relationships between (what we now call) Ethiopia, Yemen and Arabia, and they weren't always friendly. But what language were they written in? Isn't it wonderful that there exist stone inscriptions which are written in both Greek and Ge'ez? And that efforts to establish multilingual communication have such a long pedigree?

The Throne of Adulis is the title of a book by G W Bowersock

Not the last word

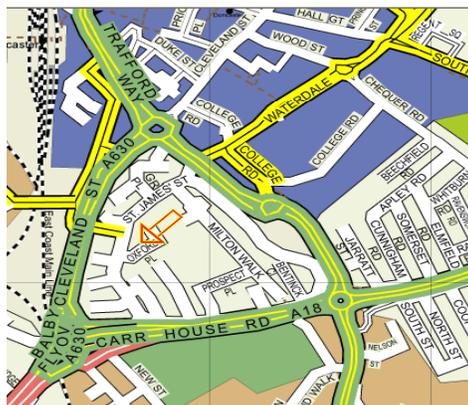


The Home Secretary Priti Patel MP issued a statement about Napier Barracks: 'The damage and destruction at Napier barracks is not only appalling but deeply offensive to the taxpayers of this country who are providing this accommodation while asylum claims are being processed.

'This type of action will not be tolerated and the Home Office will support the police to take robust action against those vandalising property, threatening staff and putting lives at risk. This site has previously accommodated our brave soldiers and army personnel – it is an insult to say that it is not good enough for these individuals.'

A view from the edge Doncaster Conversation Club Newsletter

Based at the
Quaker Meeting House
Off St James St
Doncaster DN1 3RH



To receive a copy of this newsletter by email, send a message to Paulfitzp@aol.com

Please send your contributions and suggestions to the same address.

Doncaster Conversation Club offers opportunities for local people and people who have sought asylum in the UK to join together to share friendship, while offering support and practical help.

The Club seeks to create a relaxed, friendly and supportive environment, and works on the principles of

Ownership – *everyone can get involved*

Impartiality – *it is not affiliated to any political or religious body*

Confidentiality – *what you say is private*

Respect – *for each other's differences and individuality.*

DCC is pleased to acknowledge the support of **Doncaster Society of Friends (Quakers), The Red Cross, The Refugee Council, Migrant Help, DIAL Doncaster, The Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group, St Leger Homes, Club Doncaster Foundation, Ongo M25 Services, YMCA, DARTS, CAST, Fareshare, The Brelms Trust, The Ruth Hayman Trust and Doncaster Minster.**

The Doncaster Conversation Club is run entirely by volunteers with the support of occasional grants for specific activities, currently from the Allen Lane Foundation, and the Wharfedale Trust

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributors.

Paul FitzPatrick

Doncaster Conversation Club
Doncaster, South Yorkshire

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