



The Race Equality Centre in Leicester and Leicestershire

Trec Blog: <http://trec1972.wordpress.com>

Twitter: @TREC1967

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The Race Equality Centre

The Race Equality Centre actively promotes and seeks to have implemented conditions for a racially just, fair and equitable society, which will enhance the quality of life for all citizens of Leicester and Leicestershire.

February 2020

TREC Updates

• TREC Chill and Chat Group

TREC has recently started a new Chill and Chat group. The sessions provide an opportunity to meet new people, relax in an informal, friendly setting, be part of a group and learn from each other. The group is mainly aimed at helping asylum seekers, refugees, and new arrivals to the UK by providing a safe space to talk and learn together. We know that many people have been through trauma and persecution prior to getting here. The focus is on helping with general well being, and mental health issues that may have arisen from such negative experiences. It is being held every Tuesday from 2PM to 3PM on a free to attend drop-in basis at our offices at The Race Equality Centre, 1st Floor, Highfields Centre, 96 Melbourne Road, Leicester, LE2 0DS. There is no need to book a place or call ahead, if you are interested in attending just come along and let us know at TREC's reception. Free refreshments such as tea, coffee, and biscuits will be provided.

• Independent Reporting Centre

TREC are running a campaign which will establish TREC as a 3rd Party Independent Reporting Centre for both positive and negative interaction with the Police. This will allow people to feel confident enough to engage with the Police, know what should be expected and, feel confident to handle a stop and search experience. In addition to Stop/Search workshops, we are providing Peer to Peer training to a selected group of University of Leicester students. The first Peer to Peer training was delivered on Wednesday 26th February. This will enable those attending to facilitate their own workshops; cascading information through their own networks and peer groups, further spreading this training. While this campaign is currently in its infancy, we at TREC have high hopes that it will prove to be a valuable tool for communication with the police.

• Reasonable Grounds Panel

Reasonable Grounds Panels are conducted throughout Leicester three or four times a year. They are usually open meetings and give members of the public an opportunity to read and discuss completed stop and searches to see if they deem them to be reasonable or not. We at TREC have been asked to host the next meeting which is planned for March. A more specific date is yet to be formalized as of the time of writing. For more information please contact us by email:

administrator@theraceequalitycentre.org.uk or phone: 0116 204 2790

- **Coercive Powers Scrutiny Group**

Coercive Powers Scrutiny Group meetings are held regularly at TREC. The Group reviews stop and searches, monitors adherence to policy, procedures and compliance, and makes recommendations for remedial action. Meetings start at 6pm on the second Thursday of every other month. For more information including more specific dates for when the meetings are held please contact us by email: administrator@theraceequalitycentre.org.uk or phone: 0116 204 2790

- **EU Settlement Scheme**

Now that the United Kingdom (UK) has left the European Union (EU) the government has set up an EU settlement scheme to help EU citizens and their family members who are residing in the UK. The EU settlement scheme is designed to offer EU, non-EU EEA and Swiss citizens, and their eligible family members living in the UK before the end of the transition period (during which free movement continues) the opportunity to protect their residence in the UK after the transition period has ended. If you or somebody you know would like more information please click here: <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>, or you can call the Home Office on 03333 445 675. They will evaluate whether you are eligible to apply or not. If so, they will refer you to your nearest service provider, including TREC. If you are not eligible for digital assistance through the scheme, you can contact TREC directly for assistance with the EU Settlement application. We charge a small fee for this service. We at TREC know navigating government applications can be a difficult and complicated process and we are here to help. If you want to apply for the EU settlement scheme or want to know if you are eligible you can come to us for help directly. Be advised, however, that the deadline for applications is 30 June 2021. If you or someone you know want to learn more please contact us by email: administrator@theraceequalitycentre.org.uk, or phone: 0116 204 2790.

Local News

- **Japan Foundation Touring Film Programme 2020**

The UK's largest festival of Japanese cinema is being held at the Phoenix throughout February and March. The festival's main theme is the concept of happiness. The programme seeks to present the highs and lows experienced in pursuit of happiness in Japan, showcasing diverse cinematic voices as they shine a light on stories of love, social inclusion, the resilience of humankind through times of hardship, and non-conventional paths to achieving and maintaining joy. For more information including a full list of the films being shown and to book tickets please click here: <https://www.phoenix.org.uk/event/japan-foundation-touring-film-programme-2020/>

- **How Leicester Record Studio Boss Yasin went from Drug Crowd to One of UK's Top Entrepreneurs**

A former Leicester Mercury business executive of the year who succeeded in life even after being expelled from school has been named one of the most exceptional social entrepreneurs in Britain. Yasin El Ashrafi grew up on an inner-city estate in Leicester and never met his father who was deported before he was born. He now runs a recording studio and music education business called HQ Recording, based in Charles Street, Leicester, which has built a growing local reputation for its work with up-and-coming urban, R&B and hip-hop acts. For more information please click here: <https://tinyurl.com/r2rda7o>

- **Police treating egg throwing attack on two teenage students as racially aggravated assault**

Leicestershire Police appeal for information after eggs were thrown at two teenage students in a racially aggravated assault on 3 February. The students were verbally abused, with the attackers stating that they had 'brought the SARS virus into this country'. Their college principal says the attack was prompted by the coronavirus scare. For more information please click here: <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/drunken-bully-hit-partner-claiming-3841377>

- **Coronavirus fears spark racist abuse at Leicester businesses**

Leicester residents have experienced racist abuse and some businesses have suffered following the news that two cases of the virus were confirmed in the UK. News of the virus outbreak, which originated in China, has caused global panic leading to some misinformation. Now, businesses are feeling the effects of the public's misconception about the outbreak. For more information please click here: <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/coronavirus-fears-spark-racist-abuse-3815210>

National News

- **Ruby Williams: No Child with Afro Hair Should Suffer Like Me**

A pupil who was repeatedly sent home from school because of her afro hair wants to make sure it doesn't happen to any other UK schoolchild. Ruby Williams received £8,500 in an out-of-court settlement after her family took legal action against The Urswick School in east London. She was told her hair breached policy, which stated that "afro style hair must be of reasonable size and length". The school did not accept any liability. Ruby told Radio 1 Newsbeat she wants UK schools to have "better guidelines on their uniform policy so that people can't be discriminated against when they're walking into school". For more information please click here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-45521094>

- **Bafta Film Awards: British Stars Suggest More Diverse Nominees**

Gemma Arterton and Carey Mulligan have teamed up with Time's Up UK to criticise the lack of diversity at this year's Bafta Film Awards. They and other British stars have named some of the women and people of colour they feel should be in contention. Bafta (the British Academy of Film and Television Arts) has faced censure since announcing an all-white line-up of acting nominees last month. It has since pledged to conduct a "detailed review" of its voting system. The Golden Globes also faced a backlash for having an all-male line-up in its best director category - a line-up replicated by both Bafta and Oscar voters. For more information please click here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-51209877>

- **Justin Welby Says He Is 'Sorry and Ashamed' Over Church's Racism**

At a meeting of the General Synod to address the Windrush scandal and racism in the church, the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby admits that the church is 'institutionally racist', that the phrase 'hostile environment is extraordinary and terrible', that the church appointment system is in need of urgent reform, and that he is 'personally sorry and ashamed'. For more information please click Here: <https://tinyurl.com/svns2s2>

- **US Preacher Franklin Graham Tries to Reverse UK Tour Cancellations**

As evangelical and other Christian leaders reject the stance of US evangelist Franklin Graham on immigration, poverty, gun control and Israel as irreconcilable with Christian teaching, and campaigners describe him as homophobic, Islamophobic and politically extreme, commercial venues across the UK cancel his bookings, effectively preventing his UK tour. For more information please click here: <https://tinyurl.com/wu779px>

- **News Outlets Criticised For Mislabeling Photos of Black Mps**

Three leading British media outlets have been left embarrassed and facing accusations of racism after they mislabeled a series of photos of black female Labour MPs. In a chaotic series of events, the BBC was initially forced to apologise after mislabeling the Labour MP Marsha de Cordova as Labour frontbencher Dawn Butler on its Parliament channel. Then, in an article about the BBC's mistake, the Evening Standard's online edition published a picture of a third black female Labour MP, Bell Ribeiro-Addy, mistakenly claiming it was De Cordova. For more information please click here: <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2020/feb/04/news-outlets-in-racism-row-over-mislabelling-photos-of-black-mps>

- **Chinese in UK report 'shocking' levels of racism after coronavirus outbreak**

Chinese people in the UK report 'shocking' levels of racism after the coronavirus outbreak, including verbal and physical assaults on businesses and individuals on public transport, in schools, and online harassment. For more information please click here: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/feb/09/chinese-in-uk-report-shocking-levels-of-racism-after-coronavirus-outbreak>

- **No 10 refuses to comment on PM's views of racial IQ**

Boris Johnson's spokesman has refused to say whether the prime minister thinks black people have lower IQs on average, or agrees with eugenics, after No 10 hired an adviser with highly controversial views. In a tense briefing with the media, the prime minister's deputy official spokesman declined several times to distance Johnson from the views of his adviser, Andrew Sabisky, who has suggested "enforced contraception" be used to prevent the creation of a "permanent underclass". For more information please click here: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/feb/17/no-10-refuses-to-comment-on-pms-views-of-racial-iq>

- **Tory peer Baroness Warsi backs Dave after grime star called Boris Johnson 'racist' during Brits performance**

A former Conservative Party chairwoman has backed grime star Dave after he branded Boris Johnson a "racist", calling it "a necessary wake-up call". Baroness Warsi spoke out as Downing Street refused to comment on the high-profile attack at the Brit Awards – while Priti Patel, the Home Secretary, insisted the prime minister was misunderstood. The Tory peer tweeted her support for Dave after he added a surprise verse to his track "Black", which said: "It is racist, whether or not it feels racist, the truth is our prime minister's a real racist." For more information please click here: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/baroness-warsi-dave-brit-awards-2020-tory-boris-johnson-racist-a9343496.html>