



# Cultural Sharing Forum

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# Background to the Cultural Sharing Forum

Situated in the west of Hampshire, Test Valley contains a mixture of urban, semi-urban and rural areas. A large proportion of the population live in the Borough's two main towns, Andover and Romsey.

The population of Test Valley is 131,699, with 50,888 residents living in Andover.

Andover, has had historically low but significantly increasing ethnic diversity.

## Test Valley Ethnicity data:

	White British	White Other	Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Groups	Asian	Black	Other
<b>2011</b>	92.6%	3.4%	1.3%	2.0%	0.4%	0.3%
<b>2021</b>	88.8%	4.4%	1.7%	3.3%	1.1%	0.7%



# Background to the Cultural Sharing Forum

As a team, engagement officers were regularly in touch with community leaders from the Muslim, Nepalese and Chinese communities in Andover, which have historically been the more established and formalised groups in the area.

Throughout the Pandemic, we worked collaboratively with these communities and were guided by them on how we could use our resources to best support them.

This led to working together on some brilliant projects, such as producing Covid vaccination videos with trusted community members. The video was filmed in multiple languages and formatted to be shared via Whatsapp.

This collaborative way of working developed into conversations about community leaders joint aspirations to improve inclusion in the town and embrace and celebrate diversity.



# Cultural Sharing Forum in 2023



## Andover Cultural Sharing Forum

Last Wednesday of every month, 6pm,  
The Guildhall, Andover



Come along and join us at our next get together!

An opportunity to share and discuss ways to celebrate and promote cultural diversity in Andover.

Get together with local residents from Andover's diverse communities to come together as one and embrace your own culture, as well as those around you.

The Forum has now been established for over a year, and has developed its own identity and sense of direction. Below are the values and priorities the group works towards...

### What does the Cultural Sharing Forum mean to you?

*The Cultural Sharing Forum provides an opportunity to come together as one to discover and share your culture and those around you. It aims to provide a space to embrace these cultures, share experiences and develop a better knowledge and understanding of the cultures and world around us."*

### What should the Forum aim to achieve?

*The Cultural Sharing Forum aims to embrace and better understand the cultures in Andover and promote cultural awareness. By bringing people together and making space for all cultures to interact and identify shared aims to promote inclusivity and integration.*



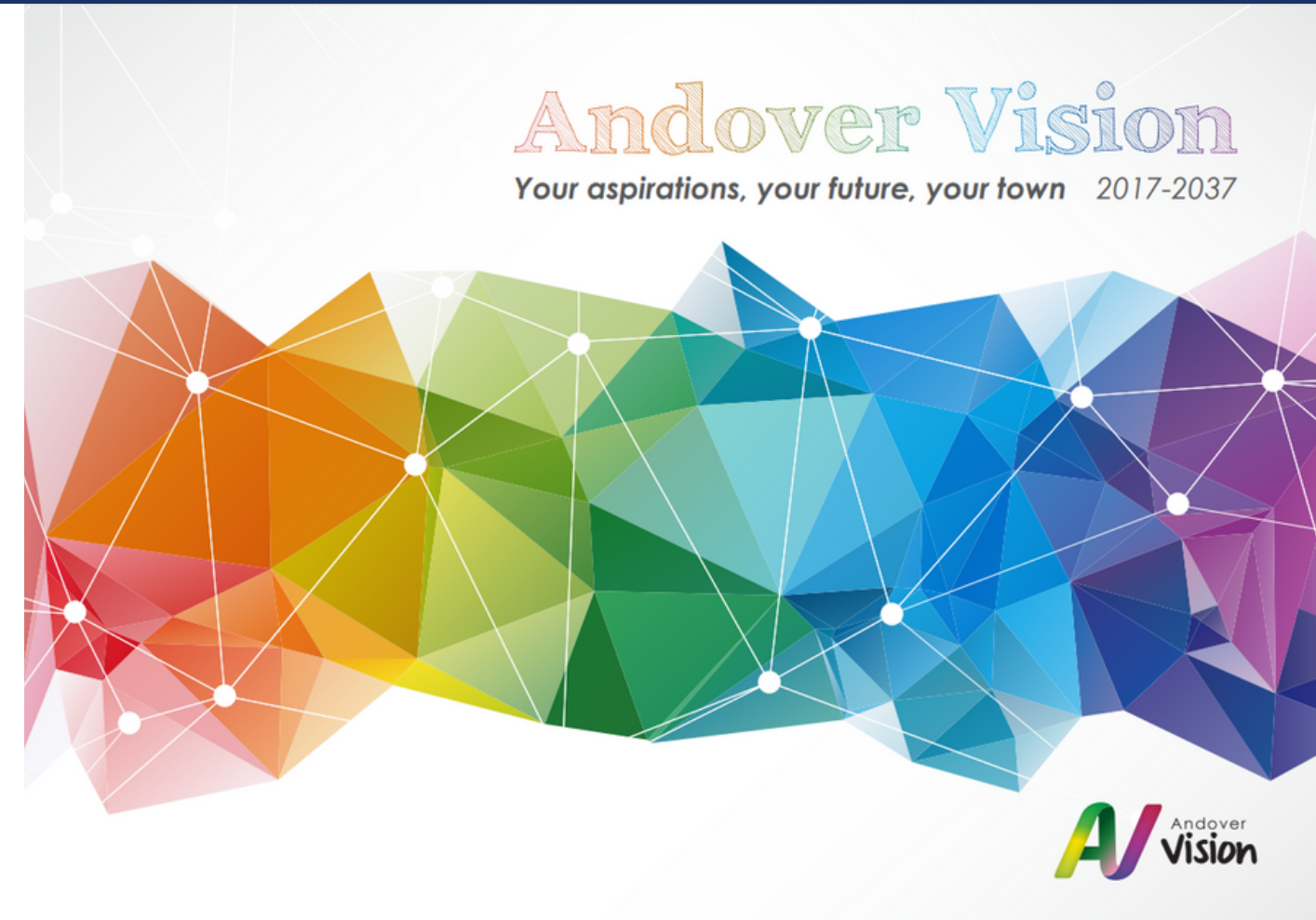
# Cultural Sharing Forum in 2023

The Cultural Sharing Forum is independent of, but affiliated to Andover Vision.

Andover Vision is a key local strategic partnership of Andover's residents, community groups, businesses, and public bodies.

The partnership works together to help the town fulfil its potential, raise aspirations and promote a sense of pride amongst communities to achieve great things for the town and its future over the next 20 years.

By the Cultural Sharing Forum being represented within this partnership, it has increased the rate of engagement in consultation and service development across a range of public services. Most importantly, it's given diverse communities the opportunity to be involved in consultation or conversations that they feel passionately about and in areas where they would like to affect change.



# Cultural Sharing Celebration

A core aim of the group is to create opportunities for more inclusive events which reflect the diversity of Andover.

Their first event, the Cultural Sharing Celebration, took place in January this year. Aimed at raising awareness of the Forum and creating an opportunity to build on people's understanding of cultures and customs.

The Forum planned for multiple stalls to run through the main shopping centre, each displaying interactive activities, like: Henna tattoos, Arabic writing, hair braiding, recipe sharing, the opportunity to try on sari's and other traditional dress, make Polynesian headdress and many others.



## CULTURAL SHARING CELEBRATION & FACES OF ANDOVER EXHIBITION

Join us for an afternoon of FREE family fun: visit the Faces of Andover exhibition (12th - 28th January Unity Art Gallery) enjoy an African fashion show, get involved in hair braiding and other cultural activities, enjoy music, dance, food and more!

Meet the members of Andover's new Cultural Sharing Forum. The forum offers space for diverse and different cultures in Andover to meet, talk, network and learn from each other. All Welcome!

Saturday 21st January

12.00 - 15.00

The Chantry Centre

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Andover Cultural Sharing Forum 



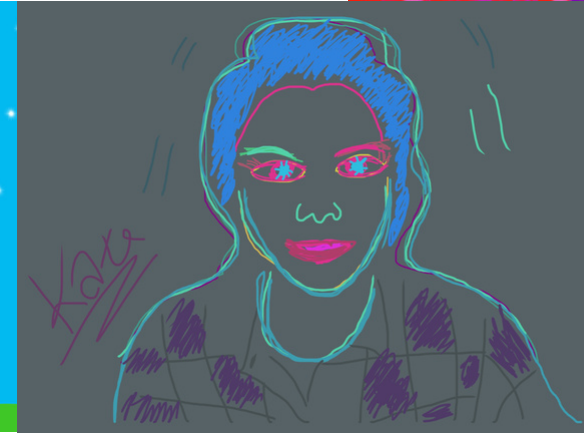
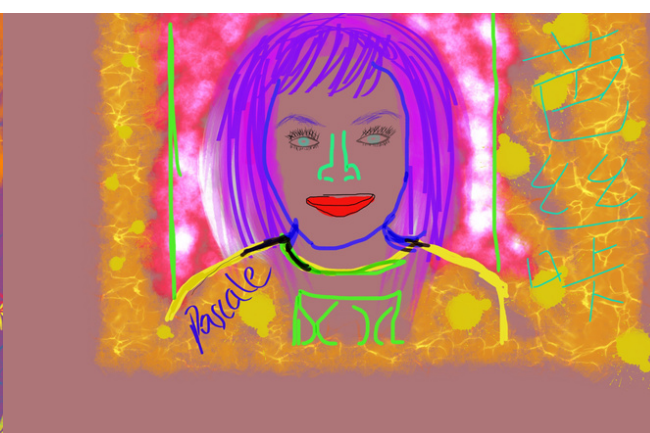
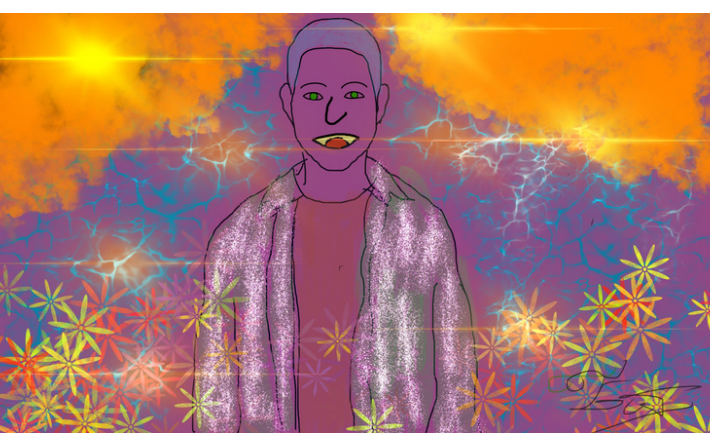
# Faces of Andover

Faces of Andover was a series of free digital self portrait workshops, undertaken in partnership with the Cultural Sharing Forum, Southampton University and a group of artists called Common Ground.

The workshops aimed to engage a culturally diverse demographic and promote intercultural conversation using digital art to enable people to share their experiences, perceptions and visions for the future.

The sessions aimed to combine artistic practice with research to explore peoples experience of place, belonging and community in Andover.

The finished portraits were shared as part of a free exhibition for a month to coincide with the Cultural Celebration event.



# Cultural Events Calendar

Date	Celebration	Date	Celebration
12 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Amazigh (Berber) New Year	5 <sup>th</sup> April	Qingming Festival
16 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Martin Luther King Day	5 <sup>th</sup> – 13 <sup>th</sup> April	Passover
22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	Chinese New Year	9 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Sunday
25 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Burns Night	14 <sup>th</sup> April	Nepalese New Year, year 2080
5 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Chinese Lantern Festival	21 <sup>st</sup> April	Eid-al-Fitr
14 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Valentine's Day	23 <sup>rd</sup> April	St George's Day
16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Tłusty Czwartek (Fat Thursday)	9 <sup>th</sup> May	Cinco de Mayo
21 <sup>st</sup> Feb	Shrove Tuesday	25 <sup>th</sup> May	African Freedom Day
21 <sup>st</sup> Feb	Mardi Gras	25 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup> May	Shavuot
1 <sup>st</sup> March	St David's Day	19 <sup>th</sup> June	Juneteenth
8 <sup>th</sup> March	Holi	21 <sup>st</sup> June	Summer Solstice
17 <sup>th</sup> March	St Patrick's Day	22 <sup>nd</sup> June	Dragon Boat Festival
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Ligo	31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Halloween
25 <sup>th</sup> June	Armed Forces Day	31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Dia de los Muertos
28 <sup>th</sup> June- 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Eid-ul-Adha / Hari Raya Haji	1 <sup>st</sup> Nov	All Souls Day
16 <sup>th</sup> July	Ghana Party in the Park	5 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Bonfire Night
19 <sup>th</sup> August	Teej Festival	11 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Remembrance Day
22 <sup>nd</sup> August	Double 7 Festival	12 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Diwali
15 <sup>th</sup> - 17 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year)	30 <sup>th</sup> Nov	St Andrews Day

The Forum has been collating a Cultural Events Calendar since it began in early 2022. This has been a hugely impactful quick win to improve awareness and visibility of different cultures and promote inclusivity and deeper understanding.

The Forum has ambitions to use the calendar and information cards to share with schools, create educational or artistic videos and regularly promote and raise awareness of the different cultural celebrations being marked in the area.





# Development and Future

- The informal nature of the group has worked well, with the Borough Council providing supporting structure to ensure the group has access to the resources needed to achieve its aims. However, this has in turn contributed to a challenge encouraging independence from this support.
- The Forum is hoping to link to similar established Multicultural Forums in surrounding areas, to encourage mentorship and share experience.
- The group aspires to continue to raise its profile and visibility in Andover, as well as continuing to encourage new membership in creative ways.
- Finally, the Forum are creating a schedule of events to promote and celebrate diversity throughout 2023 in Andover. As well as working to establish long term sustainability for the Forum to continue to determine its own direction.

