



MEP NEWSLETTER: ISSUE 11 - JULY 2025

Welcome to the MEP newsletter – a place for everyone to share news and information

DATES FOR SUMMER 2025

As usual this summer MEP will be taking a break from normal lessons, while Exeter Street Hall is closed. The last session of teaching and sewing will be on Monday 28th July. MEP will then be closed for four weeks, and will reopen on Monday 1st September.

As in previous years, we are organising events for students and volunteers during the summer break. Here's what we have planned so far:

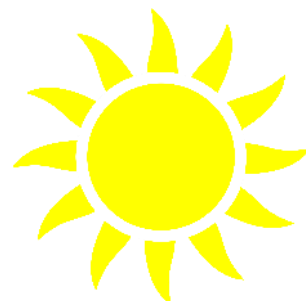
Monday 4th August: Picnic in Preston Park

Wednesday 13th August: Visit to a beautiful community garden run by Hearts and Flowers, in Stanmer Park (numbers are limited for this trip)

Monday 18th August: Open day at the MEP Community Garden

Tuesday 9th September: Music and listening event with Music 4 Connection (limited places available)

See separate flyer with more information on these different dates. If you would like to come to any of these events, please ask your teacher for more details.



An Update on Teaching this Term



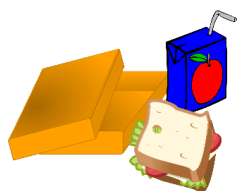
It has been another busy term of English teaching, which is of course our main activity. We have a constant flow of new applicants – sometimes self-referrals or from family members. Others are referred by organisations working with the migrant and refugee community in Brighton. We take students who are beginners or elementary in learning English.



New applicants first come for an informal visit and to see how we work. They do a small test with our teaching co-ordinator to check their level of English. We try to match them with a teacher and a small group. This term we have taken in new students from Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Iran, Syria and Vietnam. Some students, with our support, are able to move on in a few months to attend formal classes in colleges in Brighton.

This term we have also welcomed some wonderful new volunteers. We are always interested to hear from potential volunteers, especially if they have experience of teaching English to beginners, and supporting refugees. We expect that the new referrals will continue, so that by September when the new term starts we will be able to offer English lessons to even more students.

Join us for this year's MEP Big Picnic!!



All students and volunteers are invited to the MEP Big Picnic.

When?: Monday 4th August from 12.30

Where?: Preston Park, near the Rotunda Café.

MEP will buy everyone a drink, ice cream or cake from the cafe, but please bring your own food and drink as well.



Fun Cookery Class at the Community Kitchen

In May a group of 15 from MEP were invited to the Community Kitchen in Central Brighton for a cooking morning. Access to good healthy food is not easy on a low income, and is especially difficult for asylum seekers in the hotel. For this reason, the course was very welcome.

It was a great success. Everyone relaxed, chatted and laughed as they cooked in pairs. It doesn't matter what level of English people have, we can all communicate over food.

Thank you to Chef Kanthi and the wonderful, kind, supportive team at the Community Kitchen. Anne (teacher)



Here are some comments from the group :

-I liked how we used fresh ingredients; the recipe was simple enough for everyone to follow along. The instructor was also clear and made sure no one was left behind.

-The volunteers at the centre were very kind and very eager to help all the time.

-The best thing was when we sat down to eat together: the food was very delicious.

-It was fun because it was a session among friends and people from different cultures.

-I liked everything because it was a very organised class with a delicious menu and also the way the Chef delivered the cooking session...Very chill with no pressure, Yummee!

Guest Cooks at Exeter Street Hall

We have also been lucky this term to have meals cooked for us by some of our students who are learning English. They were proud to share their traditional recipes with us, encouraged by their teacher Sandy.



In February Hakan and Ozan cooked a delicious Turkish meal, including lentil soup, chick peas and rice.



In April Duong, Mae and her daughter Hannah prepared a tasty Vietnamese meal.



Thank You to these students and also to the regular cooking team who supported them with the cooking.

Big Changes at the MEP Community Garden!



It has been busy at the MEP Community Garden this year! Thanks to funding from The National Lottery, Asda, Brighton and Hove Allotment Federation and Brighton Council, the garden volunteers have been able to make some good changes. Will and Katey have been amazing and vital volunteers; they have built new raised beds,



seating and planters to make the garden an even better space for MEP students and volunteers to visit. This project involved a lot of work bringing the various materials to the plot. Susan made some cushions for the new seating, by re-using the old cushions and altering them to fit!



Kirat, Nefeissa and Will have also been working hard planting vegetables and flowers for the year. We have already harvested strawberries and peas, and the garden is full of beans and courgettes, tomatoes, cucumbers and more. They are all growing well, although the dry weather means we have to water often. We also have some new fruit trees that MEP students asked for: figs, cherry, pear and more. The grapevine is also starting to grow, and we hope it will provide us with fruits, grapes and vine leaves in the future!



If you would like to visit the garden or suggest what you would like us to grow at the community garden, please speak with Kirat at Exeter Street Hall on a Monday. She can share the next visit days.

We also have **two summer socials** coming up for people to enjoy the changes, visit the garden for the first time, and share snacks and simple food: **Saturday 5th July** and **Monday 18th August**.

We hope you can come to the MEP Community Garden soon. It is a great place to learn gardening or just feel peaceful and calm in nature.





Our Safeguarding Policy, by Maria

Safeguarding means protecting individuals, like the vulnerable adults who are our students at MEP, from harm, abuse or neglect. It's about ensuring that their health, wellbeing, and human rights are upheld. Having a safeguarding policy means that everyone in our community group will know what to do if they have concerns about the wellbeing of one of the students. MEP's safeguarding policy has been updated and is available if you would like to refer to it (see MEP website for more details). However, it might be useful to just summarise the main points for all volunteers.

The procedure for emergencies like a fire in the kitchen, or someone collapsing, is of course dealt with by just calling the emergency services. However, if the situation is not an emergency, then the procedure involves voicing those concerns to one of the group of MEP volunteers who have agreed to perform this role (names to be confirmed shortly). You and this person then fill in a form which records the concern and proposed course of action. You would then usually consult with the student in question before taking any action. The action and the result of the action are then recorded on the form.



Sewing Group News

Once again we had a very busy term in Sewing Group. Our students included Sherin, Rabab, Halima, Amal, Silvana and Sharifa. We also welcomed two new teachers,

Katie and Ursula, joining our existing teachers Sarah, Barbara, Charlotte and Susan.

Our students have progressed this term to more advanced garments, including a lined jacket (Rabab), and a complicated pair of wrap-around trousers (Sherin).

We don't just make clothes. Silvana recently moved house and was able to make several items for



her new flat, including a draft excluder, and a bedspread, and she also lengthened some curtains.

For the first time we have been able to make good use of our overlocker – an advanced kind of sewing machine, great for giving garments a professional finish. We were given it a while ago, but had a series of problems with it until Katie took it home with her and

managed to fix the problems.

Apart from these projects, we also found time to help other students by altering clothes, doing repairs, and shortening curtains – always happy to help, if we have time.

If you are interested to join the Sewing Group, please let us know. We have a waiting list, but we expect to have room for one or two new students next term.



We hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter. If you have ideas for future editions, or would like to write something, please contact Susan, at the Sewing Group.

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