



**IFN event with a focus on Inter Faith Week,
including the launch of the Inter Faith Week Toolkit**

London, 16 May 2016

Inter Faith Week

IFN's recently published Annual Review gave a good sense of the breadth of its work. One of its key programmes was Inter Faith Week and it was to that Week that this event was dedicated, culminating with the launch of an exciting new Toolkit designed to get even more people of all ages involved.

We were delighted to have a range of excellent contributors and many others in the audience whose organisations had been running excellent Inter Faith Week programmes who participated in the conversation.

Mr Vivian Wineman welcomed everyone and the event began with a period of silence to remember in thanks all those in the UK and around the world whose work contributes to greater inter faith understanding and cooperation.

Inter Faith Week

Inter Faith Week – an illustrated tour!

Ashley Beck, IFN's Inter Faith Development Officer, and Sofi Hersher, an IFN Volunteer

Mr Beck and Ms Hersher said that:

- Inter Faith Week was proposed by IFN's Executive Committee in 2008 during the consultation process that led to *Face to Face and Side by Side: A Framework for Partnership in our Multi Faith Society*, a policy document put out by then-Government detailing a framework for dialogue and faith based social action and increasing inter faith understanding and cooperation.
- The first Inter Faith Week happened in England and Wales in 2009, following extensive consultation with member bodies and others.
- It was held in partnership for the first year between IFN and DCLG.
- It drew on the pioneering Scottish Interfaith Week, which has been running with great success since 2004 and is run by Interfaith Scotland.
- In 2010, Northern Ireland held its first event as part of Inter Faith Week.

The Aims of the Week

- The aims of the Week speak to a number of significant themes:
 - Encouraging and supporting inter faith work at all levels of society in the UK
 - Increasing awareness and celebrating faith communities' work together for the betterment of their neighbourhoods and communities.
 - promoting increased dialogue and understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs.
- Inter Faith Week officially launched in November 2009 at Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London. The launch event brought together a wide range of practitioners and organisations in a national exhibition style event.
- Over 2,900 events have taken place in the last 7 years across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

- The highest event count to date occurred in 2011, when pump-priming funding was available from the Government and elsewhere.
- Groups have continued to pursue innovative ways to plan, promote and fund an incredible variety of events and activities.
- The last Inter Faith Week was the second largest ever in terms of event numbers, featuring 491¹ known events and activities. This shows a net increase for the third year in a row.
- The map on the slide shows the geographical diversity of Inter Faith Week events and activities. Each year is layered over the previous ones, so in places where activities have taken place every year, only the most recent pins are visible.

A variety of events and activities

- Each year events pop up in new areas, reflecting a demonstrable commitment to inter faith work across the United Kingdom.
- Reflecting on past Weeks a number of trends can be seen:
 - **“Dialogue, discussion, debate”**. This type of event allows people of different backgrounds to talk, listen, ask questions, and get to know each other. As people develop relationships it also enables them to begin to identify common values and concerns and to make common cause.
 - **Each year there are also a variety of events designed to educate and increase religious literacy at all ages**. Large numbers of visits to places of worship, and exhibitions take place, aiming to educate and to inspire a passion for inter faith engagement at all ages and across a variety of environments. Classroom and school activities are hugely popular, including many Q&A style activities. Informational booths in public places, ‘living library’ style events, and faith trails and pilgrimages, provide opportunities to hear about people’s faiths and beliefs first-hand.
 - Some of the most vibrant and eye-catching events involve **music, arts, culture and sport**. There are photography competitions, multi-faith concerts, football matches, art shows, song circles, poetry evenings and comedy nights. This type tends to attract a lot of young people and university organisations that leverage common interests to bring people of different belief systems together.
 - **Social action**. Inter Faith Week has also created opportunities for people to come together and get to know each other while positively contributing to their community in a variety of practical ways. IFW has a close working relationship with the Mitzvah Day initiative which falls in or immediately next to Inter Faith Week. Mitzvah Day is a day of social action led by the Jewish community but open to all encouraging as many people as possible to get involved with social action projects in their area to ‘make a difference’. In recent years, initiatives such as the Near Neighbours programme have encouraged the projects they support to mark the Week, many of which have a social action dimension.

¹ NB: Figures relating to Inter Faith Week 2015 events have updated to include the final figures as known at the time of publication. The original presentation was given prior to the completion of analysis of 2015 events, and in all cases the actual numbers were higher than those given in the presentation.

An evolving Week

- Last year's Inter Faith Week fell during a particularly challenging time, with terrorist attacks in Paris occurring 2 days before the Week began.
- Many communities responded by using Inter Faith Week to come together and express sympathy, solidarity, and hope.
- Many groups began previously-planned events with moments of silence, or open discussion about the feelings and responses of attendees.
- Some groups planned additional events to provide a place of open and honest dialogue about both their fears and constructive ways of working together in the future.
- This was not a situation IFN could have anticipated when Inter Faith Week began in 2009. Yet it is an example of the many ways in which the Week continues to evolve and be adapted to fit the needs of communities.
- It also highlights the vital importance of the positive work of which there are so many examples – every activity which brings people of different backgrounds together helps to build relationships and connections that can have particular significance in more difficult times.
- As event organisers and attendees adapt Inter Faith Week, IFN is also working to make sure the Week stays relevant and accessible to the largest possible audience - and the new Toolkit is a part of this.
- In 2015, 559² organisations are known to have participated in the Week, falling into a wide range of types.
- The information is based on what event organisers tell IFN and what the IFN office can find online.

Website and social media

- One of the ways IFN has worked to make the Week more visible and accessible has been the continued development of new technological strategies in the development, operation, and marketing of Inter Faith Week.
- There have been consistently high page views on the IFW website, totalling over 260,000 since the website was launched in October of 2010.
- Approximately 37% of those views are 'unique visits', meaning a large portion of these visits are by a new person each time. The ratio between visits and unique visits has evolved over time, with a higher proportion of traffic in recent years from first-time visitors.
- Last year the Inter Faith Week website was down for approximately 40 hours at the start of the Week following an attempted defacement attack. This accounts for the dip in total views from 2014 to 2015, as that period included most of Monday, which consistently sees the highest number of visits each year. Some of that traffic was redirected to IFN's main website, where event listings and the map continued to be available throughout the Week.
- IFN is also pursuing a more active social media strategy across Twitter and Facebook. Screenshots of both the Twitter and Facebook profiles, used to highlight the great work done by Inter Faith Week organisers during the Week, are included in the PowerPoint slides.
- Twitter has proven to be a particularly useful way for groups to share photos and offer information about their events.

² See footnote 1

- One interesting development in the past few years has been the use of hashtags to stimulate conversation about inter faith issues in lieu of, or in addition to, holding physical events. For example, Near Neighbours encouraged people to respond to their Tweets with the hashtag #InterFaithMeans in 2015 and offer personal reflections. The Feast, a youth organisation, used #faithfriends to encourage their members to share photos of inter faith friendships with meaningful captions during 2014, and used the tag #HowToTalkFaith in 2015. Some examples of those, as well as a DCLG Twitter campaign, are included in the PowerPoint slides.
- In 2015, the social media campaign returned some very promising numbers. Inter Faith Week hashtags saw reach and impression numbers at 3.4 and 11.5 million respectively. This means that content about Inter Faith Week was served to 3.4 million Twitter users 11.5 million times. There were 5,200 Tweets and Retweets included mention of the @IFWeek account name. These Tweets and Retweets saw 740,000 overall impressions. There were also promising numbers from Facebook activity. Posts by the Inter Faith Week account reached 42,000 users.
- This is an area on which IFN will of course continue to build in the future.

2016 Inter Faith Week

- Preparations for this year's Inter Faith Week are already well underway.
- For the first time, Scottish Interfaith Week will also take place across the same dates.
- It will be held from 13 to 20 November – an 8 day Week incorporating Remembrance Sunday.

A valuable contribution

- Inter Faith Week has been making an increasingly valuable contribution to inter faith understanding and cooperation in the United Kingdom and the quotes shown in the slides reflect this.
- It has helped create opportunities to foster relationships that can be called upon in both happy and challenging times

A copy of their PowerPoint slides is at Annex B.

Tribute to Scottish Interfaith Week

The Revd Alan Bayes, Chair, Inter-faith Council for Wales and IFN Trustee

Mr Bayes offered the following reflections:

- It was an honour and privilege, as a fellow 'celt', to be asked to offer a tribute to Scottish Interfaith Week.
- SIW began in 2004, when Sister Isabel Smyth was Director of the then Scottish Inter Faith Council, Ravinder Kaur Nijjar was the Convener and Dr Maureen Sier was the Inter Faith Development Officer. (Note: Dr Sier was present but Mrs Kaur Nijjar was unable to attend due to illness and the event sent her its good wishes.)

- Since its beginning SIW has provided an opportunity for individuals, local inter faith groups and faith communities to celebrate Scotland's rich, religious diversity planning events to bring local people together to promote dialogue, understanding and cooperation between Scotland's diverse communities.
- In the first year there were around 12 events held in Scotland and in 2015 over 75 events, so there has been a significant increase.
- Historically, unlike the Week in the rest of the UK, Scottish Interfaith Week has had a theme linked to it. These have included 'Values and Visions of Scotland', 'Journeys of Faith' and 'Caring for the Environment'. This year the theme will be 'Religion and the Media'.
- SIW has always been fully supported by the Scottish Government and the then Deputy First Minister, now the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, made the following comments about the Week: *"Scotland is a modern multi-faith and multi-cultural country where all people can live together in harmony, and where people of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds can follow their religion or belief and achieve their potential. These events are tremendously important in bringing together different communities united in a common purpose. We all want to live in a Scotland where mutual trust, respect and understanding form the basis for our lives and our relationships with others. I know that these basic principles will underpin the various events being held up and down the country during interfaith week"*.
- SIW has run successfully now for over 11 years and was the inspiration for Inter Faith Week in the rest of the UK.
- In previous years SIW has been held later in November than Inter Faith Week in the rest of the UK. This year the Weeks will be celebrated at the same time throughout the UK.
- On behalf of the Inter Faith Network for the UK he paid tribute to the fantastic success of Scottish Interfaith Week, looking forward to a combined Week across all four nations which he believed would have an even greater impact.

Mr Wineman noted the involvement of the Inter-faith Council for Wales and the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum in Inter Faith Week which was much appreciated.

Dr Maureen Sier offered the following reflections:

- It was sad that Sister Smyth and Mrs Kaur Nijjar were unable to be present as they were the inspiration for the Week.
- It had been a difficult decision to change the dates of Scottish Interfaith Week, as Scotland had a history of distinctiveness. This year, however, if SIW had included St Andrews Day as it usually did, it would also have fallen into December and Advent which may not have been helpful for the Christian community; and also there would have been a 2 week gap between the two Weeks and momentum may have been lost.
- It was perhaps the right time to all be 'in it together'. It was a decision that felt good. There were always dissenting voices but overall it was very positive.
- SIW would be continuing to have a theme, as this had worked well in the past, particularly because partner organisations can be involved. Last year, for example, they worked with environmental agencies across Scotland and linked part of the Week into the Climate Change Summit. This year's theme of 'Religion

and the Media' will allow them to work with the BBC, with local newspapers, and national media to look at the impact that the media has on religious communities.

- She wished success to everyone taking part in Inter Faith Week 2016 throughout all nations in the UK.

Inter Faith Week – a powerful platform to showcase the contribution that faith communities make to society and to encourage wider participation in inter faith dialogue and cooperation.

Creating a vibrant week long programme

***Riaz Ravat BEM, Deputy Director, St Philip's Centre, Leicester and
Minou Cortazzi, Baha'i community member, Leicester***

Mr Ravat offered the following reflections:

- The St Philip's Centre (SPC) is a charity rooted in the Christian tradition working with a variety of faith and belief communities across Leicester and beyond to promote inter faith understanding and harmony.
- It works with a range of public agencies, such as the police, prison service and local authorities and national Government.
- Its Patron is the Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 2016 marks its 10th anniversary.
- He thanked all those involved in making Inter Faith Week happen.
- SPC had been involved in IFW since its inception and was involved in initial discussions with the Department for Communities and Local Government.
- Initially SPC had more of a delivery role during Inter Faith Week but in recent times its role was also to facilitate, promote and coordinate IFW across Leicestershire and beyond.
- The slides show IFW activities that have taken place, including jointly with Mitzvah Day. The examples included: a Children's art competition at the cathedral; Multi faith concerts and music celebrations; Religion and belief roadshows in colleges engaging with a younger audience; roundtable discussions with the academic world; and a Faith trail, which had in particular been popular with the Scout Movement.
- Leicester Council of Faiths and other partners had worked with the SPC. LCoF had an annual exhibition at the High Cross shopping centre, a visible public place within the city for an inter faith presence.
- In recent times SPC has become involved, through the support of Near Neighbours, in the production of an IFW brochure. This is a catalogue showcasing the talents and abilities of different faith communities promoting IFW. That is available electronically.
- SPC is using IFW to significantly profile inter faith work with partners and the media and other stakeholders. Earlier in the year it ran a training programme for RE Coordinators in schools, teachers who promote and deliver RE. There were 35 on the course and none of them were aware of IFW. It is very positive that they know about it.
- A positive by-product of IFW has been the way SPC has worked with minority communities. Leicester is a city which has redefined what it means to be a

minority community. For example, the Jewish community is a minority at only 0.1% as is the Baha'i community which is even smaller. SPC particularly tries to provide confidence and a platform for these minority communities to acknowledge the contribution that they make.

Ms Cortazzi offered the following reflections:

- She thanked LCoF and SPC for providing the opportunity for building relationships with other faith communities.
- Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Baha'i faith, teaches that the earth is one country and mankind its citizen. The garden of humanity is beautiful with its various cultures, colours, backgrounds and belief systems.
- The Baha'i Unity Feast celebrates this beauty and aims to create bonds of communication and harmony. The purpose of the Unity Feast is to bring people from all religions and none together in the spirit of fellowship, friendliness, understanding and harmony, to explore common spiritual values. The goal is to focus on things that people have in common so they can play their part in unity and harmony in society, one person at a time.
- A typical programme involves reading inspirational writings from Baha'i scriptures and other faiths. Often there is music played. There is no age barrier so everyone, young and old are welcome. The children often take part in the programme. There is also consultation inviting those who attend to make suggestions to contribute thoughts on building a programme for society. After that there is refreshment and time for people to mingle and get to know new people in a spirit of love and unity.
- SPC has provided a beautiful hall free of charge during IFW for the Unity Feast and the Baha'i community was grateful for this.

A copy of their PowerPoint slides is at Annex C.

The following questions and comments were offered. Responses are included in italics.

- George Ballentyne (Christians Aware Interfaith Programme) – The footfall at the Highcross Shopping Centre in a week is 230,000. (This figure is calculated by Highcross itself from its CCTV.) The population of Leicester is about 380,000. Obviously not everyone stops to talk or collect literature but they are still aware of it. The exhibition has been run for 8 years. There are 3 people on a stall at any one time, all from different faiths and it rotates throughout the week. Highcross paid for the exhibition itself, which was in effect an in-kind donation of about £5,000. It was a remarkable example of possibly the largest public event for Inter Faith Week each year.
- Dr Avijit Datta (York Interfaith Group) – With regard to use of social media and so forth, how can those who are older, who do not use the internet, be included? And, for those more advanced in the use of technology, what about the use of geo-spatial tagging? *The IFN office was engaging with different demographics well through existing channels. It supplies information to member bodies regularly through traditional means, such as newsletters and flyers in hard copy. It often uses York Interfaith Group as an example of good integrated communication strategising because its Publicity and Communications Officer does a lot of*

correspondence digitally but one of its Trustees (in her 90s) also cycles to those without internet access to provide them with hard copies. That was hugely important.

Inter Faith Week – a powerful platform to showcase the contribution that faith communities make to society and to encourage wider participation in inter faith dialogue and cooperation.

Young people to the fore

Ben Shapiro, 3FF's ParliaMentors' Programme

Mr Shapiro offered the following reflections:

- He thanked IFN for facilitating Inter Faith Week. 3FF benefited greatly from the increased awareness and activity around IFW.
- The Interfaith Summit focused on young people between the ages of 18 and 30.
- 3FF is an inter faith charity working with people from all faiths, beliefs and backgrounds.
- The ParliaMentors programme, a political leadership programme, on which he works, is entering its 10th year and has just over 350 alumni. In recent years the alumni have been taking an active role in organising IFW events to engage the alumni network, 3FF as a whole and the wider community.
- The second slide shows Anna Connell-Smith, a committee specialist for Parliament's Education Select Committee (one of the Summit's founders); Phil Champain, 3FF's Director; Baroness Williams of Trafford, then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government; and Cllr Hashim Bhatti from Windsor (also one of the founders of the Interfaith Summit.)
- IFW was a good way to enable opportunities to work with people, such as Government Ministers, and to bring them to others to inspire them.
- The Interfaith Summit is a good way to bring young people into a space and to engage in activities that they might not otherwise be interested in. For example, there was a music festival at last year's Summit involving people from different backgrounds playing for about 20 minutes each, expressing their identity in a way that was often different to that which you would perceive from just talking with them. About 70 people came for the music festival but stayed to learn more about other young people and how they can work together. The interfaith music festival is now in its fifth year and will be at the British Museum on 22 May 2016. The fourth slide shows a young man who wrote a book about his experiences of coming to the UK from Afghanistan, called *The Lightless Sky*. In particular his story tells how he learned more about other people especially those about whom he had been taught negative views. He is now an alumnus of the ParliaMentors programme. He spoke about his book and did a Q&A session.
- The slide also shows two speakers from 3FF's speakers programme who go into schools. The programme had begun in London and has now spread to Birmingham and soon Manchester. They do a 'lived faith' talk with young people, rather than textbook discussion, looking at how faith has affected their day to day lives. The speaker programme is very successful and there is a waiting list for it.

They would be happy to hear from anyone who would like to apply to join the programme.

- The fifth slide shows one of the panel sessions, which was attended by over 100 young people. From a focus group session they discovered that it had been the social media buzz that had attracted the young people to attend the session. It was very useful to have a lot of social media attention focused on one week. Word of mouth is very important to enable people to turn up. The focus group had also shown that the young people had initially said they didn't think interfaith was for them!
- The sixth slide shows a theatre workshop run by MUJU, a Muslim Jewish theatre group, which gave an opportunity for the young people to express their identity and become more confident.
- The seventh slide shows roundtables that took place on different topics. One was on the refugee crisis and how to take action to respond to it. One was on faith, gender, power and politics.
- The final slide shows a main panel of people who volunteered to help 3FF, who gave access to their networks to inspire young people and all aided by IFW and the hype around it.
- He thanked IFN for leading on the Week and for getting so many people involved, especially young people.

A copy of his PowerPoint slides is at Annex D.

The following questions and comments were offered. Responses are included in italics.

- The speaker had been involved in the past with the National Union of Students in trying to organise an event about inter faith on campus which would have involved a lot of national student groups, multi faith chaplaincies, community groups and inter faith groups. The speaker was planning to pursue this further and would appreciate advice.

Mr Shapiro was happy to be in touch with the speaker about this.

Inter Faith Week – a powerful platform to showcase the contribution that faith communities make to society and to encourage wider participation in inter faith dialogue and cooperation.

Young people to the fore

Ben Shapiro, 3FF's ParliaMentors' Programme

Mr Shapiro offered the following reflections:

- He thanked IFN for facilitating Inter Faith Week. 3FF benefited greatly from the increased awareness and activity around IFW.
- The Interfaith Summit focused on young people between the ages of 18 and 30.

- 3FF is an inter faith charity working with people from all faiths, beliefs and backgrounds.
- The ParliaMentors programme, a political leadership programme, on which he works, is entering its 10th year and has just over 350 alumni. In recent years the alumni have been taking an active role in organising IFW events to engage the alumni network, 3FF as a whole and the wider community.
- The second slide shows Anna Connell-Smith, a committee specialist for Parliament's Education Select Committee (one of the Summit's founders); Phil Champain, 3FF's Director; Baroness Williams of Trafford, then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government; and Cllr Hashim Bhatti from Windsor (also one of the founders of the Interfaith Summit.)
- IFW was a good way to enable opportunities to work with people, such as Government Ministers, and to bring them to others to inspire them.
- The Interfaith Summit is a good way to bring young people into a space and to engage in activities that they might not otherwise be interested in. For example, there was a music festival at last year's Summit involving people from different backgrounds playing for about 20 minutes each, expressing their identity in a way that was often different to that which you would perceive from just talking with them. About 70 people came for the music festival but stayed to learn more about other young people and how they can work together. The interfaith music festival is now in its fifth year and will be at the British Museum on 22 May 2016. The fourth slide shows a young man who wrote a book about his experiences of coming to the UK from Afghanistan, called *The Lightless Sky*. In particular his story tells how he learned more about other people especially those about whom he had been taught negative views. He is now an alumnus of the ParliaMentors programme. He spoke about his book and did a Q&A session.
- The slide also shows two speakers from 3FF's speakers programme who go into schools. The programme had begun in London and has now spread to Birmingham and soon Manchester. They do a 'lived faith' talk with young people, rather than textbook discussion, looking at how faith has affected their day to day lives. The speaker programme is very successful and there is a waiting list for it. They would be happy to hear from anyone who would like to apply to join the programme.
- The fifth slide shows one of the panel sessions, which was attended by over 100 young people. From a focus group session they discovered that it had been the social media buzz that had attracted the young people to attend the session. It was very useful to have a lot of social media attention focused on one week. Word of mouth is very important to enable people to turn up. The focus group had also shown that the young people had initially said they didn't think interfaith was for them!
- The sixth slide shows a theatre workshop run by MUJU, a Muslim Jewish theatre group, which gave an opportunity for the young people to express their identity and become more confident.
- The seventh slide shows roundtables that took place on different topics. One was on the refugee crisis and how to take action to respond to it. One was on faith, gender, power and politics.
- The final slide shows a main panel of people who volunteered to help 3FF, who gave access to their networks to inspire young people and all aided by IFW and the hype around it.

- He thanked IFN for leading on the Week and for getting so many people involved, especially young people.

A copy of his PowerPoint slides is at Annex E.

The following questions and comments were offered. Responses are included in italics.

- The speaker had been involved in the past with the National Union of Students in trying to organise an event about inter faith on campus which would have involved a lot of national student groups, multi faith chaplaincies, community groups and inter faith groups. The speaker was planning to pursue this further and would appreciate advice.

Mr Shapiro was happy to be in touch with the speaker about this.

Launch of the Inter Faith Week Toolkit on Developing Successful Activities

Mr Wineman explained that this very practical booklet had been developed drawing on the excellent ideas and learning experiences of Committee members and member bodies and other event holders and photographs of many events held in Weeks to date. Its publication had been made possible with the financial support of IFN's various supporters and donors.

The support of the Department for Communities and Local Government was mentioned in the toolkit and is very important to IFN.

Suzanne Kochanowski, Head of Faith and Race, Integration Division of the Department for Communities and Local Government

Ms Kochanowski offered the following reflections:

- It was very good to be able to attend the launch of the Toolkit which she hoped would be a practical aid for the Week, building on previous years and encouraging a larger number of more diverse organisations to become involved.
- She was pleased to see reference in the Toolkit to engaging emergency services, businesses and schools and to have heard earlier ways in which groups were reaching out to different organisations.
- Inter faith relations remain a key priority for the Department for Communities and Local Government. Since 2010 the Department has spent over £50 million on integration projects, including its work with the Inter Faith Network, Near Neighbours, Mitzvah Day and others with which people would be familiar.
- The aims are to break down barriers between different groups and communities, to bring people together and, importantly, to celebrate what people have in common rather than what divides them. Inter Faith Week is a really important aspect of that – bringing people together and a celebration of faith in action.
- The Government has launched the Louise Casey Review to look at what more needs to be done to work with isolated communities. The Department is keen that IFW is positive, but also with a purpose, for example reaching out to those

who haven't been involved before, engaging young people, engaging those in society who are more isolated such as older people or women at home, and perhaps having more challenging conversations. This is obviously difficult but part of the focus around discussion and dialogue is not only raising awareness about different faiths but also tackling prejudice and hatred or comments that work against those objectives. A focus on social action is also good; that has a lasting impact in communities and can be a spring board to other activity.

- She wished everyone well for IFW throughout the UK, building on previous successes, increasing the profile and awareness using social media and other innovative forms of technology, and making inter faith activity a focus of community efforts during that week and beyond.

The formal launch of the Toolkit then took place.

Acharya Modgala Duguid of the Network of Buddhist Organisations and Islington Faith Forum

Acharya Duguid offered the following reflections:

- It is very good to hear about the wonderful work being done throughout the UK and to see the Toolkit come to fruition.
- It will be helpful for national organisations such as the Network of Buddhist Organisations and also for local inter faith groups such as Islington Faith Forum.
- Last year Islington Faith Forum tackled difficult issues such as the challenges faced by young people and how they are disaffected in society. There were encouraging talks from young people themselves and from the Chief of Police in the area who wanted to help bring communities together.
- She encouraged everyone to take their copies away and pass them on so that more people become involved.

The Revd Andy Williams of Faith Network for Manchester and Building Bridges in Burnley

Mr Williams offered the following reflections:

- It had been very good to contribute to the Toolkit and he was looking forward to it being used by local inter faith groups across the country.
- The local inter faith group in Greater Manchester is planning a conference for IFW, with faith communities in the area, possibly called 'Faith in Modern Britain', and the Toolkit will be useful to draw on in planning and preparation for that.
- He asked people to use the Toolkit to create even more events than had taken place in the last IFW.

Closing words from the Chair

Mr Wineman thanked all those who had spoken at and participated in the event and Interfaith Scotland for pioneering the week. He also thanked his fellow Trustees, the venue staff and the IFN staff.

PROGRAMME FOR THE DAY

11.00	Registration and refreshments
11.30	<p>Welcome and scene setting for the day</p> <p>Rt Revd Richard Atkinson OBE and Vivian Wineman, Co-Chairs, Inter Faith Network for the UK</p>
11.40	<p>Inter Faith Week</p> <p><u>Inter Faith Week – an illustrated tour!</u></p> <p>An illustrated overview of Inter Faith Week’s story – its impact and its potential for deepening understanding and cooperation in our ever more diverse society.</p> <p><u>Tribute to Scottish Interfaith Week</u></p> <p><i>The Revd Alan Bayes, Chair, Inter-faith Council for Wales and IFN Trustee</i></p> <p>A special tribute to the pioneering Scottish Week. Interfaith Scotland has announced that the long running Scottish Interfaith Week will take place from this year at the same time as Inter Faith Week in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.</p>
11.55	<p>Inter Faith Week – a powerful platform to showcase the contribution that faith communities make to society and to encourage wider participation in inter faith dialogue and cooperation.</p> <p><u>Creating a vibrant week long programme</u></p> <p><i>Riaz Ravat BEM, Deputy Director, St Philip’s Centre, Leicester and Minou Cortazzi, Baha’i community member, Leicester</i></p> <p>St Philip’s Centre has worked with a wide range of faith groups and inter faith initiatives to put on a week-long programme of events for Inter Faith Week across a number of years, involving people of many backgrounds and ages and different types of organisation such as Leicester Council of Faiths. Riaz will talk about how the Centre and those with whom it works use IFW to profile the minority faiths, as well as to engage the major faiths. Minou Cortazzi will be speaking about how the programme is a</p>

	<p>chance for one of the smaller communities, Baha'is, to engage with the wider community, in cooperation with the Centre.</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p><u>Young people to the fore</u></p> <p>Ben Shapiro, 3FF's ParliaMentor's Progamme, talks about 3FF's Interfaith Youth Summit in Inter Faith Week – a new development last year and planned again for 2016. This has an intercultural as well as an inter faith dimension.</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p> <p>Chan Parmar, Strategic Officer, Bolton Inter Faith Council and Meera Solanki, Bolton Interfaith Young Ambassadors give an insight into Bolton's varied Inter Faith Week programmes and how they have developed an active involvement by and with young people.</p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>
12.30	<p>Launch of the Inter Faith Week Toolkit</p> <p>Formal launch of toolkit on developing successful Inter Faith Week activities</p> <p>IFN Trustees and Suzanne Kochanowski, Head of Faith and Race, Integration Division, Department for Communities and Local Government</p> <p>This year IFN has produced a new short toolkit 'The Inter Faith Week Toolkit: Developing Successful Activities'. It draws on many images and ideas from those who have held Inter Faith Week events and is a practical – but we hope inspiring – guide to encourage even wider involvement in Inter Faith Week!</p>
12.45	Lunch
13.45	<p>EGM</p> <p>A separate Agenda and papers have been circulated.</p>
15.30	Close

The Inter Faith Network for the UK

Inter faith understanding, respect and cooperation is ever more important in the UK today.

The Inter Faith Network for the UK (IFN) links and works with national faith community representative bodies, inter faith organisations, academic and educational organisations with an interest in inter faith relations, as well as with other organisations including Government and other public agencies, to strengthen inter faith understanding and cooperation in the UK. IFN is unique in its scope and role both within the UK and in Europe. It has been bringing organisations and people together for over 25 years and its work is always evolving to meet fresh needs.

IFN carries out its work of strengthening good inter faith relations through:

- providing advice and support to inter faith organisations around the country to add value to their work
- running a helpline which each year assists hundreds of people with their inter faith projects or issues
- advocating for support of local inter faith groups and national and regional inter faith initiatives
- producing resources, in cooperation with its members, on issues of common concern such as faith based dietary practice
- bringing its member bodies and others together regularly to meet and discuss issues of common concern
- other programmes of work including Faith and public Life and Inter Faith Week

For more information about IFN, visit www.interfaith.org.uk.

The work of IFN is supported by faith communities, trusts, other donors, and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Inter Faith Week



Inter Faith Week was proposed by the IFN Executive Committee to Government during the consultation process which led to the publication of *Face to Face and Side by Side* in 2008.

Following wide consultation with member bodies, as well as more widely, Inter Faith Week was launched in England and Wales in November 2009.

It drew upon the pioneering Scottish Interfaith Week, which had been running since 2004.

Northern Ireland joined the Week from 2010.



The aims of the Week:

- Strengthening good inter faith relations at all levels
- Increasing awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- Increasing understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

The aims of the Week:



- Strengthening good inter faith relations **at all levels**
- Increasing awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular **celebrating and building** on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- **Increasing understanding** between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

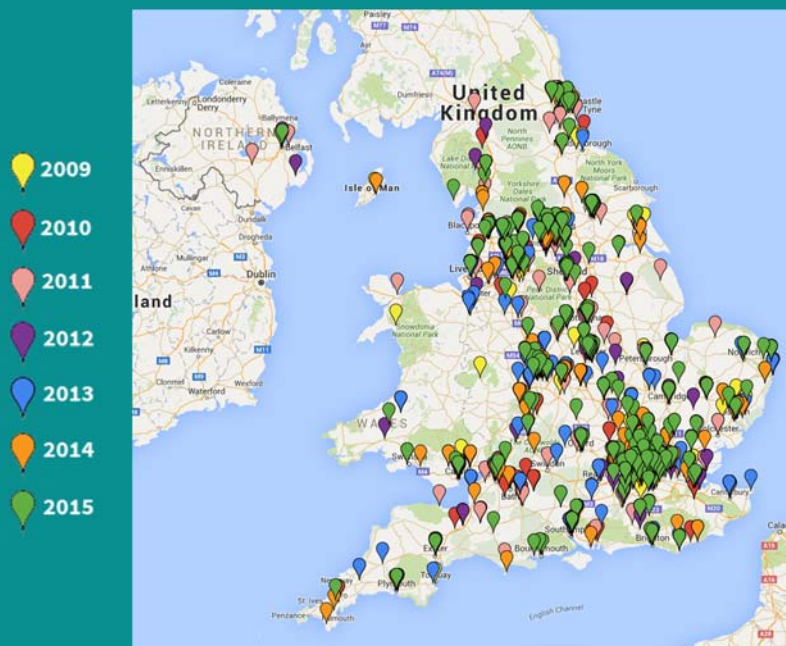


Over 2,900 events have taken place to mark the Week since 2009

Number of Inter Faith Week events by year



*Pump-priming funding was available for event holders until 2011



Dialogue, discussion, debate



Education, sharing, learning



Music, arts, culture, sport



Working Together

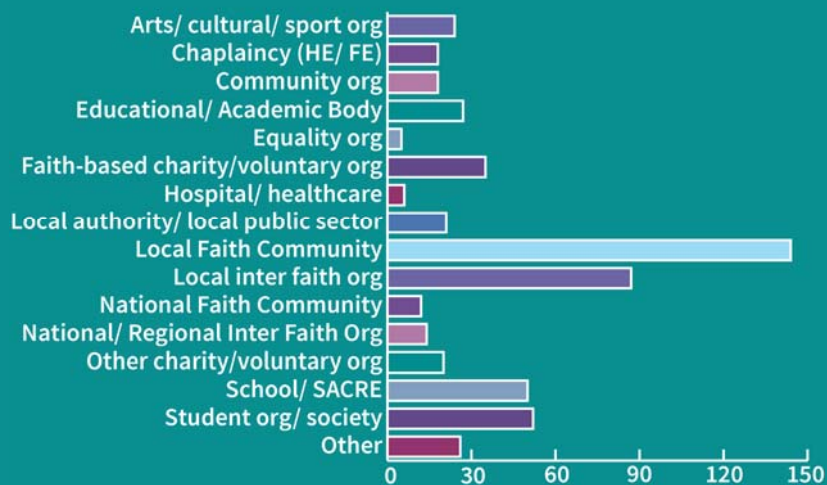


Standing together



Continually evolving...

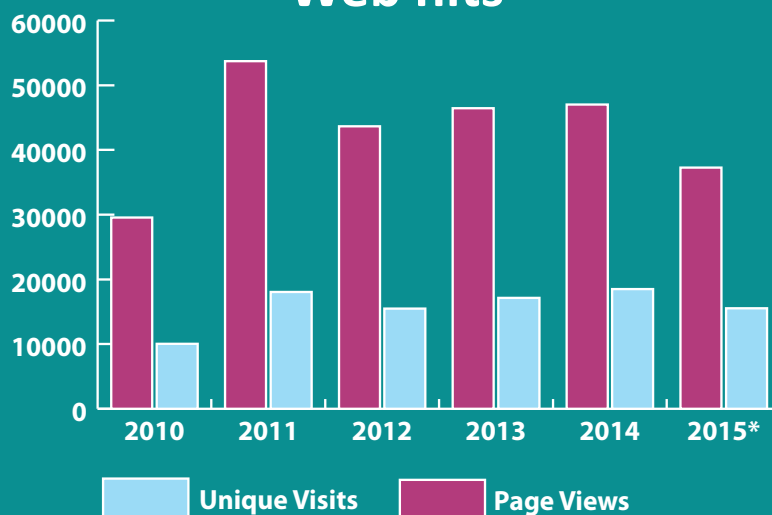
Types of organisation marking Inter Faith Week 2015



Continually evolving...



Web hits



* The IFW website was hacked and unavailable for 40 hours during what is usually the period with highest volume of hits. Some traffic was redirected to the IFN website.

Social media



Social media - Twitter



Social media by the numbers

Hashtags

- Twitter reach – 3.4 million users
- Twitter impressions – 11.5 million

Mentions

- Twitter @mentions – 5,200
- Twitter @mention impressions – 740,000

Facebook

- Facebook reach – 42,000 users

“Inter Faith Week is now a well-regarded fixture in the faith calendar and I am delighted it is going from strength to strength”

– Rt Hon David Cameron MP
Prime Minister

“Inter Faith Week is an excellent opportunity for people to come together and celebrate the rich diversity of our communities”

– Communities Minister,
Baroness Williams of Trafford





13-20 November 2016

In England, Northern Ireland,
and Wales
and Scottish Interfaith Week

Copyright © The Inter Faith Network for the UK 2016. Images used with permission.

Inter Faith Week in Leicester



Faith in Music Event



Family Interfaith Trail



StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

Faith Thru' a Lens Exhibition



StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

Christian-Jewish Study Day



StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

Pulpit Exchange – Mosque & Cathedral



StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

Family Games Evening



StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

Children's Art Competition



StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

Mitzvah Day



StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

Puppet Show & Workshop



StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

Bahá'í Unity Feast



StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

Publicity

Inter Faith Week 2013
in Leicester & Leicestershire



Inter Faith Week 2013
in Leicester & Leicestershire
17-21 November



Inter Faith Week
15th to 21st November 2013

StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester
study & engagement in a multi faith society

StPhilip'sCentre
Leicester & Leicestershire



Citizens Aware



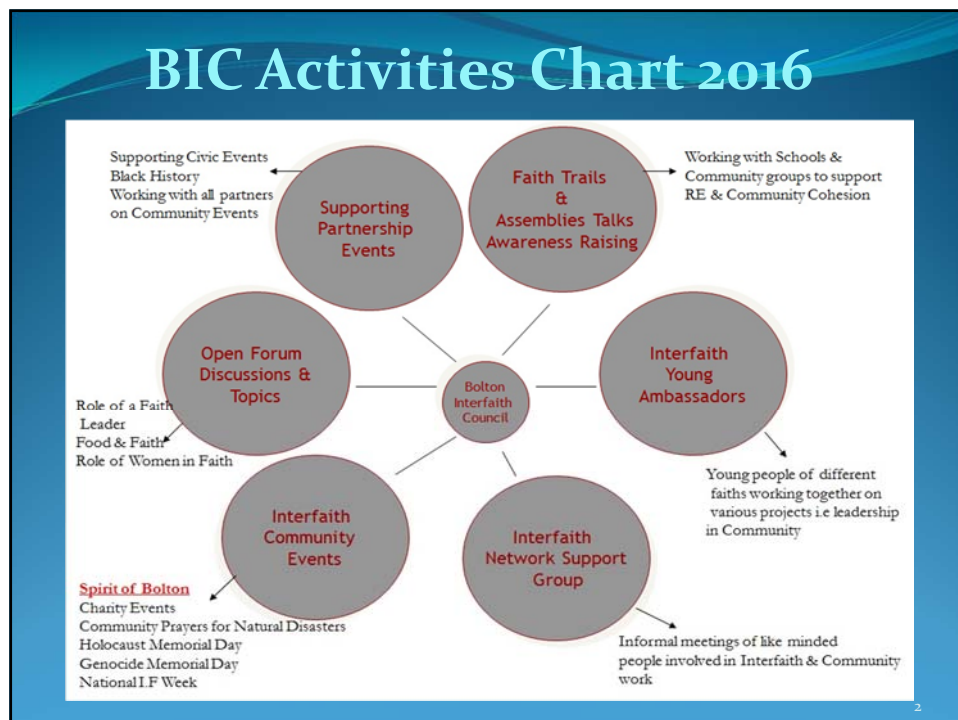
Leicester City Council



























17

Thank You

Strength of BIC is in it's openness,
transparency and willingness to
work together in sustainable
partnerships to engage with our
diverse community

18