



**Local Government Association**

# local authority engagement with faith groups and inter faith organisations

survey of England and Wales 2008

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## Background and Policy Context

In recent years, a number of factors have contributed to religion and belief issues becoming much more prominent in the public agenda.

- greater recognition of the positive contribution which faith groups make – singly and together - to their local areas;
- inclusion in the Equality Act of 'religion and belief' as a strand and its prioritising of this alongside 'race' in the 'good relations' duty;
- greater awareness of the importance of religious identity to many people in Britain;
- increased recognition of importance of need to strengthen community cohesion;
- concern to prevent incidents of violent extremism (including those claiming a religious basis for the actions involved)
- requirement to consult in a variety of contexts with all groups in the community;

In 2002, the LGA worked with the Inter Faith Network (IFN), the Inner Cities Religious Council from the then Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions and the Active Community Unit in the Home Office to produce *Faith and Community*.

This document and the materials on engagement with faith groups in *Guidance on Community Cohesion* (2002), the 2003 IFN survey with LGA assistance, *Local Inter Faith Activity in the UK: A Survey, Partnership for the Common Good: Inter Faith Structures and Local Government* (IFN in association with LGA, Home Office and ODPM); and *Community Cohesion: An Action Guide* (2004) all highlighted the significance for local authorities of engaging well with faith groups and inter faith organisations as part of developing strong local communities. This was also underlined in the 2007 final report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *Our Shared Future*.

In July 2008 the Department for Communities and Local Government published *Face to Face and Side by Side: A Framework for Partnership in our Multi Faith Society*, developed as part of Government's overall response to the recommendations of the Commission. This Framework contains extensive material on local authorities and this area of work, drawing on the submissions made by local authorities themselves to the wide public consultation process which informed the production of this document<sup>1</sup>.

Local authorities do recognise the importance of working well with faith communities, consulting and engaging with them as appropriate in the context of policy development and service delivery. However, recently the LGA has become aware that local authorities felt that they needed more information about how other authorities are working on this important but complex area. While a number of research projects are under way looking at the area of 'faith and social action' and engagement with faith groups, the LGA was aware of a particular gap in the area of research looking at 'cross faith' engagement by local authorities and the present survey therefore has a weighting towards this.

The LGA concluded that it would be helpful to carry out, in partnership with IFN and with the support of Communities and Local Government, an on-line survey looking at how local authorities are working with faith groups and inter faith organisations in their area and at what sort of additional guidance they think might be helpful for this work. The survey also prompted respondents to highlight examples of good practice and to flag up particular challenges and

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/facetofaceframework>

opportunities. While the questions were not the same as those put to local authorities in the 2003 IFN survey, there was enough similarity to allow a snapshot of change on some key issues across the period.

It is important to note that this questionnaire and case study analysis was conducted by the LGA to gather information from the perspective of local authorities. It does not seek to give a broad picture of the work of local inter faith bodies. *Inter Faith Organisations in the UK: A Directory*, published by IFN gives detailed breakdowns of the work of and contact details for each of the regional and local inter faith bodies across the UK, including indicating where these are serviced by, or working with, local authorities and LSPs.<sup>2</sup>

It is also important to bear in mind that, while there is some overlap between the agenda of faith groups and inter faith organisations on the one hand and of local authorities on the other, both have separate independent agendas of their own as well. For example, while inter faith activity in contributing to community cohesion can play some part in addressing the agenda of preventing violent extremism this is not in itself a goal of inter faith activity which has its own dynamics in terms of developing mutual understanding and cooperation between different faith communities.

We hope that this report will help local authorities – and other agencies working in partnership with them - in their vital work of engaging positively and effectively with faith groups and inter faith organisations in their areas. The LGA is also currently working with IDeA and CLG as well as IFN, the Faith Based Regeneration Network and the Community Development Foundation, and a number of other faith based and other agencies to help build the capacity of local government and their partners to engage more effectively with faith groups, both individually and through multi faith and inter faith structures. This may include developing refreshed guidance on a number of areas of activity covered in the survey.

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<sup>2</sup> Inter Faith Organisations in the UK: A Directory, Inter Faith Network for the UK, 2007

## Executive Summary

This research sought to investigate how local authorities are engaging with local inter faith and faith organisations through funding, consulting and involvement. Additionally it looked at training and guidance, mapping of faith activity and challenges in working in this area. A questionnaire was sent to 410 authorities in England and Wales. 30% of authorities responded and were from a representative spread of authority type and region.

Key messages from the research:

### Inter faith organisations and initiatives

- 64% of respondents were aware of a main local inter faith organisation (LIFO) in their area, which compares to 38% in the 2003 survey<sup>3</sup>.
- 47% of respondents reported being aware of other inter faith initiatives in their local area. These were mostly multi-faith dialogue groups
- Authorities were more likely to have a faith representative on their LSP (55% respondents) than have a separate faith sub-group (12% of respondents). Analysis of area diversity revealed that diversity was not a predictive factor in whether an LSP had a sub group or faith representative.

### Involvement with inter faith organisations and initiatives

- Just over half (55%) of authorities reported being involved in some way in setting up the LIFO and most (83%) had become involved subsequent to it being set up.
- Most authorities (73%) had not used external bodies or consultants to develop or support the LIFO in their area, but of those that had, the majority (63%) cited the known expertise of the external bodies/consultants as the reason for involving them.
- Respondents were asked how well they thought the LIFO in their area reflected the general pattern of faith in their local area. 77% of authorities responded "very well" or "well". Excluding the "don't know responses" this figures rises to 91%, which compares to 85% in 2003.
- Respondents were then asked about the types of activity the main LIFO carried out. LIFOs were reported to carry out a number of activities, with the top 5 being
  - "Encouraging/ arranging dialogue and encounter between members of different faiths";
  - "Holding meetings and events on religious or social issues";
  - "Building good community relations and cohesion";
  - "Awareness raising about faiths";
  - "Disseminating information to faith and inter faith initiatives via a newsletter, website, or electronic circulars".
- Respondents were asked to rate how effective the work of their local LIFOs and other faith groups and faith based organisations was in helping to support/deliver their authority's overall objectives of cohesion/creating a sense of belonging; empowerment; active citizenship; and preventing violent extremism. A number of respondents (ranging between 14% and 44%) were unable to answer the questions, but those that did were generally positive.

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<sup>3</sup> Local Inter Faith Activity in the UK, A survey, Inter Faith Network for the UK, October 2003

- Excluding “don’t know” responses 45% of County and single tier authorities reported using their SACRE only for its statutory role in relation to Religious Education however, approximately a third did use it to consult on other educational or youth related matters.

#### Consultation with inter faith and faith groups

- The majority (76%) of those authorities that have a LIFO did consult with it on local policy matters. Of the 18 authorities that have a LIFO but don’t consult with it, 55% were not able to give a reason why, but of those that did give a reason, most cited using different mechanisms to consult with faith communities.
- Respondents who did consult the LIFO in their area on local policy matters were then asked about the sorts of issues they consulted on. Over half consulted with them on “Cohesion/ sense of belonging”; “Equalities”; and “Priorities for LAAs”.
- Over half of respondents reported regular, direct bilateral consultation with Christian and/or Muslim groups. Almost half (47%) of respondents consulted with 2 or more individual faith groups.
- Around a quarter (26%) of respondents reported consulting with non-religious belief groups, such as Humanists.

#### Funding

- Of those 28 authorities (38% of respondents) that did make grants to the LIFO in their area, the purpose for the grants varied with 64% citing core work of the inter faith organisation, 46% citing specific projects; 43% citing particular events; 18% citing educational work and 21% citing other purposes such as website development and capacity building work through the community and voluntary sector. No authorities cited grants for the purpose of diversity training.
- Almost a quarter (23%) of authorities cited funding inter faith work from corporate budgets.
- 35% of authorities were currently funding or planning to fund the main LIFO in their local area in the coming financial year (2008/09), including through the LAA.
- The majority (75%) of respondent authorities did not pay the LIFO through a contract to deliver services. Of those that did (8%), this was for services including diversity training, work with young people, preventing violent extremism, and community development work.

#### Overall engagement and responsibility for issues

- Just over half (51%) of authorities reported having an officer(s) with formal responsibility for faith issues and inter faith issues, and of these most were found in the corporate team.
- Authorities that did report having an officer(s) with formal responsibility for faith issues were significantly more engaged with local inter faith activity (in terms of funding, being involved and consulting). It did not make a difference where the officer sat within the organisation
- Respondents were then asked if there was a councillor with lead responsibility for inter faith and faith issues in their authority. 34% of respondents indicated that there was.
- Authorities that did reporting having a councillor with formal responsibility for faith issues were also significantly more engaged with local inter faith activity (in terms of funding, being involved and consulting).
- In addition, authorities were significantly more likely to have a councillor with formal responsibility for faith issues if they had an officer (s) with formal responsibility for these issues.



### Training, guidance and support

- Just over a third of authorities (33%) reported providing specific training for staff and/or members on working with faith groups and local inter faith structures. Of those that did offer training, a large majority offered general religious literacy training and the majority aimed this at all staff.
- Training was from a spread of internal and external sources. In addition to those religious literacy training packages listed, authorities also mentioned general multi-cultural awareness training materials
- Around a quarter (24%) of respondents reported using guidance and support materials.
- A large majority (87%) of authorities commented that refreshed or additional written guidance or support would be useful, the most popular topic areas being:
  - "Working in partnership with inter faith bodies to increase cohesion and integration";
  - "Working with faith groups"; and
  - "Guidance for local inter faith organisations on working with local authorities".

### Mapping

- Almost a quarter (24%) of authorities had some kind of directory of places of worship, either web based and/or printed.
- Almost a quarter (24%) of authorities had some kind of directory of faith groups and faith based organisations either web based and/or printed.
- Directories tended to be produced by local authorities

### Auditing opportunities for interaction

- The majority (58%) of respondent authorities said they had no current plans to do so audit the opportunities for interaction, including faith interaction, in their local areas.

### Challenges

- Challenges fell into three major themes:
  - Capacity and resource: many authorities commented on a lack of funding to be able to resource inter faith work. Respondents cited capacity issues in their authorities, but also recognised capacity issues in the faith and inter faith groups in their area. Also cited was an issue of experience and expertise, in terms of knowing how to set up and run an inter faith organisation, or how to interact with faith groups.
  - Local population: with regard to the local population, many authorities commented that aside from Christianity, whilst their population included people from many faiths, major places of worship were outside the borough boundaries, thus making engagement more difficult. Other areas found it difficult finding out more about their local populations, or thought their areas to be predominantly Christian. Authorities that had tried to set up or to help set up inter faith organisations had sometimes encountered problems in engaging interest or involving particular faith groups and individuals. A number of authorities commented that awareness raising work was needed.
  - Inter faith organisations: Many rural areas cited the dispersed nature of their population as a challenge in bringing people together. Logistically it was cited to be difficult to get people together in one place. One authority also cited a challenge in trying to pin down the remit and vision of their inter faith organisation

to encourage meaningful work. Finally, there was also a large issue around ensuring representativeness, particularly where populations were predominantly Christian.

#### Reflections on good practice

The questionnaire gave room for wider comment at a number of points. As well as 'challenges' respondents highlighted examples of what they saw as ongoing good practice and a number of these have been developed into the case studies at the end of this survey.

## Background

This survey was developed by the Local Government Association (LGA) in partnership with the Inter Faith Network for the UK, with the support of the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). The questionnaire was sent to 410 authorities in England and Wales in June 2008. 30% of authorities responded, and were from a representative spread of authority type and region.

**Table 1 Response rate by type of council/authority**

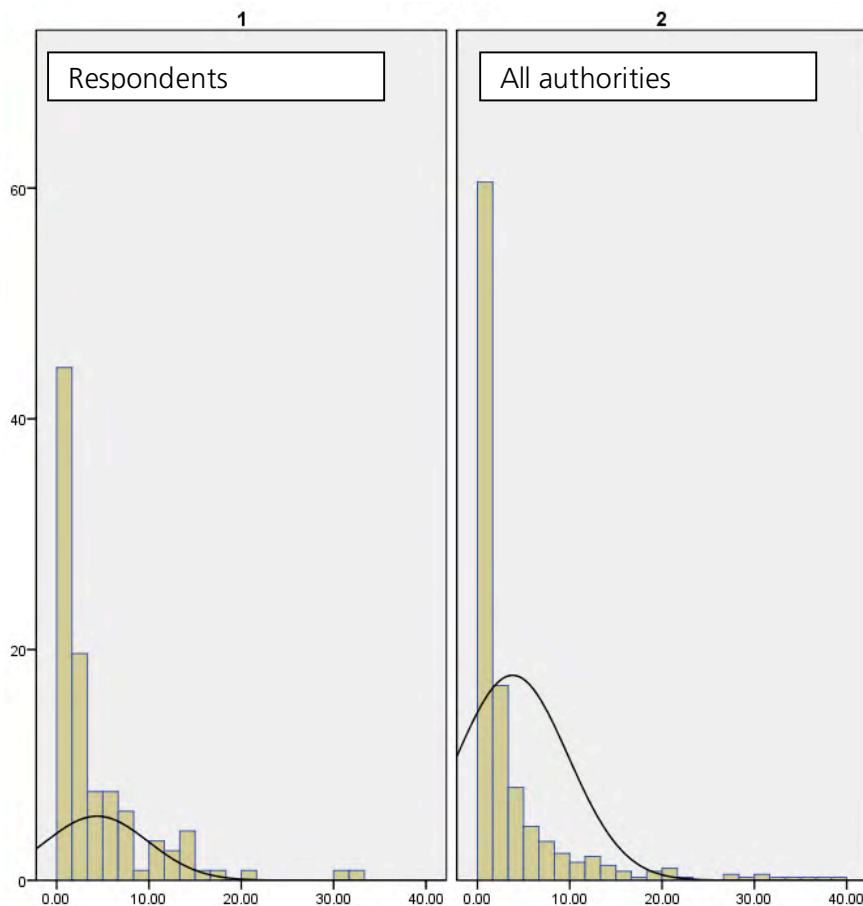
	Respondents	Total authorities	Response rate (%)
County	14	34	41
District	68	238	29
London Borough	10	33	30
Met District	14	36	39
Unitary Authority	12	47	23
Welsh Authority	5	22	23
<b>Total</b>	123	410	30

**Table 2 Response rate by region**

	Respondents	Total authorities	Response rate (%)
East of England	17	54	31
East Midlands	16	45	36
Greater London	10	33	30
North East	7	25	28
North West	15	46	33
South East	24	74	32
South West	13	51	25
West Midlands	11	38	29
Yorkshire and Humber	5	22	23
Wales	5	22	23
<b>Total</b>	123	410	30

### Response rate by religious diversity

The graphs below illustrate that the sample was slightly biased towards those authorities with a more diverse religious population (based on 2001 census). This could mean that those authorities which responded might be more likely to be engaging with multi-faith and faith groups in their area due to a higher prevalence of different faith groups.



**Figure 1 All authorities compared to the response sample**

The data presented in this report are unweighted.

Please see annex for map of religious diversity in England and Wales as recorded in the 2001 census.

### Definitions

The following definitions were given to participants at the start of the questionnaire:

- *'Local inter faith organisation'* – a body such as a forum of faiths; inter faith council or multi faith partnership involving the main faith communities in the area. May include in its aims and objectives some role in enabling faiths to relate to local public agencies
- Please note that 'inter faith organisation' is not used here to cover bodies which link different denominations within one particular community (for example Churches Together bodies or councils of mosques or of gurdwaras).
- *'Faith group' or 'faith community'* – a group or community of one religious tradition (for example a Christian or Hindu group) who define their purpose as being religious.
  - *'Faith based organisation'* – may be an organisation or an agency, such as a care home or youth helpline, which is based in one faith community and serves the community more widely.

## Inter faith organisations and initiatives

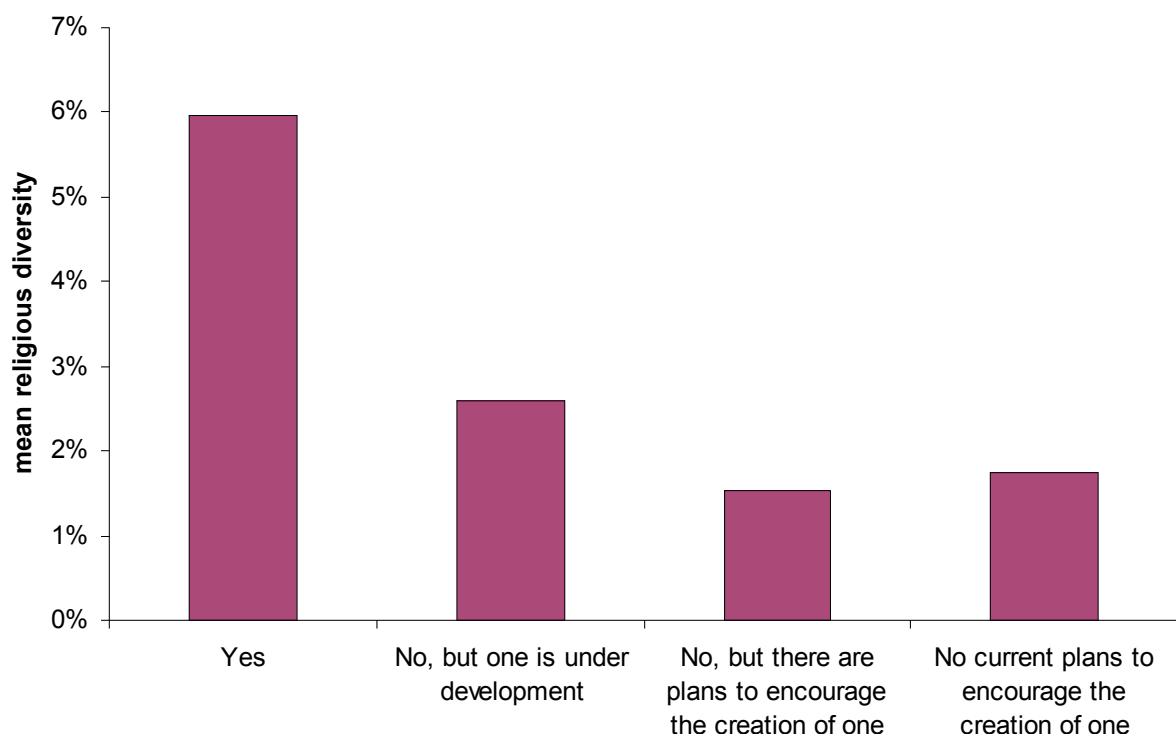
The first section of the questionnaire examined the existence of inter faith activity within local authorities' areas. Respondents were asked if there was a local inter faith organisation in their area. 64% of respondents were aware of a main local inter faith organisation (LIFO) in their area, which compares to 38% in the 2003 survey.

**Table 3 Awareness of local inter faith organisations**

Is there a local inter faith organisation (a structured body or forum linking and working with the key faiths) in your area?	% of authorities
Yes	64
No, but one is under development	4
No, but there are plans to encourage creation of one	8
No current plans to encourage creation of one	16
Don't know	8
Base	123

In general local areas with a LIFO had a significantly<sup>4</sup> more diverse local population, with on average 6% of the population being religious but not Christian, compared to 1.7% in those areas without no plans to develop one.

**Figure 2 Average per cent of the population religious but not Christian grouped by presence of a LIFO**



<sup>4</sup> A one way ANOVA ((3,112), F=4.035, p<0.05) revealed a significant difference between the diversity of areas that did have a LIFO and those that had no plans to develop one (p=0.026).

As well as a LIFO, respondents were asked whether they were aware of other local inter faith initiatives locally. In total, 47% of respondents reported being aware of other inter faith initiatives in their local area.

**Table 4 Awareness of other local inter faith initiatives**

Are you aware of any other local inter faith initiatives within your area?	% of authorities
A bilateral dialogue group such as a Christian-Jewish group or a Hindu-Sikh group	11
A tri-lateral dialogue group such as a Christian-Jewish-Muslim group	7
Another multi-faith dialogue group	17
Long term inter faith project such as a programme of reciprocal visits or shared use of premises for events by two or more faith communities group	5
A 'faith leaders' group (other than the local inter faith forum)	9
A youth inter faith forum	5
Other	12
None	19
Don't know	27
Base	139

Other responses included:

- Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education (SACRE)
- Churches Together (inter denominational Christian group)
- Youth awareness groups

LIFOs and other local inter faith initiatives were found across England and Wales and in all authority type areas.

**Table 5 Per cent of respondents who were aware of a local inter faith organisation in their local area**

Region	% of authorities
East of England	47
East Midlands	44
Greater London	100
North East	57
North West	73
South East	15
South West	63
West Midlands	8
Yorkshire and Humber	73
Wales	20

Type	% of authorities
County	86
District	53
London Borough	100
Met District	71
Unitary Authority	75
Welsh Authority	20

Respondents were asked whether there was any faith group representative on their Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) either in the form of a faith group member on the main LSP or a faith sub-group.

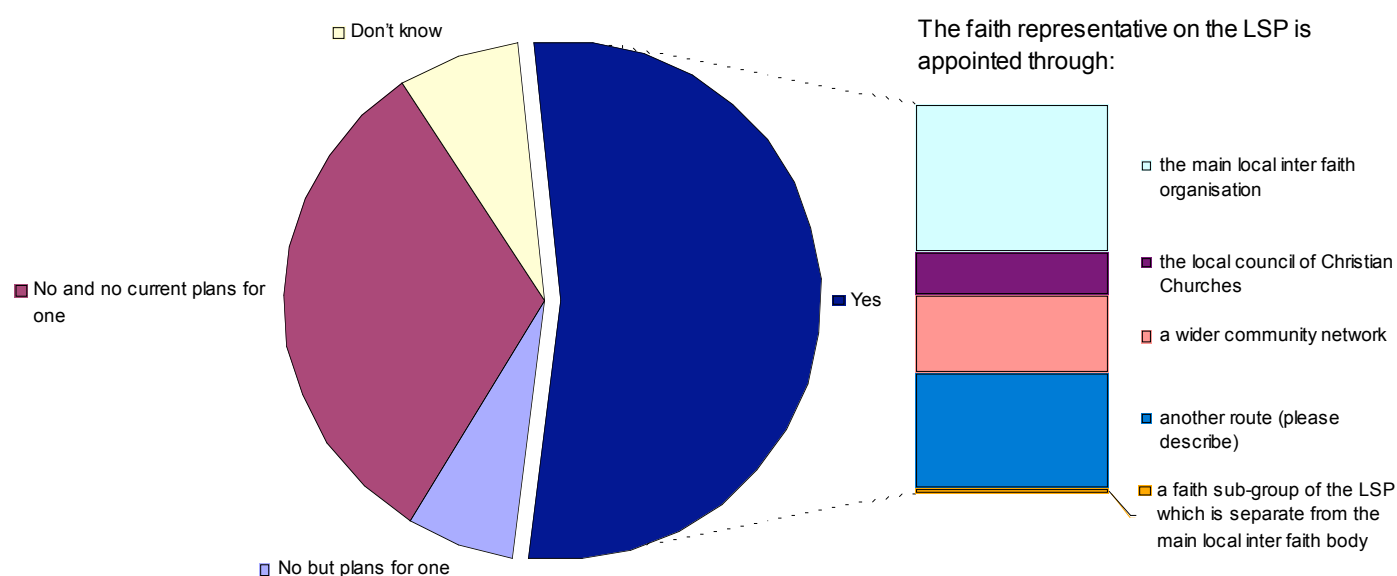
Authorities were more likely to have a faith representative on their LSP than have a separate LSP faith sub-group. Analysis of area diversity revealed that diversity was not a predictive factor<sup>5</sup> in whether an LSP had a sub group of faith representative. Figure 3 illustrates that where there was a faith representative they were most likely to be appointed through the main local inter faith organisation.

**Table 6 Presence Local Strategic Partnership faith sub-group**

Does your Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) have a faith sub-group?	% of authorities
Yes	12
No	83
Don't know	5
Base	123

**Figure 3 Is there a faith representative on the main LSP subgroup, and if there is how is that faith representative appointed?**

Is there a faith representative on your main LSP group?



Middlesbrough Council works in partnership and has developed a strong working relationship with the Middlesbrough Council of Faiths. The Council of Faiths contributes to the LSP through

<sup>5</sup> As analysed by an independent t-test and one-way ANOVA

the Community Network, which is represented on its action groups. Middlesbrough Council supports the work of the Middlesbrough Council of Faiths in a variety of ways including financially, administratively and through facilitating joint events and the use of venues. *For more information see annex.*

## Council involvement with local faith organisations

The next section looks at those authorities (64%) that had a local inter faith organisation (LIFO): Respondents were asked about their involvement with the LIFO in terms of setting up and supporting the running of it. Then about the LIFO itself in terms of how representative it is, the activities of the LIFO and how this helps the authority to meet its objectives.

### Set-up and running of LIFOS

Just over half (55%) of authorities reported being involved in some way in setting up the LIFO and as figure 4 illustrates, most (83%) had become involved subsequent to it being set up. It is interesting to note that those authorities that had not been involved in the set-up and running of the LIFO might be less likely to be aware of the existence of a LIFO than those who had been involved.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea set up The Forum of Faiths in Kensington and Chelsea in the wake of the 9-11 terrorist attacks in New York. Involving the police, the initial purpose was to garner support between and from different faith groups to prevent a backlash on Muslims in the area. *For more information see annex.*

**Table 7 Local authority involvement in setting up the main LIFO**

Was your local authority involved in setting up the main local inter faith organisation?

	% of authorities
Yes, offered staff help to scope project prior to set up	32
Yes, arranged early meetings to discuss the organisation	27
Yes, visited or had preliminary conversations with the main faith communities in your area	29
Yes, offered informal servicing in the early stages	23
Other	16
No	23
Don't know	21
Base	77

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Other types of involvement included:

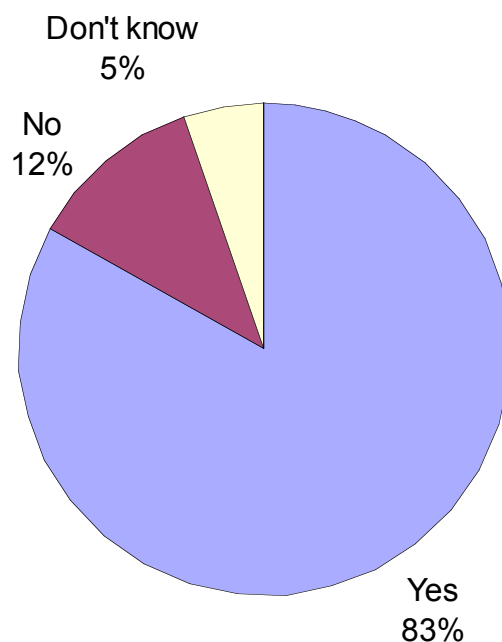
- Funding
- Management support
- Promotion and mailings

Warwick District Council had a strong role in setting up Warwick Faiths Forum. As part of the Local Strategic Partnership, Warwick DC has had a key interest in ensuring there are community interest groups. Through funding of around £5,000 and other support the council helped to set up this group in 2006. *For more information see annex.*



**Figure 4 Involvement in the LIFO subsequent to set up**

**Has your authority become involved with the main local inter faith organisation subsequent to that being set up?**



Almost a half (48%) of respondents reported being involved in the running of the LIFO.

**Table 8 Local authority involvement in the running of the main LIFO**

Is your authority involved directly in the running (or do you support the administration) of the main local inter faith organisation in your area?

	% of authorities
Yes through organising meetings	21
Yes through minute taking	13
Yes through providing venues	19
Yes, other	35
No	47
Don't know	4
Base	77

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Other responses included:

- Funding
- Offering employee resource and attending meetings
- Managerial support
- Website support

Wycombe District Council has provided funding for the production of "Wycombe Sharing of Faith's" website. The site raises awareness of the different faith groups and inter faith activities in the area. *For more information see annex.*

Respondents were asked whether they had used external bodies or consultants to develop or support the local inter faith organisation in their area. Most authorities (73%) had not used external bodies or consultants, but of those that had, the majority (63%) cited their known expertise of the external bodies/consultants as the reason for involving them.

**Table 9 Use of external bodies/consultants to develop or support LIFO**

Did you/do you use external bodies or consultants to develop or support your local inter faith organisation?

	% of authorities
Yes for development start up work	8
Yes for mapping of faith groups	8
Yes for support of ongoing tasks	10
No	73
Don't know	10
Base	77

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

**Table 10 Reason for use of external consultants/bodies**

Why did you choose to use external bodies or consultants?

	% of authorities
Lack of in-house capacity	25
Lack of in-house experience	6
Known expertise of external bodies or consultants	63
Other	31
Base	16

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

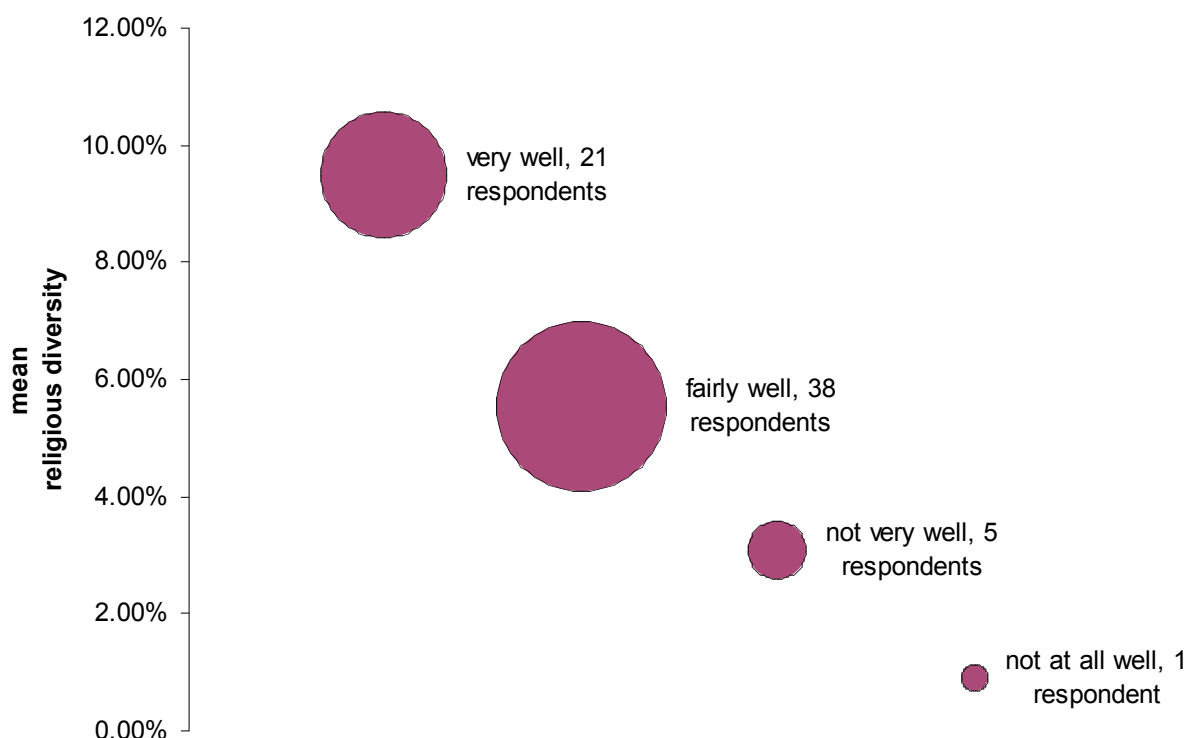
Other responses included:

- Partnership links with the local authority

### Representativeness

Respondents were asked how well they thought the LIFO in their area reflected the general pattern of faith in their local area. 77% of authorities responded "very well" or "well". Excluding the "don't know responses" this figures rises to 91%, which compares to 85% in 2003. Those authorities with a more diverse population were more likely to report a good representation on the LIFO in their area. Some authorities commented that it was difficult to reflect the local population where there was little diversity.

**Figure 5 Graph illustrating how well the LIFO reflects the general pattern of faith in the local area compared to the religious diversity of the area**



The Forum of Faiths in Kensington and Chelsea has found it a challenge to get engagement from women and young people from different faith groups and is tackling this through a number of activities over the next 18 months. *For more information see annex.*

#### Activity of LIFOS

Wycombe Sharing of Faiths run a number of activities including:

- the annual Faiths Fair, a community event in High Wycombe to celebrate diversity and unity, build awareness in the wider community of how faith is expressed in Wycombe, and build bridges between faith communities
- A separate inter-community rather than just interfaith project, "Dine at Mine", as featured in the national press <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/meet-the-dinner-party-antiterror-squad-812183.html>, that creates opportunities for people to meet others from different backgrounds who live locally.
- A local peace and friendship walk – a walk through Wycombe town centre that culminates in a bring-and-share picnic. This initiative is community-led and the Council has supported the walk through publicity and promotion.

*For more information see annex.*

Respondents were then asked about the types of activity the main LIFO carried out. LIFOs were reported to carry out a number of activities, with the top 5 being "Encouraging/ arranging dialogue and encounter between members of different faiths"; "Holding meetings and events on religious or social issues"; "Building good community relations and cohesion"; "Awareness raising about faiths"; "Disseminating information to faith and inter faith initiatives via a newsletter, website, or electronic circulars".

Aside from their lobbying role, the Warwick Faiths Forum also hold various multi-faith events, including a faith trail that toured the religious venues of the town. They often have an exhibition stand at various events to promote multi-faith activity and understanding. In particular they display materials at the police conference and have a positive relationship with the police force around religious hate crime. For *more information* see *annex*.

**Table 11 Activities of main LIFO**

To your knowledge, what types of activity does your main local inter faith organisation carry out?

	% of authorities
Encouraging/arranging dialogue and encounter between members of different faiths	86
Holding meetings and events on religious or social issues	82
Building good community relations and cohesion	79
Awareness raising about faiths	77
Disseminating information to faith and inter faith initiatives via a newsletter, website, or electronic circulars	64
Assisting on multi faith civic events or ceremonies	55
Responding to tensions	52
Social/leisure events such as shared meals or food fairs	42
Educational events and exhibitions	40
Making statements at times of crisis	35
Working with the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) on religious education issues and support for inter faith learning in local schools	35
Inter faith work involving young people – such as organising a youth inter faith forum	32
Awareness raising with non-religiously based communities	31
Work/dialogue with non-religious based communities	29
Arranging an annual 'multi faith pilgrimage' or walk around different faith venues in the area	19
Running 'faith trails' or visits programmes to local places of worship	19
Sending speakers to schools	18
Women's meetings	12
Equalities work	10
Environmental/regeneration projects	9
Inter faith sporting events (e.g. inter faith football)	6
Diversity training	5
Don't know	6
Base	77

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

The Forum of Faiths in Kensington and Chelsea have the following proposed activities for the year ahead:

- Annual lectures including guest speakers and a panel of faith representatives on topics including “Faith and Culture”
- Quarterly meetings with guest speakers on young Muslims in Kensington and Chelsea; how to live with a difference; exploring multifaith chaplaincy and homelessness in Kensington and Chelsea.
- A multi-faith summer party, including displays, food and music
- Exploration of faith festivals including Eid

*For more information see annex*

Respondents were asked to rate how effective the work of their local LIFOs and other faith groups and faith based organisations was in helping to support/deliver their authority’s overall objectives

of cohesion/creating a sense of belonging; empowerment; active citizenship; and preventing violent extremism. A number of respondents (ranging between 14% and 44% for the following 8 questions) were unable to answer the questions, but those that did were generally positive. Respondents who selected the “don’t know” option were more likely to indicate a need for guidance on “how to evaluate the effectiveness of particular projects or programmes of work designed to increase good inter faith relations” in the subsequent question on “areas that authorities might find it useful to have refreshed or additional written guidance or support” (Table 30).

Windsor and Maidenhead Community Forum has had a positive influence on community relationships by holding regular multifaith get togethers and youth sporting tournaments. These events bring groups from different communities together and help to promote understanding and positive affirmation of diversity in the area. The sporting tournaments include football and netball and are largely aimed at youth in the area. In addition to regular evening meetings, the forum runs an annual multi-faith day at the town hall where faith groups and other organizations, including the community safety team from the council, have exhibition stands and there is a chance to share experiences and gain understanding. *For more information see annex.*

**Table 12 Extent to which the main LIFO helps authorities to deliver objectives**

How well do you think the work of your local inter faith organisation helps to support/deliver your authority’s overall objectives in the following areas?	Cohesion/ sense of belonging	Empowerment	Active citizenship	Preventing violent extremism
Very well	35	18	23	14
Fairly well	56	60	55	70
Not very well	6	16	18	12
Not at all well	3	5	4	5
Base	63	55	56	43

**Table 13 Extent to which other faith based organisations and faith groups help authorities to deliver objectives**

How well do you think the work of other faith groups or faith based organisations help to support/deliver your authority's overall objectives in the following areas?	Cohesion/ sense of belonging	Empowerment	Active citizenship	Preventing violent extremism
Very well	24	19	22	24
Fairly well	63	62	61	56
Not very well	12	17	15	18
Not at all well	0	2	2	3
Base	49	47	46	34

Warwick District Council are working with the Warwick Faiths Forum to ensure individuals from faith communities have a voice, as part of the council's local democracy stream of work. *For more information see annex.*

Each local authority area has a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) which has a statutory role to advise on all aspects of its provision for Religious Education (RE) in its schools. Respondents were asked to indicate how they used their SACRE. Excluding "don't know" responses 45% of County and single tier authorities reported using their SACRE only for its statutory role in relation to Religious Education, however approximately a third did use it to consult on other educational or youth related matters.

**Table 14 Local authority use of SACRE**

Each local authority area has a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) which has a statutory role to advise on all aspects of its provision for religious education (RE) in its schools. Does your local authority use its SACRE:

	% of authorities
for its statutory role in relation to RE	75
to consult on other educational or youth related matters	35
for wider consultation	18
Don't know	24
Base	55

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Wider consultation included:

- On matters of sensitivity, for example wearing veils in schools
- Community cohesion issues
- Preventing Violent Extremism
- For advice on things such as resource booklets

## Involving and consulting

The next section looks at how authorities are involving and consulting with inter faith organisations, faith groups and non-religious belief groups.

Respondents were firstly asked about multi faith bodies. The majority (76%) of those authorities that have a LIFO did consult with it on local policy matters. Of the 18 authorities that have a LIFO but don't consult with it, 55% were not able to give a reason why, but of those that did give a reason, most cited using different mechanisms to consult with faith communities.

**Table 15 Multi faith bodies consulted on local policy matters**

Which if any of the following multi faith bodies do you consult with on local policy matters?

	% of authorities
Main local inter faith organisation (where there is one)	51
Faith sub group of LSP	3
A 'faith leaders' group (other than the main inter faith organisation)	26
None	27
Don't know	9
Base	117

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Middlesbrough Council consults with the Council of Faiths on a wide range of issues and it is a member of the Council's Harmony Initiative Advisory Group, established as part of Middlesbrough's Council's Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder. The Council of Faiths has also been involved in the development of various strategies, including the Cultural strategy. *For more information see annex*

**Table 16 Reasons for not using LIFOs as a forum for consulting on local policy matters**

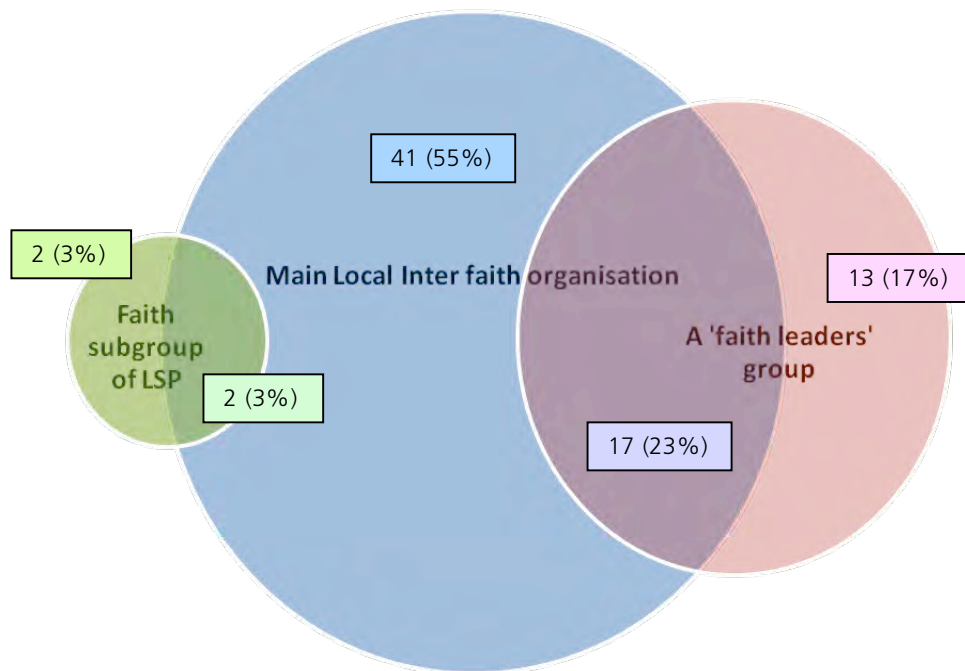
Please indicate the reason you are not using your local inter faith organisation as a forum for consulting on local policy matters:

	% of authorities
We do not see it as adequately representative of faiths in the area	17
We prefer only to consult directly with individual faith communities	0
We use a different mechanism or mechanisms to consult faith communities	33
Don't know	55
Base	18

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Figure 6 illustrates authorities who consulted with both the faith subgroup of the LSP and the main LIFO, or both the main LIFO and a 'faith leaders' group. No local authorities indicated consulting with both a faith leaders group and a faith sub group of their LSP.

**Figure 6 Graph illustrating how many authorities consulted with the faith subgroup of their LSP and/or the main LIFO and/or a 'faith leaders' group**



Respondents who did consult the LIFO in their area on local policy matters were then asked about the sorts of issues they consulted on.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea uses the faith forum as a consultation tool to explore how best to deliver services to faith communities, including their views, concerns and objections. *For more information see annex.*

Over half of respondents consulted with the LIFO in their area on "Cohesion/ sense of belonging"; "Equalities"; and "Priorities for LAAs".



**Table 17 Issues LIFO consulted upon**On what sort of issues do you consult your local inter faith organisation? **% of authorities**

Cohesion/ sense of belonging	79
Equalities	65
Priorities for LAAs	58
Preventing violent extremism	46
Active citizenship	44
Crime and Disorder	40
Planning	37
Young people	37
Social Care and health	35
Empowerment	32
Culture	30
Environment/Regeneration	26
Education	25
Sport and Leisure	23
Other	14
Tourism	5
Don't know	5
Base	57

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Other responses included:

- Safeguarding children
- Sustainable community strategy
- Hate crime

Windsor and Maidenhead Community Forum works with the council on safety issues. Community safety officers report any major racial incidents to the group, however these are rare because of the genuine understanding and appreciation faith groups have of each other. *For more information see annex.*

All respondents were then asked about consultation with other faith and belief groups. Over half of respondents reported regular, direct bilateral consultation with Christian and/or Muslim groups. Respondents were able to tick multiple boxes, but almost half (47%) consulted with 2 or more individual faith groups.

**Table 18 Individual faith groups authorities have regular, direct bilateral consultation with**Which if any individual faith groups do you have regular, direct bilateral consultation with? **% of authorities**

Christian	54
Muslim	54
Hindu	24
None	23
Sikh	20
Jewish	18
Other	13
Don't know	10
Base	117

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Other responses included:

- Buddhist (7 respondents)
- Baha'i (6)
- Quaker (2)
- Zoroastrian (2)
- Greek Orthodox (1)
- Jains (1)
- Unificationist (1)

Around a quarter (26%) of respondents reported consulting with non-religious belief groups, such as Humanists.

**Table 19 Consultation with non-religious belief groups**

Do you also consult with non-religious belief groups (such as Humanists)?	% of authorities
Yes	26
No	50
Don't know	25
Base	117

## Funding issues

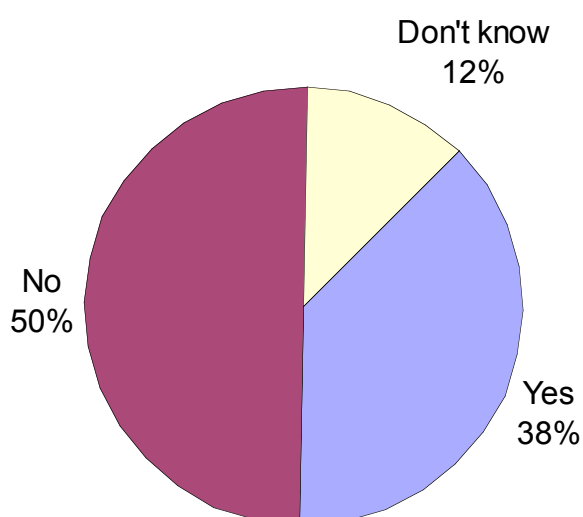
The next section looks at how authorities are funding local inter faith organisations and inter faith work in their local areas.

Wycombe District Council has supported Wycombe Sharing of Faiths through funding to produce a DVD to be distributed to local organisations that comprises short stories to illustrate what it is like for different people living in the local area. The DVD is aimed at building trust and understanding between individuals and groups in the local area. *For more information see annex.*

Figure 7 illustrates that 38% of the authorities that had a LIFO made grants to it in the past financial year (2007/08).

### Figure 7 Graph illustrating the percentage of authorities that made grants to the LIFO in 2007/8

Has your local authority made grants to the main local inter faith body in the past financial year (2007-08)?



Leicester City Council provides funding for the Leicester Council of Faiths (LCoF) by way of a 3 year agreement (currently extended to 31 March 2009). This year's Grant is around £24,300, and is used to rent a meeting room and office in the city centre for the council of faiths, and to fund the post of a part-time administrator. This funding has been available for the last 10 years and is hoped will prove to be a long-term funding arrangement to support the work of the group. Additional funding is also given for project work. *For more information see annex*

Of those 28 authorities that did make grants to the LIFO in their area, the purpose for the grants varied with 64% citing core work of the inter faith organisation, 46% citing specific projects; 43% citing particular events; 18% citing educational work and 21% citing other purposes such as website development and capacity building work through the community and voluntary sector. No authorities cited diversity training.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea have funded an 18 month post of a Faiths and Communities Development Manager to build capacity in the faith forum. The aim is to make the forum self-reliant and develop governance structures and a constitution for the forum. In addition the individual will help to build the work of the forum. *For more information see annex.*

Almost a quarter (23%) of authorities cited funding inter faith work from corporate budgets.

**Table 20 Budgets that funds deployed to support inter faith work come from**

From which budgets do funds deployed to support inter faith work generally come?

	% of authorities
Adult services	2
Children's services	3
Corporate	23
Area based grant	4
Community cohesion budget (not corporate)	15
Other	30
Don't know	37
Base	115

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Other budgets included:

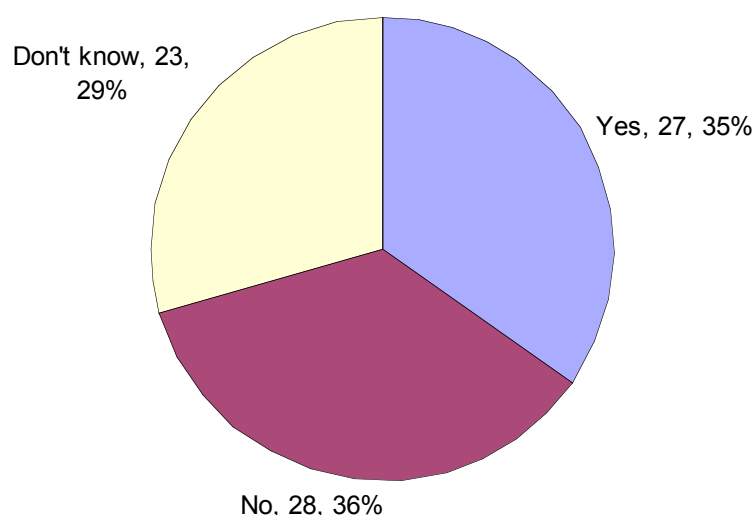
- Community development grants
- Equalities
- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
- Preventing Violent Extremism

Cambridge City Council uses money from community cohesion budgets to support a group called Society for Dialogue and Action. This is an inter faith group run by women, which provides training and sharing on the Abrahamic Faiths (Judaism, Islam and Christianity). The group has been instrumental in building relationships within the community. *For more information see annex.*

Looking to the year ahead, authorities were asked if they were currently funding or planning to fund the main LIFO in their local area in the coming financial year (2008/09), including through the LAA. Figure 8 illustrates that 35% responded yes.

**Figure 8 Graph illustrating the percentage of authorities currently funding or planning to fund the main LIFO in 2008/09**

Is your local authority currently funding or planning to fund, including through the LAA, the main local inter faith body for this financial year? 2008-09?



Since its inception Islington council has provided direct support for servicing and developing the network in addition to Islington Faith Forum's own successful fundraising endeavours. Most recently, the council has awarded the Forum £25,000 per annum for the next three years. This will assist the group to pursue their aims and objectives including:- developing and enhancing partnership working, promoting and assisting the wide range of services provided to citizens in the Islington community from within local faith-based organisations, improving local understanding of the common aims and objectives of all faith groups in providing added support services from within their many organisations and encourage greater collaboration within and between faith communities. *For more information see annex.*

Of those 27 authorities that either were currently funding or were planning to fund the main LIFO, the purpose for the grants varied with 70% citing core work of the inter faith organisation, 52% citing specific projects; 41% citing particular events; 22% citing educational work, 11% citing diversity training, and 33% citing other purposes such as community cohesion work and preventing violent extremism work.

South Gloucestershire Council has supported South Gloucestershire Faith Forum through funding of £5,000 in running a faith survey to identify the contributions that faith organisations and groups make to community life in South Gloucestershire. *For more information see annex.*

The majority (75%) of authorities did not pay the LIFO through a contract to deliver services.

**Table 21 Paying the main LIFO through a contract to deliver services**

Over the last financial year did your local authority pay the main local inter faith organisation through a contract to deliver services?

	% of authorities
Yes	8
No	75
Don't Know	16
Base	73

Of those that did use the LIFO to deliver services, there was a spread of services delivered. In addition to those listed, 2 authorities also cited community development work.

**Table 22 Services delivered by the main LIFO**

Which services does the main local inter faith organisation deliver through the contract?

	% of authorities
Diversity training	33
Education	17
Mediation work	0
Work with young people	33
Adult social care	17
Preventing violent extremism	33
Working with re-offenders	17
Other	33
Don't know	0
Base	6

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Other responses included:

- Community cohesion, community development and developing partnerships
- Community engagement and empowerment activities

## Overall engagement and responsibility for issues

The next section looks at overall engagement with inter faith work in local areas and where responsibility for faith work is held within authorities.

Leicester Council of Faiths has contact with many of the most vulnerable people in society that the local authority finds it difficult to engage with, for example asylum seekers and new arrivals. This provides a useful way of gaining information about the local population and reaching those individuals that can be difficult to reach. *For more information see annex*

Respondents were asked whether they had an officer or officers with formal responsibility for faith issues and inter faith issues. Just over half (51%) of authorities reported having an officer(s) with formal responsibility for faith issues and inter faith issues, and of these most were found in the corporate team.

**Table 23 Authorities with an officer or officers with formal responsibility for faith issues and inter faith issues**

Does your council have an officer or officers with formal responsibility for faith issues and inter faith issues?

	% of authorities
Yes within the corporate team	30
Yes within a service team	17
Yes within another team	4
No but we have outsourced this role	0
No, no one has formal responsibility	41
Don't know	8
Base	114

Analysis was then conducted to gain an overall picture of engagement of local authorities with inter faith organisations. This was done by looking at the extent to which authorities were involved with the set up and running of the LIFO in their area; consulting with inter faith groups; and funding inter faith work in their local area.

Authorities that did report having an officer(s) with formal responsibility for faith issues were significantly<sup>6</sup> more engaged with local inter faith activity (in terms of funding, being involved and consulting). It did not make a difference where the officer sat within the organisation.

Respondents were then asked if there was a councillor with lead responsibility for inter faith and faith issues in their authority. 34% of respondents indicated that there was.

**Table 24 Authorities with a councillor with lead responsibility for faith issues and inter faith issues**

Does your authority have a councillor with lead responsibility for these issues?

	% of authorities
Yes	34
No	52
Don't Know	14
Base	114

Authorities that did report having a councillor with formal responsibility for faith issues were also significantly<sup>7</sup> more engaged with local inter faith activity (in terms of funding, being involved and consulting).

In addition, authorities were significantly<sup>8</sup> more likely to have a councillor with formal responsibility for faith issues if they had an officer (s) with formal responsibility for these issues.

<sup>6</sup> An engagement index was created by compiling answers to questions about funding, being involved with and consulting local inter faith organisations. This index was then analysed using a one-way ANOVA, which revealed a significant difference in engagement index scores between those with a council officer (s) with formal responsibility and those without ( $F(3,98)=11.9$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Tukey's post hoc analysis revealed significant differences between the corporate and service team scores with the no-one scores.

<sup>7</sup> An engagement index was created by compiling answers to questions about funding, being involved with and consulting local inter faith organisations. This index was then analysed using an independent samples t-test ( $t(137)=4.23$ ,  $p<0.001$ )

<sup>8</sup> A chi square test revealed that authorities were significantly more likely to have a councillor with formal responsibility if they had an officer(s) with formal responsibility. (Pearson chi-square (1) = 13.04,  $p<0.001$ )

## Training, guidance and support

The next section looks at what training local authorities are providing for staff on working with faith groups and local inter faith structures, guidance materials and resources local authorities are using; and the areas that authorities would find it useful to have refreshed or additional written guidance or support.

Respondents were first asked whether they provide specific training for staff and/or members on working with faith groups and local inter faith structures. Just over a third of authorities (33%) reported providing specific training for staff and/or members on working with faith groups and local inter faith structures. Of those that did offer training, a large majority offered general religious literacy training and the majority aimed this at all staff.

**Table 25 Training provided for staff on working with faith groups and local inter faith structures**

What training for staff on working with faith groups and local inter faith structures do you provide?

	% of authorities
General religious literacy (for example to help staff understand religious sensitivities)	87
Working and consulting with faith groups	32
Working and consulting with inter faith structures	16
Base	37

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

**Table 26 Who general religious literacy training is aimed at**

Who is general religious literacy training aimed at?

	% of authorities
All staff	81
Frontline staff	14
Staff with a dedicated responsibility for working with this sector of the community	19
Staff who express an interest	16
Councillors	35
Other	3
Don't know	5
Base	32

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Durham County Council have been actively working in partnership with the Churches Regional Commission and the Regional Faiths Network to develop and run a pilot faiths training programme, 'Engaging with Faiths', with officers from a number of local authorities in the North East. The learning programme sought to address the key question "why does faith matter for local authorities and what can we do to build the capacity of local government to improve collaboration with faith communities?". *For more information see annex.*

Respondents who provided training were then asked what resources they used. Training was from a spread of internal and external sources. In addition to those religious literacy training packages listed, authorities also mentioned general multi cultural awareness training materials.



**Table 27 Resources used to provide general religious literacy training**

What resources do you use for this?

**% of authorities**

Literature/guidance on religious literacy prepared internally	32
Literature/guidance on religious literacy prepared externally	19
Internal trainers and training materials	46
Bought in training packages delivered by external trainers	46
Don't know	14
Base	37

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

**Table 28 Use of religious literacy training packages delivered by external trainers**

Which religious literacy training packages delivered by external trainers have you used?

**% of authorities**

Multi faith training across all the main faiths delivered by your local inter faith organisation or your regional faith forum	0
Multi faith training across all the main faiths delivered by a non-faith based consultancy body	44
Individual units on working with a particular faith community (such as Sikhs or Muslims) delivered by your local inter faith organisation or your regional faith forum	0
Individual units on working with a particular faith community (such as Sikhs or Muslims) delivered by training agencies based in the faiths in question	22
Individual units on working with a particular faith community (such as Sikhs or Muslims) delivered by secular consultancies	22
Other	22
Don't know	0
Base	9

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Respondents were then asked if they used any existing guidance and support materials on engagement by local authorities with faith and inter faith structures and issues at the local level. Around a quarter (24%) of respondents reported using guidance and support materials. The table below lists some of the guidance materials used by authorities.

**Table 29 Guidance materials used by authorities**

Which guidance materials has your authority used?	% of authorities
Faith and Community: a good practice guide for local authorities (Local Government Association, Home Office, Inner Cities Religious Council of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Inter Faith Network) 2002	63
Community Cohesion: an action guide (Local Government Association, Home Office, Audit Commission, IDeA, Commission for Racial Equality and the Inter Faith Network) 2004	78
Partnership for the Common Good: Inter Faith Structures and Local Government (Inter Faith Network in association with the Home Office, Local Government Association and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) 2003	30
The Local Inter Faith Guide: Faith Community Cooperation in Action (Inter Faith Network in association with the Inner Cities Religious Council of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) 2005	33
Tools for regeneration: working with faith communities (Faith Based Regeneration Network) 2004	30
"Priceless, Unmeasurable: Faith and Community Development in 21st Century England" (Faith Based Regeneration Network and partners)	4
Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs, IFN	11
Looking After One Another: The Safety and Security of our Faith Communities, IFN in association with the Home Office, LGA, ACPO, CFA and CPS, 2005.	4
Inter Faith Organisations in the UK: A Directory, Inter Faith Network, 2007	33
Materials provided by the regional faith forum in your Region	15
Other	26
Base	27

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Other guidance materials cited included:

- Building on Faith - Church Urban Fund and Faith Makes Communities Work - Shaftesbury Society
- Understanding Faiths published by the three Northern Churches Regional Commissions
- General Guidance on Diversity
- Faith Groups and Community Work: produced in Essex with County Council lead
- Guidance for Schools on the Duty to Promote Community Cohesion
- Internal toolkit prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership

Essex County Council have produced a guidance booklet entitled "Faith Groups and Community Work", which is aimed at faith groups and organisations considering involvement in work for the local community. This practical guide offers advice on working with statutory bodies and is useful primarily for faith groups but also for other voluntary groups moving into new areas of work and for statutory bodies in understanding about working with faith groups. The guide covers a range of information including signposts to legal information, equalities legislation, employment legislation, planning legislation, project management and health and safety guidance. In addition there is advice for faith-based groups about the preconceptions and concerns council staff and others may have when working with faith groups. *For more information see annex.*

Respondents were then asked on which areas they might find it useful to have refreshed or additional written guidance or support. A large majority (87%) of authorities commented that refreshed or additional written guidance or support would be useful, the most popular topic areas being: "Working in partnership with inter faith bodies to increase cohesion and integration";

“Working with faith groups”; and “Guidance for inter faith organisations on working with local authorities”.

**Table 30 Areas in which authorities would find it useful to have refreshed or additional written guidance and support**

In which of the following areas, if any, would you find it useful to have refreshed or additional written guidance or support?

	% of authorities
Developing new inter faith structures and helping strengthen existing inter faith structures	45
Working with local inter faith organisations	43
Working with faith groups	53
When it is appropriate to fund faith or inter faith organisations through grants	46
When it is appropriate to pay faith or inter faith organisations to deliver services and/or to support them through the route of service delivery contracts to support them through the route of service delivery contracts	37
Guidance for inter faith organisations on working with local authorities	51
Working in partnership with inter faith bodies to increase cohesion and integration	57
How to evaluate the effectiveness of particular projects or programmes of work designed to increase good inter faith relations	45
Increasing general religious literacy among staff	45
Other	3
None of these	15
Base	114

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Other guidance/support needs included:

- Specific advice for cemetery staff on different faith etiquette in burials
- Ensuring inclusion of non faith groups

Respondents who indicated a need for guidance on how to evaluate the effectiveness of particular projects or programmes of work designed to increase good inter faith relations were more likely to select the “don’t know” option in the previous questions about how well the LIFO and local faith initiatives support the local authority in delivery of their objectives of community cohesions, empowerment, active citizenship and preventing violent extremism.

## Mapping

The next section looks at how local areas are mapping faith activity in terms of directories or places of worship and directories of faith groups and faith-based organisations.

Respondents were asked whether there is a directory of places of worship in their local area. Almost a quarter (24%) of authorities had some kind of directory, either web based and/or printed.

**Table 31 Authorities that have directories of places of worship**

Is there a directory of places of worship in your local area?	% of authorities
Yes printed	15
Yes web based	17
No but plans for one	16
No current plans	29
Don't know	28
Base	114

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Directories of places of worship in local areas tended to be produced by the local authority. Other responses included local newspapers and universities.

**Table 32 Production of directories**

Please indicate who produces this directory:	% of authorities
Your authority	49
Your LSP	0
Faith Forum	9
Other agency	42
Base	33

Respondents were then asked whether there is a directory of faith groups and faith-based organisations in their local area. Almost a quarter (24%) of authorities had some kind of directory either web based and/or printed.

**Table 33 Authorities that have directories of faith groups and faith-based organisations**

Is there a directory of faith groups and faith-based organisations in your local area?	% of authorities
Yes printed	14
Yes web based	12
No but plans for one	12
No current plans	31
Don't know	33
Base	114

Note: respondents were able to tick multiple boxes so percentages do not sum to 100.

Directories of faith based groups and faith-based organisations in local areas also tended to be produced by local authorities. Other responses included the county council for respondents from district councils, and universities.

**Table 34 Production of directories**

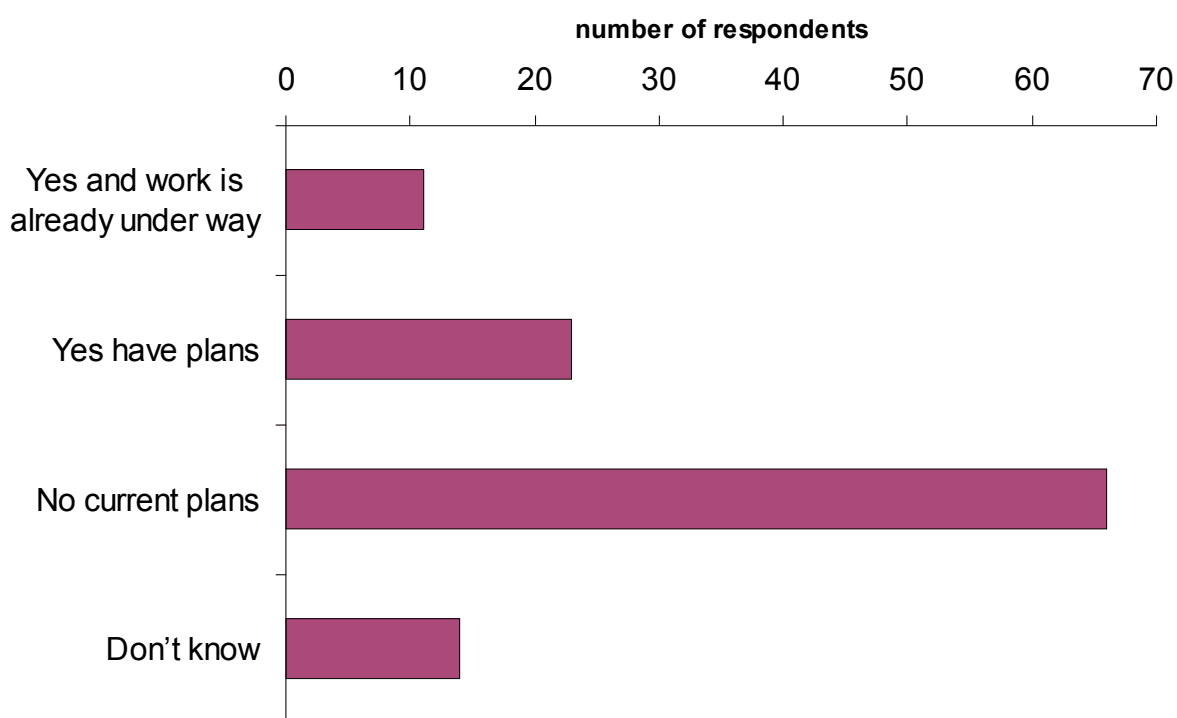
Please indicate who produces this directory:	% of authorities
Your authority	41
Your LSP	0
Faith forum	19
Other agency	41
Base	27

## Auditing opportunities for interaction

Respondents were asked about whether they intended to audit the opportunities for interaction, including faith interaction, in their local areas. Figure 9 illustrates that the majority (58%) of authorities said they had no current plans to do so.

**Figure 9 Graph illustrating intention to audit the opportunities for interaction, including faith interaction, in local areas**

**Do you currently have plans to audit the opportunities for interaction, including faith interaction, in your local area?**



South Gloucestershire Council has supported South Gloucestershire Faith Forum through funding of £5,000 in running a faith survey to identify the contributions that faith organisations and groups make to community life in South Gloucestershire. *For more information see annex.*

## Challenges

Finally, local authorities were asked to highlight any particular challenges they had been facing in working with inter faith and faith groups. Challenges fell into three major themes:

Capacity and resource: many authorities commented on a lack of funding to be able to resource inter faith work. Respondents cited capacity issues in their authorities, but also recognised capacity issues in the faith and inter faith groups in their area. Also cited was an issue of experience and expertise, in terms of knowing how to help set up or support the running of an inter faith organisation, or how to interact with faith groups.

Local population: with regard to the local population, many authorities commented that aside from Christianity, whilst their population included people from many faiths, major places of worship were outside the borough boundaries, thus making engagement more difficult. Other areas found it difficult finding out more about their local populations, or thought their areas to be predominantly Christian. Authorities that had tried to set up organisations sometimes encountered problems in engaging interest or faith groups and individuals. A number of authorities commented that awareness raising work was needed.

Inter faith organisations: Many rural areas cited the dispersed nature of their population as a challenge in bringing people together. Logistically it was cited to be difficult to get people together in one place. One authority also cited a challenge in trying to pin down the remit and vision of their inter faith organisation to encourage meaningful work. Finally, there was also a large issue around ensuring reflection in a multi faith body of all faiths, particularly where populations were predominantly Christian.

## **Conclusions**

This research about local authority engagement with faith and inter faith bodies in their areas has illuminated many positive examples of how local authorities are engaging with these.

The responses showed a wide variation in the level of engagement with inter faith and faith groups. Analysis of the diversity of respondent areas showed that in some cases low multi faith engagement can be attributed to the mono faith and monocultural nature of the area. Bilateral engagement with the Christian Churches will continue to be key in these areas, and indeed continues to be very important in more diverse areas.

The process of conducting the survey revealed that in a number of cases it was difficult to find the person most suitable for completing the questionnaire. In some authorities this was because responsibilities for faith issues are shared between a number of departments. Analysis of the job roles of those respondents who completed the survey showed faith issues to largely sit with community development or cohesion officers or equalities and diversity officers.

The case study interviews revealed the variation in the way authorities are working with local inter faith organisations and groups. Those participating in the interviews were very positive about the contributions inter faith organisations had made to the communities and to the work of the local authority. In one or two cases there was a note of scepticism about the focus on faith communities and a questioning of why a place of worship should have a particular contribution to make to consultation processes.

It is important to note that this questionnaire and case study analysis was conducted from the perspective of local authorities. The activities conducted by local inter faith organisations are likely to be wider and more diverse than those highlighted in this report<sup>9</sup>. It is fair to note that engagement with local authorities may also be wider than the questionnaire revealed due to the dispersed nature of faith issues across local authorities. The report does not explore the way local authorities are working with each other on faith issues at sub-regional and regional levels, although the case study research did give some indication of the importance of this type of

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<sup>9</sup> Inter Faith Organisations in the UK: A Directory, IFN 2007 gives detailed breakdowns of the work of and contact details for regional and local inter faith bodies across the UK.

working in some regions (See Durham County Council case study). Additionally, the report does not explore how local authorities are working directly with individual faith groups, which will account for a large proportion of faith based work in local areas.

Since completion of the survey work for this report the Department of Communities and Local Government have published *"Face-to-face and Side-by-side: A framework for partnership in our multi faith society"*. A number of the case study authorities commented that this report was driving them to explore further how they might work with the local inter faith organisation in their area and had raised awareness within their authorities' of the importance of inter faith work. It is therefore important to note the results in this report as a snapshot in a changing landscape.

## Annex

### Web addresses for online directories of worship

Arun	<a href="http://www.arun.gov.uk">www.arun.gov.uk</a> and follow links to Arun Organisations List
Bristol	<a href="http://www.uwe.ac.uk/chaplaincy/faith_communities">www.uwe.ac.uk/chaplaincy/faith_communities</a> <a href="http://www.city-visitor.com/cambridge/placesofworship.html">www.city-visitor.com/cambridge/placesofworship.html</a> ;
Cambridge	<a href="http://www.cambridgeonline.co.uk/local/society_and_culture/religion_and_spirituality/">www.cambridgeonline.co.uk/local/society_and_culture/religion_and_spirituality/</a>
Chorley	<a href="http://www.chorley.gov.uk">www.chorley.gov.uk</a>
Devon	<a href="http://www.devonline.gov.uk/community/">http://www.devonline.gov.uk/community/</a>
East Lindsey	<a href="http://www.myllocalservices.co.uk/Lincolnshire/Religious_Organisations/Lincolnshire/">http://www.myllocalservices.co.uk/Lincolnshire/Religious_Organisations/Lincolnshire/</a>
Fylde	<a href="http://www.fylde.gov.uk/GeneralR.aspx?id= SX9ADC-A781FB54">http://www.fylde.gov.uk/GeneralR.aspx?id= SX9ADC-A781FB54</a>
Islington	<a href="http://www.islington.gov.uk">www.islington.gov.uk</a>
Preston	<a href="http://prestonfaithforum.org.uk">prestonfaithforum.org.uk</a>
Reading	<a href="http://readingfaithforum.com/">http://readingfaithforum.com/</a>
Shropshire	<a href="http://www.chtogshropshire.co.uk">www.chtogshropshire.co.uk</a>
Stevenage	<a href="http://www.hertsdirect.org">www.hertsdirect.org</a>
Westminster	<a href="http://www3.westminster.gov.uk/publications/publications_detail.cfm?id=1647">http://www3.westminster.gov.uk/publications/publications_detail.cfm?id=1647</a>
Windsor and Maidenhead	<a href="http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/ed_sacre_local_places_worship.htm">http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/ed_sacre_local_places_worship.htm</a>
Wycombe	<a href="http://www.wsof.org.uk">www.wsof.org.uk</a>

Web addresses for online directories of faith groups and faith-based organisations

Arun	<a href="http://www.arun.gov.uk">www.arun.gov.uk</a> and follow links to Arun Organisations List
Cambridge	<a href="http://www.faithneteast.org.uk">www.faithneteast.org.uk</a> ; <a href="http://www.eefa.net/">www.eefa.net/</a>
Devon	<a href="http://www.devonline.gov.uk/community/">http://www.devonline.gov.uk/community/</a>
Durham	<a href="http://www.resourcescentreonline.co.uk/">http://www.resourcescentreonline.co.uk/</a>
East Lindsey	<a href="http://www.mylocalservices.co.uk/Lincolnshire/Religious_Organisations/Lincolnshire/">http://www.mylocalservices.co.uk/Lincolnshire/Religious_Organisations/Lincolnshire/</a>
Islington	<a href="http://islingtonfaithsforum.org.uk">islingtonfaithsforum.org.uk</a>
Kensington and Chelsea	<a href="http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/communityrelations">www.rbkc.gov.uk/communityrelations</a>
Preston	<a href="http://prestonfaithforum.org.uk">prestonfaithforum.org.uk</a>
Reading	<a href="http://readingfaithforum.com/">http://readingfaithforum.com/</a>
Stevenage	<a href="http://www.hertsdirect.org">www.hertsdirect.org</a>
Westminster	<a href="http://www3.westminster.gov.uk/publications/publications_detail.cfm?id=1647">http://www3.westminster.gov.uk/publications/publications_detail.cfm?id=1647</a>
Windsor and Maidenhead	<a href="http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/ed_sacre_local_places_worship.htm">http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/ed_sacre_local_places_worship.htm</a>



## Case Studies

The following 10 case studies are based on telephone interviews with local authorities. These councils were selected on the basis of their answers to the online questionnaire. Councils were selected if they had worked closely with their local inter faith organisation or if they had any been involved in any particularly interesting work around inter faith activity in their area. A selection of councils from different areas of the country and of different types was selected to ensure a range of views were explored. The interviews took around 20 minutes. The following are summaries of these interviews:

### **Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea**

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea set up the faith forum in the wake of the 9-11 terrorist attacks in New York. Involving the police, the initial purpose was to garner support between and from different faiths to prevent a backlash against Muslims in the area. It was proposed that it should be a vehicle to get people to meet, foster respect, learn about faiths and illuminate the shared goals of the faith groups. The forum includes representatives from the 8 major faiths in the area.

The council serviced the forum from its inception up to September 2008 through the community relations team, including organising meetings, taking minutes, preparing for meetings, providing premises for meetings, lectures and the annual exhibition. The forum was used to inform service delivery and as a consultation tool to explore how best to deliver services to faith communities, including their views, concerns and objections.

The council's role in the forum has recently changed as it is now funding an 18 month post of a faith and communities development manager to build capacity in the forum. The aim is to make the forum self-reliant and develop governance structures and a constitution for the forum. In addition the individual will help to build the work of the forum, including the following proposed activities for the year ahead:

- Annual lectures including guest speakers and a panel of faith representatives on the following topics: faith and culture.
- Quarterly meetings with guest speakers on young Muslims in Kensington and Chelsea; how to live with a difference; exploring multifaith chaplaincy and homelessness in Kensington and Chelsea.
- A multi-faith summer party, including displays, food and music
- Exploration of faith festivals including Eid .

The forum has recently started to produce a newsletter circulated to all members, the primary care trust, the police, council and other bodies detailing forum activities and events. There is also a strong publicity campaign to invite the public to events and raise awareness of the Forum's activities.

The forum has enabled better interaction of the council with faith communities and a better understanding about how to reach and deliver services for faith communities. The forum has also helped to raise awareness and understanding between faith groups and within the community. A focus for the forum now is how to bring faith leaders to the forefront of the work.

The forum is currently facing a challenge in how to improve dialogue with women and young people, and in particular young women. Gaining greater involvement will strengthen the work of the forum and discussions are currently taking place about how best to tackle this challenge. There is also an issue around funding once the funding for the 18 month post has run out. Fundraising strategies are being developed to secure the future of the forum.

For more information about the faith forum please visit <http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/KCPAboutUs/general/ffkc.asp> or contact Dr Abdelghafour Dahbi Skali [abdelghafour.dahbiskali@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:abdelghafour.dahbiskali@rbkc.gov.uk)

## **Warwick District Council**

Warwick District Faiths Forum provides an opportunity for faith leaders of around 24 different faith groups found in the Warwick area to get together and learn from each other, and to present a single voice for faith groups. Strongly involved in the conception and set-up of the forum, Warwick district council are keen partners in the work of the forum.

The forum's key focus is around inter faith dialogue. It aims to bring a broader understanding and provide a united voice representing faith. An example of this united voice was seen during community concern around Christmas and Diwali lights in Leamington. The forum was able to respond to negative media coverage by emphasising that this issue was creating unnecessary division. A second example of the forum's lobbying was about a lap dancing club that used Buddhist iconography. The forum argued on behalf of all faiths about the inappropriateness of the use of religious icons in this manner.

Aside from its lobbying role, the forum also hold various multi-faith events, including a faith trail that toured the religious venues of the town. It often has an exhibition stand at various events to promote multi-faith activity and understanding. In particular it displays material at the police conference and has a positive relationship with the police force around religious hate crime.

The council's role has largely been around setting up the faith forum. As part of the Local Strategic Partnership, Warwick has had a key interest in ensuring there are community interest groups. Through funding of around £5,000 and other support the council helped to set up this group in 2006. The county council have also been key in linking up the faith forum with schools in the area and feeding the work of the forum into religious education across the borough. They are now working with the forum to ensure individuals from faith communities have a voice, as part of the council's local democracy stream of work. The forum is now largely self-funding through grants and fundraising activities, including the production of a multi-faith calendar detailing all faith holidays.

There were a number of challenges in setting up the group. Some people were sceptical about the need for a faith forum, and there was concern around proselytising and how comfortable people from different faiths would feel meeting and working together. These challenges were overcome by taking the development of the group very slowly ensuring people were comfortable with how it was progressing.

There have been many successes including the aforementioned lobbying examples. There has also been improved awareness and understanding in the community through the faith trail and exhibitions.

For more information about Warwick faith forum please visit [www.wdfaiithsforum.org](http://www.wdfaiithsforum.org) and to find out more about the work at Warwick district council please contact [timhealey@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:timhealey@warwickshire.gov.uk)

### **Wycombe District Council**

Wycombe District Council has been supporting “Wycombe Sharing of Faiths” through funding, practical support and promotional activities, for a number of years.

In particular the council has provided funding for:

- the annual Faiths Fair, a community event in High Wycombe to celebrate diversity and unity, build awareness in the wider community of how faith is expressed in Wycombe, and build bridges between faith communities
- production of a DVD to be distributed to local organisations that comprises short stories to illustrate what it is like for different people living in the local area. This DVD is aimed at building trust and understanding between individuals and groups in the local area.
- Production of a website that raises awareness of the different faith groups and interfaith activities in the area.

A separate inter-community rather than just inter faith project, “Dine at Mine”, as featured in the national press <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/meet-the-dinner-party-antiterror-squad-812183.html>, creates opportunities for people to meet others from different backgrounds who live locally. A number of small dinner parties in people's homes provide a relaxed setting to share food and time with people who they may not otherwise have the chance to get to know in the course of their day-to-day lives. The parties included an all-female gathering, a get-together for over-40s and a dinner for 20-somethings. This is very much a community-led project, although the council has helped by promoting the event to increase awareness and involvement.

Other recent initiatives include a local peace and friendship walk – a walk through Wycombe town centre that culminates in a bring-and-share picnic. Again this initiative is community-led. The Council has supported the walk through publicity and promotion.

The events highlighted above have enabled sharing of experiences and better understanding between groups. The purpose behind many of the events and projects has been to bring to the fore the shared values and aims of different communities. They have also helped to combat some of the negative perceptions and press arising from events in recent years.

For more information about the work of Wycombe Sharing of Faiths please visit <http://www.wsof.org.uk/> or to find out more about the Community cohesion agenda at Wycombe please contact [paul\\_hodson@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:paul_hodson@wycombe.gov.uk)

### **Essex County Council**

Essex County Council has produced a guidance booklet entitled “Faith Groups and Community Work”, which is aimed at faith groups and organisations considering involvement in work for the

local community. This practical guide offers advice on working with statutory bodies and is useful primarily for faith groups but also for other voluntary groups moving into new areas of work and for statutory bodies in understanding about working with faith groups. The guide covers a range of information including signposts to legal information, equalities legislation, employment legislation, planning legislation, project management and health and safety guidance. In addition there is advice for faith-based groups about the preconceptions and concerns council staff and others may have when working with faith groups. An example is the sensitivity around using non-secular premises for wider community activities. The guide recommends faith groups think carefully about symbols or aspects of the premises that may cause concern for wider community use, and about community activities that the faith group may consider to be an unacceptable use of the premises, for example gambling. A second example could be a concern around proselytising.

Work on the guide started as a result of the council being approached by a member of a faith group who expressed a need for guidance and information. Staff at the council then spoke to various faith group contacts to explore the particular information needs they had and to seek their advice in their experiences of interacting with statutory bodies and difficulties they had faced. Gathering this information and pulling together legal and statutory information took around 20 days of staff time and was funded through the Policy Unit budget.

The guide has been successful in helping faith groups in their interactions with the local authority, and positive feedback has been gained from those who have used the guide. Production of the guide also helped to build good relationships with contacts in faith groups and increase understanding and awareness in both faith groups and statutory bodies.

Gathering information to inform the guide was a challenge overcome with good relationships with contacts from faith groups and organisations. A particular challenge was ensuring the guide was comprehensible to a wide audience. This involved explaining complex statutory requirements and legal prose in a simple, plain English manner. Particular attention was also given to ensure that the guide did not show bias towards any one particular faith group or against non-faith-based groups.

If Essex were to embark on such a project again they would ensure that the guide was better promoted. Whilst many copies have been distributed, there was potential to reach more faith groups and therefore increase faith group involvement in the local community.

For more information about this guide please contact Simon Banks [simon.banks@essex.gov.uk](mailto:simon.banks@essex.gov.uk).

## **Durham County Council and North East Initiatives**

Durham County Council has been actively working in partnership with the Churches Regional Commission and the Regional Faiths Network to develop and run a pilot faiths training programme, 'Engaging with Faiths', with officers from a number of local authorities in the North East. The learning programme sought to address the key question, "why does faith matter for local authorities and what can we do to build the capacity of local government to improve collaboration with faith communities?" Participants were largely equalities and diversity officers, and had an opportunity in the 2 day course to discuss issues, challenges, good practice and develop action plans around working with faith groups and communities. The training programme has resulted in participants forming an action research 'learning set' where they can develop their thinking further in particular with relation to the recently published Communities and Local Government (CLG) guidance "Face to face and side by side".

The idea for the training programme came from discussions between the local authority, Churches Regional Commission (CRC) and the Regional Faiths Network (RFN). A sub-group of the RFN formed the steering group for the training programme and comprised members from the network, the CRC and the local authority. Funding for the pilot came initially from CLG through Government Office North East. The CRC and RFN have secured further funding to enable them to continue facilitation of the action research group.

The training programme was successful in raising awareness of faith issues in those authorities that attended the programme through subsequent discussion and contact with participants. The ongoing work of the action research group has enabled authorities to discuss issues such as structures of faith communities and how best to engage with them. The programme has enabled participants to learn from each other, build relationships with the regional faiths network and CRC, and think further about how to engage with faith groups and recognise the contributions they can make to local communities. The CRC and RFN have been supported by CLG to make direct contact with the other local authorities in the North East who did not take part in the initial pilot programme. Reports from this work are very encouraging with requests from these authorities to repeat the learning programme in the near future. This development process has introduced the CLG Faith Strategy to many of these authorities and findings show that this has been well received.

An initial challenge was to get buy-in from authorities at the right level and to raise awareness about issues in this area. However, as the programme has moved along this has become easier and more authorities have shown interest. There have also been capacity challenges around getting involvement in the project from members of a diverse range of faith groups and both the CRC and the RFN are actively engaged in finding ways to address these challenges. The emerging infrastructure arrangements encouraging and supporting these developments in the North East illustrates positive and purposeful cooperation and collaboration between Government Office North East, the local authorities and the Regional Faiths Network.

For more information about this project please contact Ian Hunter Smart at [ian.huntersmart@durham.gov.uk](mailto:ian.huntersmart@durham.gov.uk)

## **London Borough of Islington**

Islington Council took the initiative in setting up Islington Faiths Forum (IFF) in early 2001. The forum was formally inaugurated with a high-profile launch in 2004 attended by around 50 different faith communities.

Since its inception the council has provided direct support for servicing and developing the network in addition to the IFF's own successful fundraising endeavours. Most recently, the council has awarded the forum £25,000 per annum for the next three years.

This will assist the group to pursue their aims and objectives including:- developing and enhancing partnership working, promoting and assisting the wide range of services provided to citizens in the Islington community from within local faith-based organisations (FBOs), improving local understanding of the common aims and objectives of all faith groups in providing added support services from within their many organisations, and encouraging greater collaboration within and between faith communities.

The IFF has very much made its mark in improving community relations through the vital role it played in responding to the appalling events of September 2001 and July 2005. The forum enabled faith communities in Islington to come together in their response to events which could so easily have driven them apart. This response was expressed most clearly in the inter-faith service organised by the forum in September 2005 to which representatives of all faith communities in Islington contributed on an equal basis.

The Islington Faiths Forum is the principal network for the council and the voluntary and community sector to engage more widely with representatives of faith communities. Along with other networks of voluntary and community organisations it is now part of the Islington Community Network which feeds directly into the Islington Strategic Partnership. It is used as a basis for consultation and engagement by council officers. It participated on the development of the Islington Local Area Agreement.

A good example of the way the faiths forum is connecting with the council is its involvement in the council's emergency planning process. It has trained members of the forum in our procedures and the forum will be an important part of rolling out our emergency plan should we ever need to do so. This will enable them to link with a wide range of community-based resources and volunteers if needed. Other examples include the successful provision of the forum's faith literacy training to the local fire services; a wide range of activities for Peace Week 2008 aimed at promoting peace and community safety and the official launch of Islington Safeguarding Children's Board and IFF's child protection policy for faith groups that will take place in January 2009.

For more information about the Islington Faiths Forum please visit:

<http://www.islingtonfaithsforum.org.uk/> or contact Clive Clarke [clive.clarke@islington.gov.uk](mailto:clive.clarke@islington.gov.uk)

## Leicester City Council

Leicester City Council provides funding for the Leicester Council of Faiths (LCoF) by way of a 3 year agreement (currently extended to 31 March 2009). This year's grant is around £24,300, and is used to rent a meeting room and office in the city centre for the council of faiths, and to fund the post of a part-time administrator. This funding has been available for the last 10 years and is hoped will prove to be a long-term funding arrangement to support the work of the group.

LCoF contributes in many ways to community cohesion in the area:

- A representative from the group sits on the organising committee for the Holocaust Memorial Day event, which is jointly run by the LCoF, the Schools Development and Support Agency, the Stanley Burton Centre for Holocaust Studies (Leicester University), and the City Council. Support for this event is provided by the LCoF's Administrator.
- LCoF works with schools on faith issues, and organises the Annual "Peace Pilgrimage", a very popular bus tour visiting 6 places of worship as part of Heritage Open Day activities.
- LCoF has recently completed an inter faith listening research project "Life Views" that looks at a variety of perspectives about and from faith groups in Leicester. This included consultation with groups not usually represented on the Council of Faiths.
- LCoF's Equality & Diversity Training Officer has recently published information leaflets for each of the 8 major faith traditions. These are available generally but are more specifically targeted at staff in public service agencies and other organisations who need an understanding of faith issues.
- LCoF plays an important role on the Equality & Diversity Partnership, its current representative being the Equality & Diversity Training Officer.
- LCoF has a representative who not only sits on the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), but is also one of the Voluntary & Community Sector representatives on the Partnership Executive. This is one of the routes by which the local authority engage with and work with the faith communities.
- Working with the group has been a positive experience for the local authority. There has been much joint working, cooperation and advice from the LCoF. An example of joint working was a combined response to central government's "Face-to-Face & Side-by-Side" consultation on faith matters earlier this year.
- The local authority has also recognised that LCoF has contact with many of the most vulnerable people in society which the local authority finds it difficult to engage with, for example asylum seekers and new arrivals. This provides a useful way of gaining information about the local population and reaching those individuals that can be difficult to reach.

The local authority has not encountered many challenges working with the council of faiths. Representation of all the faith groups in an area is something that is very difficult for any council of faiths to ensure and this is a matter which the Leicester Council of Faiths itself has on its agenda.

For more information about the Leicester Council of Faiths please visit <http://www.leicestercounciloffaiths.org.uk/> or contact Rachel Clarke [Rachel.clarke@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Rachel.clarke@leicester.gov.uk) for further information about faith related work at Leicester City Council.

## **Middlesbrough Council**

Middlesbrough Council works in partnership and has developed a strong working relationship with the Middlesbrough Council of Faiths. This has been made possible through work carried out with the Middlesbrough Cohesion Partnership, which was developed and is facilitated by Middlesbrough Council.

Middlesbrough Council supports the work of the Middlesbrough Council of Faiths in a variety of ways including financially, administratively and through facilitating joint events and the use of venues.

Middlesbrough Council of Faiths' activities include:

- A faiths resource – a library available to schools and organisations on various faith matters
- Sending representatives to schools and organisations to talk about faith issues
- Supporting community engagement activities
- Running a faith trail
- Working with the Standing Advisory Council of Religious Education (SACRE)

Middlesbrough Council of Faiths was originally set up by the Middlesbrough Community Network who are responsible for co-ordinating the voluntary and community sector's input and involvement in Middlesbrough's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The Council of Faiths contributes to the LSP through the Community Network, which is represented on its action groups. The local authority consults with the Council of Faiths on a wide range of issues and it is a member of the Council's Harmony Initiative Advisory Group, established as part of Middlesbrough's Council's Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder. The Council of Faiths has also been involved in the development of various strategies, including the Cultural strategy. The local authority also assists in helping to establish positive relationships between the Council of Faiths and local community groups and organisations.

The Council of Faiths has been involved in a number of headline council events, including:

- Culture Fest
- Festival of Faiths
- An outdoor 'Getting to Know You' event
- LSP events

One of the challenges faced is to ensure that the Middlesbrough Council of Faiths is sustainable and continues to grow and remain an active partner in both civic and community life in Middlesbrough. The Middlesbrough Cohesion Partnership also works with the Cleveland Inter - Faith Group alongside working directly with faith groups in the area.

For more information about Middlesbrough Council of Faiths please visit [www.middlesbroughfaiths.org.uk](http://www.middlesbroughfaiths.org.uk) For more information about the Middlesbrough Local Strategic Partnership, Cohesion Partnership and Community Network please visit: <http://www.middlesbroughpartnership.org.uk> or contact Shahda Khan [shahda\\_khan@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:shahda_khan@middlesbrough.gov.uk)

## **Cambridge City Council**

Cambridge City Council supports a group called Society for Dialogue and Action. This is an inter faith group run by women, which provides training, and sharing on the Abrahamic Faiths (Judaism,



Islam and Christianity). The group is open to all women and so far has had women on the course from the three religions and Hindu women, aged between 17 and 80+. Members of this group have formed some very real and lasting friendships. An example is a Bangladeshi woman who as a result of this group has been in this county for 40 years was for the first time invited into the house of a white British person.

The training programme is now in its second year of running and comprises a series of weekly sessions at a local university venue. As a result of the sessions, the group has produced information on faith which will be made available to schools.

Cambridge city council has been involved in this group by providing funding to support the social and cultural aspects of the group's work. Funding largely comes from the community cohesion budget, in the region of £2,000 a year. The council has also facilitated the work of the group by providing links between the group and the county council and other contacts.

The work of this group has had some very real and clear successes in Cambridge. The group subscribes to the principle that belief without action means nothing, and so is keen to make a positive contribution to the community. The Council values and supports this group because of the links it has enabled between women from such diverse backgrounds and sees this type of work as crucial to the Community Cohesion and active participation agenda. The relationships between parts of the community that this group has enabled help promote the sense of belonging that the council is encouraging through its community cohesion agenda. Working in a cooperative and facilitative way, the group has been able to reach many families within the community and produce a balanced view of the community. One particular success of the group has been 3 women setting up a meeting open to the community to discuss the role of Muslim women in the community and in particular in preventing the alienation of youth.

The main challenge the group has faced was around gaining funding. The council has supported the group in identifying the social and cultural aspects of their work to enable council funding to be appropriate.

For more information about the group please visit <http://www.societyfordialogueandaction.org.uk/index.html>. For more information about this group or about the community cohesion agenda in Cambridge please contact [ariadne.henry@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:ariadne.henry@cambridge.gov.uk)

## **Kirklees Council**

Kirklees Council has led inter faith activity in the area in 2 key ways.

1. In 2001 the Kirklees Standing Advisory Council for religious Education (SACRE) developed Interfaith Kirklees (Schools), a schools initiative that offers interactive learning experiences to facilitate learning about faiths in schools
2. The council has also led the development of Kirklees Faiths Forum, an inter faith organisation bringing together faith based work in Kirklees

Interfaith Kirklees (Schools) is an educational project bringing together the faith communities of Kirklees to promote learning and awareness around faith issues, and the council provides funding to support their work. Interfaith Kirklees (Schools) is housed in seven Faith Centres, each in a local place of worship: Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh. Children visit the Faith Centres and

learn about and from religion. The initiative supports the duty on schools to promote community cohesion in that pupils learn about a diverse range of faiths, practices and beliefs. The council has provided training for the faith centre hosts and guides who are from the worshipping communities. The guides/hosts are trained in questioning and philosophical techniques to help the students engage with religious concepts. Learning packages have been developed for schools, and in some cases these are bespoke and developed in partnership with the school to cover issues beyond the curriculum. The faith centres receive around 200 visits a year and have been regarded as a unique and successful initiative.

Kirklees Faiths Forum was set up to provide a means of bringing together the work of the two inter faith councils, Kirklees SACRE and the local authority in Kirklees. The council was very much involved in the set up of the forum and also supports their work with funding from its preventing violent extremism, community cohesion and corporate budgets. The forum is now in the process of applying for charitable status. This is important both in terms of enabling the forum to become self-sustaining and in terms of establishing a wider interest through its independence from the council. The work of the forum includes:

- engaging with the public to explore sensitive issues, for example the wearing of the Islamic veil, or forced marriages
- mapping of faith communities in the area. Officers have also written an accompanying paper exploring local faith communities, including the different Muslim traditions in Kirklees and discussions of nuances around theology and culture. This paper will be useful in helping to build confidence in engaging with faith communities by building a better understanding
- working with the local authority and other bodies in the development of citizenship materials, in particular for schools and a related set of materials for Madressahs, exploring key concepts such as democracy and being a good citizen
- plans to provide training for local authority officers and others to raise awareness around faith issues and how to deal with sensitive issues

To find out more about Interfaith Kirklees (Schools) please visit <http://www.interfaithkirklees.org.uk/> or to find out more about the faiths forum and other inter faith work within the local authority please contact David Raven-Hill [david.raven-hill@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:david.raven-hill@kirklees.gov.uk)

## **Pendle Borough Council**

Pendle Borough Council works closely with Building Bridges Pendle (BBP), the main local inter faith organisation in the area. The council gives funding of around £55,000 p.a. to support the core work of the organisation.

The main aims are:

- To advance the education of the public in the study of religion of all denominations and creeds in particular, but not exclusively, with reference to the Christian and Islamic faiths
- To work towards the elimination of racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial and faith groups
- To bring a realisation that diversity, is a positive aspect in the make-up of our society and to promote differences in culture and faith as richness
- To be aware of similarities in our identity as citizens of a multi-cultural and multi-faith country

The inter faith organisation works in partnership with places of worship in the area and both voluntary and statutory agencies, including the local authority. Activities of the inter faith organisation include:

- Engagement with the Faith community: Interfaith seminars are delivered across the borough where people of faith and of no-faith are given an open invitation to attend. These sessions are used to stimulate discussion on a wide range of contemporary issues.
- Cultural awareness events: Multi-cultural and multi-faith events are an opportunity for families and friends to be provided with a living experience of celebrating diversity through arts and culture. BBP place an emphasis on using a wide range of different faith venues to expand participant's experiences.
- Bringing families together: Social trips give families and friends an opportunity to spend a full day together and build relationships on a trip out of the local area. BBP have also developed an innovative friends and families scheme to encourage cross-cultural relationships.
- Preventing Violent Extremism: Initiatives designed specifically for capacity building and citizenship education with Mosques and Madrassahs.
- Educational work in Schools: BBP have produced four Community Cohesion Education programmes which are delivered to Schools in Pendle, Burnley, Hyndburn and Preston. All of the education programmes are based on criteria from PSHE and Citizenship curriculum for Key Stage 2, 3 and 4. On the basis of common values we share as human beings, it explores and discuss young people's views towards the make-up of our Society.
- Volunteers group: Involved in many aspects of BBP's work, including designing and delivering projects.
- Newsletter: Publication of a newsletter (four times a year) which informs people and organisations of practical work taking place to promote cohesion and harmony at both grassroots and strategic levels.
- Partnership work: Networking and working closely with key agencies such as Pendle Borough Council, the Police and Lancashire County Council. BBP have played a key role in developing the Local Strategic Partnership's approach to developing Community Cohesion.

Building Bridges Pendle state that *"Every strand of our work is targeted so that barriers to integration and cohesion are challenged and practical personal steps are taken to promote harmony."*

For more information about Building Bridges Pendle please visit [www.buildingbridgespendle.org.uk](http://www.buildingbridgespendle.org.uk) or to find out more about the community cohesion agenda in Pendle please contact [george.dodds@pendle.gov.uk](mailto:george.dodds@pendle.gov.uk)

### **South Gloucestershire Council**

South Gloucestershire Council has supported South Gloucestershire Faith Forum in running a faith survey to identify the contributions that faith organisations and groups make to community life in South Gloucestershire.

The aims of the survey are to:

- Identify and describe the wide ranging and positive contributions that faith organisations and groups make to community life in South Gloucestershire. This will include: -

- Organising and supporting clubs and community activities
- Use of buildings
- Providing services, including tendering for public services
- Leading issue based campaigns e.g. social, environmental and justice issues with local, national or international significance
- Contributions to the cultural life of South Gloucestershire
- Contributing and responding to strategic plans, initiatives and partnership work that are the responsibility of the South Gloucestershire Partnership and its constituent partners
- Volunteering contribution to other activities
- Prepare a database of faith organisations in South Gloucestershire
- Encourage networking between faith communities
  - Identify financial significance and implications of faith based activity
  - Sources of funding for faith based activities including S106 planning gain opportunities
  - Tendering for services
  - Value of faith based activities
  - Faith communities' own resources
- Identify new opportunities for faith based activity in South Gloucestershire
- Raise awareness of public bodies and voluntary sector / community organisations about the contribution made by faith communities and improve dialogue
- Identify any further issues

The report, due to be completed in March 2009, will highlight the contribution that faith communities already make to life in South Gloucestershire and the opportunities that exist for further contributions. The report will provide a basis for the further development of the South Gloucestershire Faith Forum and will also provide valuable information for faith organisations and groups in South Gloucestershire as well as South Gloucestershire Partnership and its constituent partners. It should influence the development and implementation of the South Gloucestershire Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement.

South Gloucestershire Council has contributed £5,000 towards this survey and also works with the forum to identify contacts and links, and facilitate their work as part of their community engagement agenda.

For more information about this survey or the work of the faith forum please visit [www.southglosfaithforum.org.uk](http://www.southglosfaithforum.org.uk)

## **Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead**

Windsor and Maidenhead Community Forum has had a positive influence on community relationships by holding regular multi-faith get togethers and youth sporting tournaments. These events bring together groups from different communities and help to promote understanding and positive affirmation of diversity in the area. The sporting tournaments include football and netball and are largely aimed at youth in the area. In addition to regular evening meetings, the forum runs an annual multi-faith day at the town hall where faith groups and other organisations, including the community safety team from the council, have exhibition stands and there is a chance to share experiences and gain understanding.

The forum is also planning this year to support a touring puppet show aimed at primary school children, highlighting the importance of and reward from respecting the other people's faith and culture and their rights and interests; to develop a mobile exhibition providing information about various faiths and cultures; to continue to support faith and cultural groups within the community; and to create and support local structures to develop strong inter-faith and multi-cultural ties within the community, with a particular emphasis on development of appropriate women's inter faith groups.

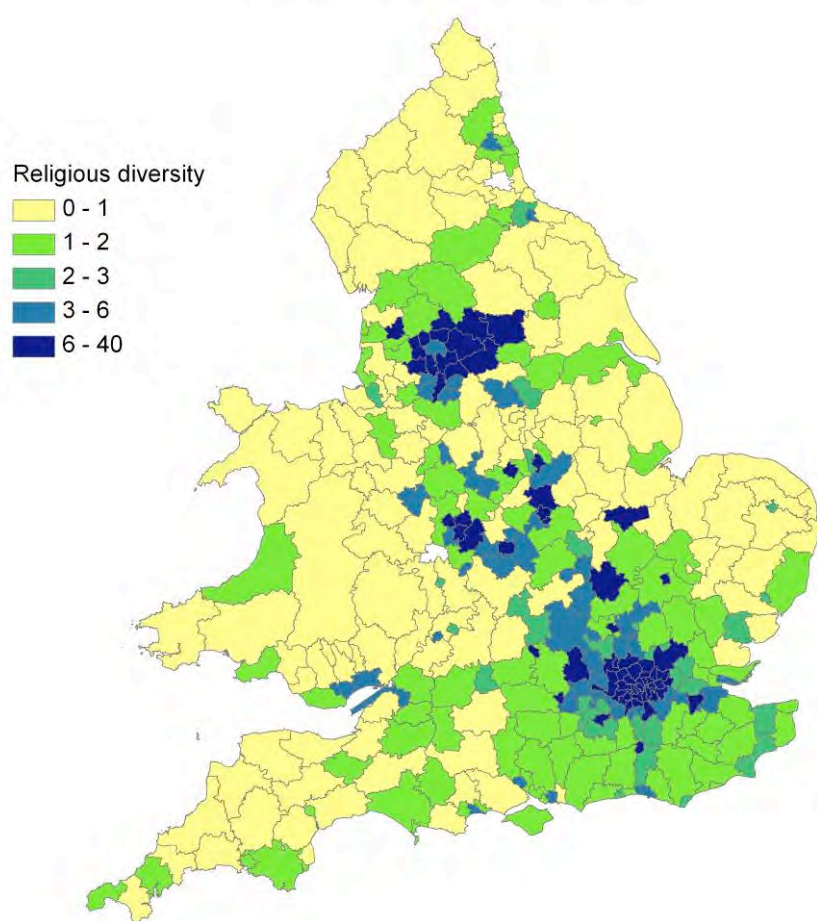
The council was initially fairly heavily involved in the set up of this community forum. However, involvement is now largely facilitative, including the use of the town hall and a presence at the quarterly meetings of the forum. In particular the council work with the forum on safety issues, advising them of any major racial incidents, however these are rare because of the genuine understanding and appreciation faith groups have of each other.

The council provides some funding and support for the forum through occasional grants and use of premises, however the work of the forum is largely self-sustaining. The faith groups involved in the forum appreciate its importance and meetings are often held in faith group venues.

The forum is a place where all sorts of community issues can be discussed, with a focus on celebrating diversity. The forum has enabled an open dialogue between members of different faith and community groups and encouraged understanding between groups. In part the harmonious situation in Windsor and Maidenhead could be attributable to the work of the forum and its partners.

For more information about the Windsor and Maidenhead Community Forum and the various multi-faith events they run please visit [www.wamcf.org](http://www.wamcf.org). For more information about the community safety agenda a Windsor and Maidenhead please contact Brian Martin [brian.martin@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:brian.martin@rbwm.gov.uk)

Percentage of the population who are religious but not Christian, England and Wales, 2001



Source: Census 2001, ONS

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## **The Inter Faith Network for the UK**

The Inter Faith Network for the UK was founded in 1987 to promote good relations between people of different faiths in this country. Its member organisations include representative bodies from the Baha'i; Buddhist; Christian; Hindu; Jain; Jewish; Muslim; Sikh; and Zoroastrian communities; national and local inter faith bodies; and academic institutions and educational bodies concerned with inter faith issues. Further information about its work can be found at [www.interfaith.org.uk](http://www.interfaith.org.uk)

## **Local Inter Faith Organisations**

Local inter faith forums, councils, groups and associations bring people of different faiths together to learn more about one another's faith and to co-operate in giving advice on religious issues to local public service providers. They also ensure that key members of the different faiths in a locality meet regularly at meetings or special functions. These personal links are crucial to promote mutual understanding; to facilitate constructive engagement on matters of common concern; and to ensure rapid and effective response if problems occur such as attacks on places of worship or tension between different communities.

Many local inter faith bodies work with their local authorities and LSPs and value this developing partnership. They are, though, usually independent bodies and they will have a religious and spiritual basis for their work which, while often underpinning and inspiring cohesion work and social action, is not limited to these.

IFN publishes a directory, *Inter Faith Organisations in the UK*, which lists national, regional and local inter faith bodies around the UK. Nearly 220 multi faith local inter faith organisations, working with people from all or most of the major faiths in their areas, are now in existence. There are also local inter faith bodies which operate on a bilateral or trilateral basis, such as the nearly 50 branches of the Council of Christians and Jews and the groups of the Three Faiths Forum, or other particular dialogues, such as ones focusing on Buddhist-Christian, Sikh-Christian, Hindu-Christian or Jewish-Muslim relations/dialogue. There are, too, an increasing number of inter faith projects.

For local authorities, the Inter Faith Network can be a helpful resource but so too, increasingly, will be the English Regional Faith Forums (which are among its member bodies). Details for these can be found at <http://www.interfaith.org.uk/local/directoryfullist.htm>. Some are already working to assist local authorities in their areas on the development of work with faith and inter faith structures and others are developing their capacity to do so.





## LOCAL AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT WITH FAITH AND INTER FAITH GROUPS

### Welcome

Working with faith groups and inter faith structures to promote a cohesive, integrated local community. This survey is being conducted by the Local Government Association (LGA) in partnership with the Inter Faith Network for the UK, with the support of the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). The results will be used to develop work to assist local authorities and others in strengthening their engagement with faith and inter faith issues.

Please note that the results of the survey will be confidential. Any publication arising from this survey will summarise data so that individual authorities' responses are not identifiable. Identifiable information from this survey will, however, be used internally within the LGA and Inter Faith Network in taking forward their work on these issues.

### Working definitions

These are provided to help with the context of the questions in the questionnaire. It should be stressed that there are no hard-and-fast, agreed definitions in this field of work. The definitions below should be used as a guide only and are available by clicking on the link at the top of every page of the questionnaire.

'Local inter faith organisation' – a body such as a forum of faiths; inter faith council or multi faith partnership involving the main faith communities in the area. May include in its aims and objectives some role in enabling faiths to relate to local public agencies

Please note that 'inter faith organisation' is not used here to cover bodies which link different denominations within one particular community (for example Churches Together bodies or councils of mosques or of gurdwaras).

'Faith group' or 'faith community' – a group or community of one religious tradition (for example a Christian or Hindu group) who define their purpose as being religious.

'Faith based organisation' – may be an organisation or an agency, such as a care home or youth helpline, which is based in one faith community and serves the community more widely.

### Authority name

Please state which authority you represent?

*Please enter your authority name:*

*Please enter your contact details*

name

role

email

phone

### Local inter faith organisations and projects in your area



Is there a local inter faith organisation (a structured body or forum linking and working with the key faiths) in your area?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes (please give the name and contact details for the organisation)
- ☐ No, but one is under development
- ☐ No, but there are plans to encourage creation of one
- ☐ No current plans to encourage creation of one
- ☐ Don't know

Are you aware of any other local inter faith initiatives within your area?

*Please tick all that apply and specify names where you can*

	Yes	Name
A bilateral dialogue group such as a Christian-Jewish group or a Hindu-Sikh group	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A tri-lateral dialogue group such as a Christian-Jewish-Muslim group	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Another multi-faith dialogue group	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Long term inter faith project such as a programme of reciprocal visits or shared use of premises for events by two or more faith communities group	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A 'faith leaders' group (other than the local inter faith forum)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A youth inter faith forum	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Does your Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) have a faith sub-group?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Is there a faith representative on your main LSP group?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No but plans for one
- ☐ No and no current plans for one
- ☐ Don't know

*For those that have a faith representative on the main LSP group*

The faith representative on the LSP is appointed through:

*Please tick one*

- ☐ the main local inter faith organisation
- ☐ the local council of Christian Churches
- ☐ a faith sub-group of the LSP which is separate from the main local inter faith body
- ☐ a wider community network
- ☐ another route (please describe)

## **Council involvement with local inter faith organisations**

How well do you think the membership of the main local inter faith organisation in your area reflects in its membership the general pattern of faith membership in your area?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Fairly well
- ☐ Not very well
- ☐ Not at all well
- ☐ Don't know

Was your local authority involved in setting up the main local inter faith organisation?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Yes, offered staff help to scope project prior to set up
- ☐ Yes, arranged early meetings to discuss the organisation
- ☐ Yes, visited or had preliminary conversations with the main faith communities in your area
- ☐ Yes, offered informal servicing in the early stages
- ☐ Other (please describe)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Has your authority become involved with the main local inter faith organisation subsequent to that being set up?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Is your authority involved directly in the running (or do you support the administration) of the main local inter faith organisation in your area?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Yes through organising meetings
- ☐ Yes through minute taking
- ☐ Yes through providing venues
- ☐ Yes, other (please specify)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

Did you/do you use external bodies or consultants to develop or support your local inter faith organisation?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Yes for development start up work
- ☐ Yes for mapping of faith groups
- ☐ Yes for support of ongoing tasks
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

*For those that used external bodies or consultants*

Why did you choose to use external bodies or consultants?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Lack of in-house capacity
- ☐ Lack of in-house experience

- ☐ Known expertise of external bodies or consultants
- ☐ Other (please specify)

To your knowledge, what types of activity does your main local inter faith organisation carry out?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Encouraging/arranging dialogue and encounter between members of different faiths
- ☐ Holding meetings and events on religious or social issues
- ☐ Building good community relations and cohesion
- ☐ Responding to tensions
- ☐ Making statements at times of crisis
- ☐ Assisting on multi faith civic events or ceremonies
- ☐ Awareness raising about faiths
- ☐ Disseminating information to faith and inter faith initiatives via a newsletter, website, or electronic circulars
- ☐ Diversity training
- ☐ Equalities work
- ☐ Women's meetings
- ☐ Inter faith work involving young people – such as organising a youth inter faith forum
- ☐ Educational events and exhibitions
- ☐ Sending speakers to schools
- ☐ Working with the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) on religious education issues and support for inter faith learning in local schools
- ☐ Arranging an annual 'multi faith pilgrimage' or walk around different faith venues in the area
- ☐ Running 'faith trails' or visits programmes to local places of worship
- ☐ Environmental/regeneration projects
- ☐ Inter faith sporting events (e.g. inter faith football)
- ☐ Social/leisure events such as shared meals or food fairs
- ☐ Awareness raising with non-faith communities
- ☐ Work/dialogue with non-faith communities
- ☐ Don't know

How well do you think the work of your local inter faith organisation helps to support/deliver your authority's overall objectives in the following areas?

	Very well	Fairly well	Not very well	Not at all well	Don't know
Cohesion/ creating a sense of belonging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Active citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preventing violent extremism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How well do you think the work of other faith groups or faith based organisations help to support/deliver your authority's overall objectives in the following areas?

	Very well	Fairly well	Not very well	Not at all well	Don't know
Cohesion/ creating a sense of belonging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Active citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preventing violent extremism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Each local authority area has a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) which has a statutory role to advice on all aspects of its provision for religious education (RE) in its schools. Does your local authority use its SACRE:

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ for its statutory role in relation to RE
- ☐ to consult on other educational or youth related matters
- ☐ for wider consultation (please specify)
- ☐ Don't know

## Involving and consulting

Which if any of the following multi faith bodies do you consult with on local policy matters?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Main local inter faith organisation (where there is one)
- ☐ Faith sub group of LSP
- ☐ A 'faith leaders' group (other than the main inter faith organisation)
- ☐ None
- ☐ Don't know

*For those who do **not** use their local inter faith organization, faith sub-group or 'faith leaders' group as a forum for consulting on policy matters.*

Please indicate the reason you are not using your local inter faith organisation as a forum for consulting on local policy matters:

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ We do not see it as adequately representative of faiths in the area
- ☐ We prefer only to consult directly with individual faith communities
- ☐ We use a different mechanism or mechanisms to consult faith communities (please specify)
- ☐ Don't know

*For those who do use their local inter faith organization, faith sub-group or 'faith leaders' group as a forum for consulting on policy matters.*

On what sort of issues do you consult your local inter faith organisation?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Equalities
- ☐ Cohesion/ sense of belonging
- ☐ Active citizenship
- ☐ Preventing violent extremism
- ☐ Planning
- ☐ Priorities for LAAs
- ☐ Tourism
- ☐ Culture
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Empowerment
- ☐ Crime and Disorder
- ☐ Social Care and health
- ☐ Environment/Regeneration
- ☐ Young people
- ☐ Sport and Leisure
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ Don't know

Which if any individual faith groups do you have regular, direct bilateral consultation with?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Christian
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ None
- ☐ Don't know

Do you also consult with non-religious belief groups (such as Humanists)?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

## **Funding issues**

Has your local authority made grants to the main local inter faith body in the past financial year (2007-08)?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

*Please indicate amount or 'DK' for don't know*

How much in total did your local authority make in grants over the last financial year? £

How many grants did this cover? \_\_\_\_\_

For what purpose were these grants given?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Core work of the inter faith organisation
- ☐ Specific projects
- ☐ Particular events
- ☐ Educational work
- ☐ Diversity training
- ☐ Other

From which budgets do funds deployed to support inter faith work generally come?

*Please tick any that apply*

- ☐ Adult services
- ☐ Children's services
- ☐ Corporate
- ☐ Area based grant
- ☐ Community cohesion budget (not corporate)

- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ Don't know

Is your local authority currently funding or planning to fund, including through the LAA, the main local inter faith body for this financial year, 2008-09?

*Please tick any that apply*

- ☐ Yes for core projects
- ☐ Yes for specific projects
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

How much in total is your local authority, including through the LAA, funding the main local inter faith organisation over this financial year, 2008-09?

*Please indicate amount or 'DK' for don't know*

£ \_\_\_\_\_

For what purpose is this funding being given?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Core work of the inter faith organisation
- ☐ Specific projects
- ☐ Particular events
- ☐ Educational work
- ☐ Diversity training
- ☐ Other

Over the last financial year did your local authority pay the main local inter faith organisation through a contract to deliver services?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't Know

Which services does the main local inter faith organisation deliver through the contract?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Diversity training
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Mediation work
- ☐ Work with young people
- ☐ Adult social care
- ☐ Preventing violent extremism
- ☐ Working with re-offenders
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ Don't know

## **Training, guidance and support**

Does your local authority provide specific training for staff and/or members on working with faith groups and local inter faith structures?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

*For those that do provide specific training for staff and/or members on working with faith groups and local inter faith structures.*

What training for staff on working with faith groups and local inter faith structures provide?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ General religious literacy (for example to help staff understand religious sensitivities)
- ☐ Working and consulting with faith groups
- ☐ Working and consulting with inter faith structures

Who is general religious literacy training aimed at?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ All staff
- ☐ Frontline staff
- ☐ Staff with a dedicated responsibility for working with this sector of the community
- ☐ Staff who express an interest
- ☐ Councillors
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ Don't know

What resources do you use for this?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Literature/guidance on religious literacy prepared internally
- ☐ Literature/guidance on religious literacy prepared externally
- ☐ Internal trainers and training materials
- ☐ Bought in training packages delivered by external trainers
- ☐ Don't know

*For those who have bought in training packages delivered by external trainers.*

Which religious literacy training packages delivered by external trainers have you used?

*Please tick any that your authority has used*

- ☐ Multi faith training across all the main faiths delivered by your local inter faith organisation or your regional faith forum
- ☐ Multi faith training across all the main faiths delivered by a non-faith based consultancy body
- ☐ Individual units on working with a particular faith community (such as Sikhs or Muslims) delivered by your local inter faith organisation or your regional faith forum
- ☐ Individual units on working with a particular faith community (such as Sikhs or Muslims) delivered by training agencies based in the faiths in question
- ☐ Individual units on working with a particular faith community (such as Sikhs or Muslims) delivered by secular consultancies
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Don't know

Are there any existing guidance and support materials on engagement by local authorities with faith and inter faith structures and issues at the local level which you regularly use?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

*For those who have used existing guidance and support materials on engagement by local authorities with faith and inter faith structures and issues at the local level.*

Which guidance materials has your authority used?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Faith and Community: a good practice guide for local authorities (Local Government Association, Home Office, Inner Cities Religious Council of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Inter Faith Network) 2002
- ☐ Community Cohesion: an action guide (Local Government Association, Home Office, Audit Commission, IDeA, Commission for Racial Equality and the Inter Faith Network) 2004
- ☐ Partnership for the Common Good: Inter Faith Structures and Local Government (Inter Faith Network in association with the Home Office, Local Government Association and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) 2003
- ☐ The Local Inter Faith Guide: Faith Community Cooperation in Action (Inter Faith Network in association with the Inner Cities Religious Council of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) 2005
- ☐ Tools for regeneration: working with faith communities (Faith Based Regeneration Network) 2004
- ☐ "Priceless, Unmeasurable: Faith and Community Development in 21st Century England" (Faith Based Regeneration Network and partners)
- ☐ Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs, IFN
- ☐ Looking After One Another: The Safety and Security of our Faith Communities, IFN in association with the Home Office, LGA, ACPO, CFA and CPS, 2005.
- ☐ Inter Faith Organisations in the UK: A Directory, Inter Faith Network, 2007
- ☐ Materials provided by the regional faith forum in your Region
- ☐ Other (please specify)

In which of the following areas, if any, would you find it useful to have refreshed or additional written guidance or support?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Developing new inter faith structures and helping strengthen existing inter faith structures
- ☐ Working with local inter faith organisations
- ☐ Working with faith groups
- ☐ When it is appropriate to fund faith or inter faith organisations through grants
- ☐ When it is appropriate to pay faith or inter faith organisations to deliver services and/or to support them through the route of service delivery contracts to support them through the route of service delivery contracts
- ☐ Guidance for inter faith organisations on working with local authorities
- ☐ Working in partnership with inter faith bodies to increase cohesion and integration
- ☐ How to evaluate the effectiveness of particular projects or programmes of work designed to increase good inter faith relations
- ☐ Increasing general religious literacy among staff
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ None of these



## Responsibility for issues

Does your council have an officer or officers with formal responsibility for faith issues and inter faith issues?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes within the corporate team
- ☐ Yes within a service team
- ☐ Yes within another team
- ☐ No but we have outsourced this role
- ☐ No, no one has formal responsibility
- ☐ Don't know

*For those who have outsourced formal responsibility for faith issues and inter faith issues.*

Where has formal responsibility for faith issues and inter faith issues been outsourced to?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Community and Voluntary Sector
- ☐ Third sector network
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Does your authority have a councillor with lead responsibility for these issues?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't Know

## Mapping

Is there a directory of places of worship in your local area?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Yes printed (please send us a copy if you would like to)
- ☐ Yes web based (please insert the link if you would like to)
- ☐ No but plans for one
- ☐ No current plans
- ☐ Don't know

Please indicate who produces this directory:

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Your authority
- ☐ Your LSP
- ☐ Local dioceses
- ☐ Other agency (please specify)

Is there a directory of faith groups and faith-based organisations in your local area?

*Please tick all that apply*

- ☐ Yes printed (please send us a copy if you would like to)
- ☐ Yes web based (please insert the link if you would like to)

- ☐ No but plans for one
- ☐ No current plans
- ☐ Don't know

Please indicate who produces this directory:

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Your authority
- ☐ Your LSP
- ☐ Local dioceses
- ☐ Other agency (please specify)

## Final comments

Do you currently have plans to audit the opportunities for interaction, including faith interaction, in your local area?

*Please tick one*

- ☐ Yes and work is already under way
- ☐ Yes have plans
- ☐ No current plans
- ☐ Don't know

Are there any particular challenges which you, as an authority, have faced or are facing in terms of working to involve faith groups or to engage with faith and inter faith structures to strengthen inter faith engagement and faith based social action in your area?

*Please write up to 200 words*

Finally, please add any other comments or examples of your authority working effectively with local inter faith organisations and faith groups.

*Please write up to 200 words and we will contact you for further details and permission before citing any good practice examples.*

## Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your responses to this survey will be used by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Inter Faith Network for the UK, with the support of the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) to develop work to assist local authorities and others in strengthening their engagement with faith and inter faith issues.

A list of resources and guidance materials that may be of interest to you can be found [here](#). A copy of your answers can be sent to you by emailing [louise.dove@lga.gov.uk](mailto:louise.dove@lga.gov.uk)

If you would like to send us a copy of any directories of local places of worship or faith groups and faith-based organizations, please send them to

The Inter Faith Network for the UK  
8A Lower Grosvenor Place  
London SW1W 0EN



The Local Government Association is the national voice for more than 450 local authorities in England and Wales. The LGA group comprises the LGA and five partner organisations which work together to support, promote and improve local government.



For further information please contact  
the Local Government Association at:  
Local Government House  
Smith Square  
London SW1P 3HZ

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queries on 020 7664 3131  
Fax: 020 7664 3030  
Email: [info@lga.gov.uk](mailto:info@lga.gov.uk)  
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