



Inter Faith Network Newsletter

September/October 2023

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FAITH AND PUBLIC LIFE UPDATES

UK Commission on Covid Commemoration report

The UK Commission on Covid Commemoration's final report on how the Covid pandemic should be remembered across the UK was published on 18 September. The Commission has made 10 recommendations to the Government on how to make sure the events of the pandemic and the experiences that people went through are not forgotten. The Commission's recommendations include preserving existing memorials, including the National Covid Memorial Wall in central London, holding a national day of reflection every year and identifying green spaces across the UK to serve as Covid memorial spaces. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport will now work with other government departments and the Devolved Administrations to consider the recommendations and respond in due course. The full report can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-commission-on-covid-commemorations-final-report>.

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A Level and GCSE Religious Studies and teacher recruitment

The Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) has reported that 15,438 Religious Studies A level entries were recorded in England and Wales this year, a decline of 4.5 percent from 2022. However, between 2003 and 2022, A level Religious Studies has been one of the fastest growing subjects at A level, with an increase of 39 percent in the number of entries to the subject. <https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/2023/08/fall-in-a-level-rs-entries-sees-calls-for-action-for-specialist-teacher-recruitment/>

The REC also notes that the number of students in England and Wales taking a GCSE course in Religious Studies has remained stable at 253,906, up by a margin of 0.3% from last year. <https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/2023/08/religious-studies-remains-a-popular-gcse-despite-specialist-teacher-recruitment-challenge/>

The REC warns that a shortage in specialist teachers means some schools, particularly in the Midlands and North East, are now struggling to offer the subject at A level. The latest UCAS data showed that applicants to train to teach the subject have fallen by a third.

A group of cross-party peers, MPs, and religious educators wrote to Secretary of State Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP, calling on the Government to address the crisis in teaching and recruitment of Religious Education teachers, including underfunding and a need for the introduction of training bursaries.

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2023/22-september/news/uk/cross-party-group-deplores-lack-of-government-funding-for-religious-education>
[Letter-to-Secretary-of-State-for-Education-Religious Education.pdf \(natre.org.uk\)](#)

On 12 September, a House of Commons Education Select Committee Inquiry into teacher recruitment, retention and training heard evidence from the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) about a number of subjects that had repeatedly missed their Department for Education recruitment targets, of which Religious Education was the only one without financial incentives to encourage recruitment into training.

<https://committees.parliament.uk/event/19264/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/NATRE-Speak-at-Oral-Education-Select-committee-hearing-on-Recruitment-and-retention>

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Edinburgh Council Education Committee religious representatives' voting rights removed

Councillors have voted to remove voting rights from unelected religious representatives from the Church of Scotland, the Roman Catholic Church and Edinburgh Interfaith Association who sit on Edinburgh Council's Education Committee. The voting powers dated back to 1918 when control of Catholic schools was handed over to the state from the church and different faith groups had expressed a strong desire to see them retained.

<https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/edinburgh-council-strip-voting-rights-27628921>

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National Content Standard for RE in England published

The Religious Education Council of England and Wales published, in September, a National Content Standard. This provides clarification and a benchmark for 'excellence in religion and worldviews/religious education (RE) in England'. It is a non-statutory benchmark for syllabus providers and other bodies to evaluate their work. It provides a standard by which different RE curricula, content, pedagogy, and provision can be benchmarked.

The document has been developed around extracts from a draft resource released in May 2022 which has been the focus of subsequent consultation and scrutiny. The final version of the resource will form a handbook for curriculum developers in the subject and is due for completion in Spring 2024. The RE Council has partnered with a range of contributors in the national RE sector in this project.

<https://religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resource/national-content-standard-1st-edition-2023/>

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Hate crime

SikhGuard, a national platform designed to encourage members of the Sikh community to report incidents of hate crime was given a formal launch in Nottingham in August at an event organised by Nottinghamshire Police in Siri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara Sikh Temple. SikhGuard (sikhguard.org) aims to make it easier for people from within the community who have experienced abuse to come forward and report it to the police.

<https://www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/news/nottinghamshire/news/news/2023/august/force-leads-awareness-launch-of-national-platform-tackling-anti-sikh-hate/>

CST report on Antisemitic incidents

In August the Community Security Trust published its report on Antisemitic Incidents from January to June 2023. [Antisemitic Incidents Report January-June 2023](#)

It shows 803 instances of anti-Jewish hate recorded across the UK in the first six months of this year. This is a 2% decrease from the 823 incidents reported in the first half of 2022. 26% of the incidents were of abuse online - an increase of 37% from the online incidents recorded in the first half of 2022.

Tell Mama report on Anti-Muslim Hate

Tell Mama have published a report on case numbers and classifications of anti-Muslim hate cases covering a decade from 2012-2022, in the course of which there has been a doubling of verified and confirmed anti-Muslim hate cases reported to Tell MAMA. The report looks at the nature of these and factors linked with them.

<https://tellmamauk.org/a-decade-of-anti-muslim-hate/>

Nazi flags posted near mosque in Dunmurry

In August three Nazi flags bearing swastikas were placed outside the Iqraa Mosque in the Ashley Park area of Dunmurry, Northern Ireland.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/prayer-service-hears-condemnation-of-nazi-flags-outside-mosque-in-west-belfast/a277109863.html>

Local response included a community rally. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-66627909> The Muslim Council of Britain issued a statement noting that this was not an isolated incident and urged the UK Government to take action.

<https://mcb.org.uk/mcb-condemns-nazi-activity-in-northern-ireland-calls-for-uk-government-intervention/>

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REPORT HATE CRIMES AND INCIDENTS AND WORK TOGETHER TO HELP TACKLE THEM

Report hate crimes and incidents online through True Vision or via 3rd parties eg Community Security Trust (CST); Tell Mama UK; Sikhguard; and Stop Hate UK; at a police station; or by ringing the police on 101 (non-emergency) or 999.

<https://gov.uk/report-hate-crime>

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/report-hate-crime-and-third-party-reporting/>

<https://reporthate.victimsupport.org.uk/hate-crime/>

<https://www.psni.police.uk/crime/hate-crime/reporting-a-hate-crime/>

See also *Looking after one another: the safety and security of our faith communities* (IFN and partners) which contains practical pointers for working together to counter hate crime.

<https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/looking-after-one-another-the-safety-and-security-of-our-faith-communities-2023>

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Leicester unrest

A year on from disturbances in Leicester, three panellists have been appointed by Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Rt Hon Michael Gove MP to sit on an independent review chaired by Lord Ian Austin, Dr Samir Shah CBE, Professor Hilary Pilkington and Dr Shaaz Mahboob. Speaking on the appointments, Lord Austin said: "Leicester has a proud history of diversity, tolerance and community cohesion which makes what happened last year all the more troubling. We want to listen to people in Leicester to understand last year's events, what can be learned from them and how communities in the city can work together to prevent problems in future."

A DLUHC spokesperson said that the panel would look to establish the facts of the unrest and analyse its causes, with a view to making “practical recommendations” on how to avoid such events in future. It is expected to report next year.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/elizabeth-ii-india-michael-gove-pakistan-lord-b2413414.html>

SOAS University of London Director Professor Adam Habib is supporting a separate independent public inquiry and related research into “violence between members of South Asian communities that took place in the East Midlands city of Leicester in September 2022”. It is chaired by Juan E. Méndez.

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/about/news/soas-support-independent-commission-inquiry-leicester-violence>

Meanwhile, an incident during the Ganesh festival, adjacent to a Hindu temple on Belgrave Road in Leicester, reported at <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/police-accused-disproportionate-response-man-8777174> prompted Leicester Council of Faiths to issue a statement:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=720441606794831&set=a.474839344688393>

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Updated guidance for safeguarding in out-of-school settings

The Department for Education has just published its updated guidance for safeguarding in out-of-school settings, which includes supplementary religious settings. The guidance for providers can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice> and the guidance for parents and carers at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-safeguarding-children-in-out-of-school-settings>.

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Charity Commission social media guidance for charities

The Charity Commission for England and Wales has published new social media guidance for charities. The guidance “makes clear that social media can be a highly effective way for a charity to engage its audiences and communicate about its work but that there are risks involved, which trustees should plan for. The new guidance is clear that charities using social media should have a social media policy in place and should ensure the policy is followed. This is standard practice in many charities and across other sectors and industries, and can help an organisation avoid problems and address issues swiftly if they occur.” The guidance aims to help trustees understand their risks, how their legal duties apply, and what to consider if issues arise.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulator-publishes-new-guidance-on-charities-social-media-use>

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Special Feature – Faith friendly workplaces

There has been increasing interest in how to develop ‘faith friendly’ workplaces. This has been developing over a number of years. For example, both the Equality and Human Rights Commission and ACAS have produced guidance with this purpose.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/religion-or-belief-workplace>
<https://www.acas.org.uk/acas-guide-to-religion-or-belief-discrimination>

Many networks and working groups have been emerging across the last year, such as a Faith and Belief Network at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust and the Religion and Belief Working Groups launched at the Atomic Weapons Establishment. New single faith networks are also emerging. Most recently, a new trade union faith and belief network was launched at the TUC Congress in Liverpool in September. Its purpose is to encourage dialogue between unions, faith organisations and community groups and it aims to explore common ground on the dignity of labour and trade union rights, and in-work poverty.

The growing number of initiatives reflects an increasing awareness by organisations and their employees of the significance of religion and belief – both in terms of staff wellbeing and good workplace relations but also because religious diversity can strengthen organisations, including their understanding of clients’ needs.

As well as new networks emerging, many companies are seeking to strengthen their work in the area of religion and belief. CBREUK, for example launched, during Inter Faith Week last year, 'Holding Faith', described as its first ever practical guide to faith, religion and belief in the workplace, noting that it hoped that “the guidance sparks meaningful conversations and helps break down barriers when it comes to supporting colleagues of faith”. <https://tinyurl.com/yh3dk9t8>

As noted in the last issue of the Newsletter, a new initiative, ‘Faith Friendly Workplaces’ has been formed which is drawing together staff workplace networks from companies around the UK. This emerged from the organisation ‘Transform’ and is being supported with research by the Multi Faith Centre at the University of Derby. A meeting about faith in the workplace was held at 10 Downing Street in July where employers talked with the Prime Minister’s Advisers about encouraging faith-friendly policies and there are plans for a summit in the coming year.

Inter Faith Week offers a great opportunity for companies and staff to explore religion and belief issues and to start, develop and deepen initiatives.

For the 2021 Week, the Inter Faith Network provided a special Inter Faith Blog for the Employers’ Network for Equality and Inclusion on this. <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/resources/workplaces> Here are just a few ‘top tips’ from the Blog for employers and employees based on our work in this area.

Consider how your company/workplace is responding to faith and belief issues

- What faith and inter faith networks are operating in our company or workplace? Would it be helpful to support new networks into being?
- How are we encouraging religion and belief literacy in the workplace?
- Is our corporate climate one that is ‘faith and belief friendly’, where people feel comfortable to bring that aspect of their identify to work?
- Workplace provision – How are we responding to needs for example appropriate catering options, prayer/mediation space, and pastoral/spiritual support?
- Are we recruiting in a way which encourages diversity in the applicant base?
- How strong is the religion and belief dimension of our equalities policy and implementation?

- How may our company/workplace benefit from its diverse workforce, including those of different faiths and beliefs?

Encourage and enable people to bring the faith and belief dimension of their lives to work

People work best when they feel that they can bring their whole selves to the work place. Where people feel that they are welcomed and that inclusion of faith or belief is apparent, it can have a positive impact on a person's wellbeing and approach to work and colleagues.

Create/encourage staff networks to develop inter faith understanding and good relations within the workforce

Faith and belief are not always fully understood. Developing networks can help increase religious literacy and foster stronger relationships and good relations in the workplace. You could:

- Encourage single faith based staff networks (e.g. Hindu, Muslim or Christian network)
- Support the setting up of a multi faith staff network

Remember to allow people to self-define and to explain faith or non-religious belief from their own perspective: people practise their faith in a range of ways.

Hold special events to increase understanding and build good inter faith relations

You could:

- Run a webinar for/with your offices around the country on religion and belief issues and the importance of good relations
- Use a platform such as Coffee Roulette or a programme like the Inter Faith Network's 'Inter Faith Buddies' to encourage one to one conversations
- Enable or support particular dialogues, such one between a Muslim and Jewish network, on issues of common interest
- set up occasional online talks – for example about particular topics like faith festivals such as Easter, Wesak or Vaisakhi, or highlighting some of the perhaps less well know traditions such as Baha'i, Pagan, Jain or Zoroastrian faiths
- Hold a discussion about the ways in which religious literacy and dialogue might contribute to and strengthen the realisation of your corporate values.

And don't forget to schedule events in a faith aware way! Check out a multi faith calendar such as the Shap calendar to ensure that events don't clash with particular festivals and talk with your staff of different faiths about questions of timing.

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Inter Faith Week

This year Inter Faith Week will take place across England, Northern Ireland and Wales from Sunday 12 to Sunday 19 November. This will be the 15th Inter Faith Week.

Events and activities

Now is a great time to begin planning an activity for the Week! There are lots of activity ideas and resources to help you run an event at [Resources - Inter Faith Week](#). Another

great resource is '[Strengthening Cooperation and Understanding: Inter Faith Week 2022](#)'. This is packed with examples and pictures of how the Week was marked by faith and inter faith organisations, local authorities, emergency services, universities, colleges, schools, hospitals and hospices, sports bodies, museums, libraries, and many others.

A Zoom 'tips and planning session' will take place on 4 October (further information under [Diary Dates](#)).

Please let us know about your events and activities

IFN maintains an interactive map and calendar listings which will show events happening by town/city across the country. This adds to the buzz of the Week and helps media and others find out what's going on.

If you arrange an activity, please do take a few minutes to tell us about it at www.interfaithweek.org/register. If you register your activity on the website, you can request a free Inter Faith Week registration pack (subject to availability).

The Inter Faith Week logo, flyer, poster, and other branding materials can be downloaded at <http://www.interfaithweek.org/resources/publicity-and-branding>.

Social media

Follow Inter Faith Week on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn:

<https://www.facebook.com/ifweek/>

<https://twitter.com/IFWeek>

<https://www.instagram.com/IFWeek/>

<https://uk.linkedin.com/showcase/ifweek/>

Scottish Interfaith Week

Scottish Interfaith Week will also be held from Sunday 12 to Sunday 19 November.

Running since 2004, it is led by Interfaith Scotland. It has a different theme each year. This year it is 'Community'. www.scottishinterfaithweek.org

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INTER FAITH NETWORK FOR THE UK NEWS

Please support the Inter Faith Network's work to increase inter faith understanding and cooperation

Like many other charities, IFN faces steep challenges in resourcing its work.

If you see the significance of IFN's contribution to the continued development of a harmonious, diverse UK marked by inter faith understanding and cooperation, please do consider a donation to support IFN's work. Contributions at all levels are gratefully received and are used with care to make a real difference.

You can:

- Make a donation by credit card or PayPal at: <https://interfaith.org.uk/donate>
- Donate directly via PayPal at www.paypal.me/ifnetuk
- Donate by BACS to: CAF Bank Ltd, Sort Code: 40-52-40, Account Number: 00019472

- Donate by cheque, payable to 'The Inter Faith Network', to The Inter Faith Network for the UK, Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London, SW1P 3RB.
- Hold a fundraiser for the work of the Inter Faith Network

AT THE MOMENT, DONATIONS ARE BEING MATCHED AND SO HAVE DOUBLE THE VALUE.

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Meeting of IFN and inter faith linking bodies in the devolved nations

In August IFN held a meeting with the inter faith linking bodies in the devolved nations. The meeting was an opportunity for Interfaith Scotland, the Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum and the Inter Faith Council for Wales to share news and good practice and also to discuss Inter Faith Week and Scottish Interfaith Week.

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Day event for local inter faith practitioners

IFN will be holding an online day event for local inter faith organisations from across the UK on 26 October. The event will provide a chance to discuss work and particular issues of interest and concern. Further information has been sent to local inter faith organisations.

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INTER FAITH PROJECTS, PROGRAMMES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Inter Faith Council for Wales 20th Anniversary

The Inter Faith Council for Wales will be marking its 20th Anniversary this year with a concert by the Interfaith Choir of Wales on 23 November. Rehearsals are taking place each week during the Autumn. All are welcome. More information is at <https://www.facebook.com/interfaithcouncilforwales/>.

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Interfaith Scotland monthly 'Interfaith Interactions'

Interfaith Scotland is running a new monthly online series, "Interfaith Interactions". It describes this as an opportunity for people of various faith and belief backgrounds to come together to discuss specific topics each time. This month's theme, for a discussion on 16 October, is 'Prayer', linked to the Week of Prayer for World Peace which runs from 15-21 October.

<https://www.facebook.com/interfaithscotland/posts/pfbid0npy49FTf4dcpXyeupMa1WJx9Qd26XKKNctzr6BjZ1XjyW3wL2e4LQpsW7NMo9rrFl>

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Multi faith tree planting

With the autumn tree-planting period just ahead, a number of multi faith tree plantings are in prospect.

On a visit to Salisbury, HRH Sophie, the Duchess of Edinburgh took part, with Salisbury's first Muslim Mayor, in a tree dedication, unveiling a plaque symbolising unity among multi-

faith communities. The tree (a magnolia) will be planted in Queen Elizabeth Gardens later in the Autumn. <https://www.newvalleynews.co.uk/news/duchess-spends-day-locally/>

Inter Faith Week, 12-19 November, will see a number of other tree plantings. For example, Southend Faith and Belief Network and Wellbeing at Garon Park are inviting Network members, and faith leaders or community leads, to unite together and mark Inter Faith Week by planting a tree and looking after the planet.

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Westminster Interfaith 40th Anniversary

An event was held on 5 September to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Westminster Interfaith (WI). IFN's Executive Director was among those who spoke at the event. The event included the launch of a new edition of 'Transcendence', originally written by Brother Daniel Faivre SG as well as tributes to his work and the work of his colleagues at WI. Westminster Interfaith "exists to live out the Church's call to promote dialogue, respect and collaboration between Catholics and the followers of other religious traditions in the Diocese of Westminster". <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/47958>

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West Midlands Combined Authority Faith Covenant signing

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has become the latest authority to sign up to the Faith Covenant. Signed by Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands and WMCA chair, the covenant commits the WMCA to "working even more collaboratively and consistently with diverse faith communities to deliver a better connected, more prosperous, fairer, greener, and healthier region." The signing took place in September at an event at Walsall College where the leaders of Sandwell and Walsall councils also added their names, with Dudley committing to doing so. Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Solihull and Coventry have already signed the covenant. <https://www.wmca.org.uk/news/mayor-signs-wmca-up-to-faith-covenant/>

The Faith Covenant, set up by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Faith and Society, "a joint commitment between faith communities and local authorities to a set of principles that guide engagement, aiming to remove some of the mistrust that exists and to promote open, practical working on all levels." <https://www.faihandsociety.org/covenant/>

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Building Bridges in Burnley and Burnley Football Club

Burnley Football Club and Burnley FC in the Community have announced Building Bridges Burnley as an Official Charity Partner for the 2023/24 season. The charity partnership aims to enhance awareness and increase understanding of different faith groups within the town. During the season the charity partnership will deliver a programme of events including a Community Iftar, Multi-Faith Football Tournament, Carol Concert and more. <https://burnleyfccommunity.org/building-bridges-burnley-are-clarets-new-charity-partner/>

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Stockport Multifaith Network relaunch

Stockport Multifaith Network has been relaunched with an inaugural roundtable event with Stockport Council on 22 September. The event recognised the contribution of faith groups to supporting residents and in particular its role in combatting food poverty across the borough, with many faith groups taking responsibility for providing food to their communities and other vulnerable people in Stockport.

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/news/faith-leaders-tackling-cost-of-living-head-on>

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Religion Media Centre Creating Connections series

The Religion Media Centre is organising its second series of Creating Connections events, where “local journalists meet religious groups, exploring new stories, breaking down misunderstanding, and showcasing expertise”. The first event in the series was held in Bradford in September. Events will be taking place across October and November in Coventry, Newcastle, Liverpool, Bristol and Norwich. To find out more and sign up to attend, visit <https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/creating-connections/>.

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Faith festivals

National and local inter faith bodies often highlight festivals through meetings, social media posts and other online features. For example, Lancashire Forum of Faiths made a series of videos with interviews with people of different faiths on their main festivals.

<https://www.youtube.com/@interfaithlancashire4399>

The Women’s Interfaith Network (WIN) is currently running a regular blog series where members and friends of WIN are invited to prepare a ‘festival diary’, exploring the history and significance of specific rituals or outlining the routine of religious celebrations, as a window into the lived experience of people of different faiths. The latest blog is from a Jain member of their Gants Hill group and explores the Jain festival of Paryushana or Das Lakshana and its roots in Jain philosophy and

ethics. <https://wominet.org.uk/2023/09/07/blog-festival-diary-paryushana-das-lakshana-by-jiwan-jain/>

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RESOURCES AND STUDY/TRAINING

Resources

Deep Connections: Women’s local inter faith initiatives in the UK

Hard copies are now available of *Deep Connections: Women’s local inter faith initiatives in the UK*, launched by IFN earlier this year. For more information, email

ifnet@interfaith.org.uk.

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UKWFN Toolkit on Gender Equality

Religions for Peace UK Women of Faith Network has launched ‘Gender Equality Empowerment For All A Dialogue to Action Toolkit’. The toolkit gives the context for

UKWFN's projects, shares its experiences of delivering the projects, its methodology, and gives further scope for development. UKWFN's aim is to see the toolkit being used "by faith, interfaith, secular communities/groups, and educational/ governmental sectors to challenge the inequalities that exist in our communities and society". The toolkit can be downloaded at <https://www.rfpuk.org/resources/202306TOOLKIT.pdf>. For information about UKWFN projects, visit www.linktr.ee/rfp_UKWFN.

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CALLS FOR INFORMATION, COMPETITIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Calls for information

ONS Consultation on population and migration statistics

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is running a public consultation on plans for its transformation of population and migration statistics in England and Wales. <https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics> These statistics cover a wide range of areas, including household characteristics, employment, health, religion and international migration. The consultation document "explains the ONS's proposals to create a sustainable system for producing essential, up-to-date statistics about the population. To do this, the system would primarily use administrative data such as tax or benefit data, complemented by survey data and a wider range of data sources. This could replace the current reliance on the census every ten years. This consultation is seeking views on how these proposals meet the needs of users of ONS statistics compared to a system based on a census." The consultation closes on 26 October. For help or further information about the consultation, email 2023consultation@ons.gov.uk.

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Consultations on the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act

The Scottish Government has launched four consultations on regulations to be made under the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016. The consultations are on alkaline hydrolysis, burials, inspection of the funeral sector, and the licensing of funeral directors. While comments are welcome on all four consultations, respondents can choose to answer any number. All four consultations are available at <https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/consultation-collection/> and are open until 17 November. Enquiries can be sent to BurialAndCremation@gov.scot.

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Scottish Government Consultation on RSHP education in schools

The Scottish Government is consulting on the RSHP (Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood) education to be delivered in schools. There are five new sections in the draft revised guidance, including one on faith and belief. The consultation details are at <https://consult.gov.scot/learning-directorate/teaching-guidance-for-relationships-sexual-health/> and the consultation closes on 23 November. Enquiries can be sent to personalandsocialeducation@gov.scot.

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JOBS, INTERNSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERING

The Inter Faith Network for the UK – Honorary Treasurer

The Inter Faith Network for the UK is currently seeking a new Honorary Treasurer. This is an important role which helps IFN take forward its work effectively. While the Honorary Treasurer is not required to lead on fundraising, some support on that front will be an important aspect of their role. For more information, visit <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/involved/vacancies/volunteering>.

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The Inter Faith Network for the UK - Volunteers

The Inter Faith Network for the UK currently has an opportunity for online volunteers with good desk research and writing skills who would like to offer 4-8 hours a week to help on different aspects of IFN's work to promote inter faith understanding and cooperation in the UK. To express an interest in volunteering, please complete the application form at <https://www.interfaith.org.uk/involved/vacancies/volunteering>.

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Multi-Faith Centre at the University of Derby – Marketing and Events Manager

The Multi-Faith Centre at the University of Derby is seeking to recruit a part time Marketing and Events Manager. The purpose of the role is to increase the profile of the Multi Faith Centre, through varied digital communication channels, as well as event planning and management. The role will also entail providing office administration support, such as being the first point of contact for general enquiries. The deadline for applications is 5 October. For more information, including how to apply, visit <https://multifaithcentre.org/news/job-vacancy-marketing-administration-executive>.

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St Ethelburga's Centre - Volunteers

The St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace currently has a number of volunteer roles available, from internships to event helper and translators. More information is at <https://stethelburgas.org/get-involved/vacancies-and-volunteering/>.

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FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund

The UK Government's Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund, administered via the National Lottery Community Fund, is now open. This funding is for organisations that support people and communities under severe pressure because of the increased cost of living. Organisations can apply for between £10,000 and £75,000. To apply, the organisation must already run critical services, such as providing food and emergency supplies, emergency shelters or warm spaces. The deadline for applications is 16 October.

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/community-organisationscost-of-living-fund>

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The Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund

The Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund has a small grants programme for UK registered non-profit organisations supporting grassroots projects in diverse and deprived communities. Among its funding themes are 'social inclusion', which is described as including "Community and art projects that aim to relieve poverty, loneliness and other social issues or support the welfare of the elderly, veterans and interfaith cohesion." The next round of applications opened on 1 August. <https://www.pwcf.org.uk/apply-grant>

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UK Government Find a Grant programme

The UK Government's Find a Grant programme currently includes 53 grant schemes and can be found at <https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/>.

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Funding websites

My Funding Central is a database of grant funding and social investment sources. This service is available to organisations with an annual income below £1m and is free for organisations under £30k. <https://www.myfundingcentral.co.uk/> Similar websites for funding in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can be found at Funding Scotland - <https://funding.scot/>, Wales Council for Voluntary Action - <http://www.wcva.cymru./funding> and Grant Tracker for Northern Ireland - <https://www.grant-tracker.org/>.

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FCC Community Action Fund

The FCC Communities Foundation is offering grants between £2,000 and £100,000 for projects which involve the provision, maintenance or improvement of public amenities including community spaces in places of worship, which are registered charities. Projects must be based within 10 miles of an eligible FCC Environment waste facility. The next round closes on 6 December. <https://fcccommunitiesfoundation.org.uk/funds/fcc-community-action-fund>

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SPECIAL WEEKS/DAYS/MONTHS

National Hate Crime Awareness Week takes place from Saturday 14 October to Saturday 21 October. <https://nationalhcaw.uk/>

Week of Prayer for World Peace takes place from Sunday 15 to Sunday 22 October. This year's theme is 'Praying with hope in a troubled world'. <https://weekofprayerforworldpeace.co.uk/>

Islamophobia Awareness Month takes place each year during November. Its theme this year is #muslimstories. <https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/>

Inter Faith Week, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, will take place from Sunday 12 to Sunday 19 November. www.interfaithweek.org

Scottish Interfaith Week will be held from Sunday 12 to Sunday 19 November. It is led by Interfaith Scotland. This year's theme will be 'Community'.
www.scottishinterfaithweek.org

Mitzvah Day will take place on Sunday 19 November. It is an annual day of faith-based social action led by the Jewish community. Many events and projects held for the day have an inter faith focus. Its theme this year is 'Repairing the World'. www.mitzvahday.org.uk/

Holocaust Memorial Day takes place on 27 January. Its theme in 2024 is 'Fragility of Freedom'. <https://www.hmd.org.uk/>

World Interfaith Harmony Week takes place from 1 to 7 February. It is a UN recognised Week which was proposed to the UN General Assembly by HM King Abdullah of Jordan.
<https://worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com/>

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DIARY DATES

A few examples of forthcoming events are listed below. They are virtual, except where noted.

In addition, the listing below, IFN carries inter faith activity listings on its website: www.interfaith.org.uk.

York Interfaith Group is holding its next meeting on Tuesday 3 October. The topic will be 'Sacred Books (part two) - Insights from the Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths'. The speakers will be Rabbi Elisheva Salamo (Jewish), Canon Christopher Collingwood (Christian) and Roderic Vassie (Muslim). It is being held from 7.00pm to 8.45pm at the City of York Council, West Offices, Station Rise, York YO1 6GA. For more information, email yorkinterfaithgroup@gmail.com.

The Inter Faith Network for the UK is holding a short lunchtime Zoom session on Wednesday 4 October on preparing for Inter Faith Week, with: Tips and ideas for people thinking about possible activities to hold; Pointers for promoting activities to reach more people; Thinking about monitoring and evaluation of activities; and a Q and A session with the Inter Faith Week team at IFN. It is being held from 12.30pm to 1.30pm. To attend, register [here](#) by midday on 3 October.

Council of Christians and Jews (South East branch) is organising a visit to Ightham Mote in Kent on Wednesday 4 October. The theme for the visit will be 'Searching for and Concealing Religious Identity: remarkable stories of search and concealment in an English country house during times of enormous change'. Amanda-Jane Doran, Collections and House Manager at Ightham Mote, will be speaking about her unexpected findings, while preparing the Exhibition 'Country Houses, Jewish Homes'. For booking and further information, email stephenweil6@gmail.com.

The **Multi Faith Centre at the University of Derby** is holding a talk on Wednesday 4 October by Jeff Halper, an Israeli anthropologist, the Director of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions and a founding member of the One Democratic State Campaign. The topic for his talk will be 'One Democratic State In Palestine/Israel: Is it time To Get Political?'. It is being held from 7pm to 9pm at the Multi Faith Centre, University of Derby, Kedleston Road, Derby DE22 1GB. For more information, and to book, visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/one-democratic-state-in-palestineisrael-is-it-time-to-get-political-tickets-705184123697>.

Bedford Council of Faiths is holding its next meeting on Wednesday 4 October. The theme will be 'Organ Donation' and the speaker will be Tarsem Paul. It is being held at 7.30pm at The Chapel Room, Priory Methodist Church, 63 Newnham Avenue, Bedford, MK41 9Q3. A Zoom link will be provided nearer the date of the meeting for those unable to attend the face-to-face session. For more information, email bedfordcounciloffaiths@gmail.com.

Interfaith MK is holding its next meeting on Thursday 5 October. This will be a roundtable open discussion on 'Life after Life'. Participants are invited to "prepare an interesting description (5 mins max) of their views on life after life, also commonly described as life after death". It is being held from 7.30pm to 9pm at Whaddon Way Church, Beaverbrook Court, Bletchley, MK3 7JS. For more information, email interfaithmk@gmail.com.

Interfaith Scotland is holding its Annual Interfaith Lecture on Wednesday 11 October. The Lecture will be delivered by Zara Mohammed, Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain, on the theme of 'Leadership for Peaceful Co-Existence'. It is being held from 6pm to 8.30pm at the Interfaith Scotland Dialogue Centre, 110 Flemington Street Glasgow G21 4BF. For more information, visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/interfaith-scotlands-annual-interfaith-lecture-agm-2023-tickets-698885193427>.

The **St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace** is holding an informal lunchtime gathering on Wednesday 11 October to mark the Feast of St Ethelburga. This will be a community celebration, informal meet-up with mulled juice and seasonal nibbles. It is being held from 12pm to 2pm at the St Ethelburga's Centre in London. For more information, visit <https://stethelburgas.org/event/st-ethelburgas-feast-day-4/>.

Calderdale Interfaith is holding its General Open Meeting & Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 11 October. It is being held at 7pm at Hamza Mosque, Eagle Street, Todmorden, OL14 5HQ. For more information, email Calderdaleinterfaith@gmail.com.

The **Multi Faith Centre at the University of Derby** is holding its AGM on Thursday 12 October. It is being held from 4.30pm to 5.30pm at the Multi Faith Centre, University of Derby, Kedleston Road, Derby DE22 1GB. For more information, and to book, visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/multi-faith-centre-annual-general-meeting-tickets-705206540747>.

Essex Faith Covenant is holding a conference on Wednesday 18 October on 'Belief and Blue Lights: Working Together to Demolish Hate Crime and Build Resilience'. The programme will include senior officers from each of the emergency services as keynote speakers. It is being held from 9am to 3.30pm at Chelmsford Cathedral. For more information, and to book, visit <https://www.essexfuture.org.uk/boards-networks/essex-faith-covenant/belief-and-blue-lights-conference/>.

Council of Christians and Jews (Manchester branch) is holding an event on Thursday 19 October on 'Jewish-Christian Relations since the Second World War: A Miracle in our

Lifetime?'. The speakers will be Sister Teresa Brittain NDS, the Revd Canon Steve Williams and David Arnold. It is being held at 7.30pm. To register, visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZU5f-2ppz8jG9Qzn-PKoK5juetQepJXttQ9>.

Faith for the Climate will be collaborating with **St John's Church in Waterloo**, London for UK Black History Month in October and Inter Faith Week (12-19 Nov) on Exploring Spirit "interfaith season of arts, film, reflection, talks, worship, prayer and meditation which will bring together nature, the climate crisis and the spiritual journey". Details of events, which are being held between 19 October and 20 November, are at <https://faithfortheclimate.org.uk/events/exploring-spirit-uk-black-history-month-and-interfaith-week/>.

Redbridge Faith Forum is holding its Annual Walk of Peace on Sunday 22 October. This is a gentle stroll through central Ilford, visiting different faith venues, that brings together people from many diverse faith communities in Redbridge in a spirit of fellowship and harmony. The theme for this year's walk is 'Faith – Finding peace within'. It begins at 12.50pm at the Holocaust Memorial Garden, Valentines Park, Ilford and ends at 4pm at Karamsar Gurdwara, 400 High Road, Ilford. Participants can join/leave at any point. Refreshments will be served at some faith venues but please bring your own refillable water bottle. For more information, email faith.forum@redbridge.gov.uk.

Southwark Multi Faith Forum is organising an Interfaith Walk on Sunday 22 October. The event will start at 12.30pm at Qing Liang Buddhist Association 111 Consort Road SE15 3RU. There will then be a walk to Peckham Islamic Centre Choumert Road Se15 4PD and then to Copleston Church and community centre, Copleston Road, where there will be food and refreshments. To register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/southwark-interfaith-walk-2023-tickets-723448302347>.

The **World Congress of Faiths** is holding its annual Youngusband Lecture on Wednesday 25 October. The Revd Dr Stephen Albert, Director of the World Interfaith Network and creator of Interfaith Awareness Week, will be speaking from California on 'Beyond the Golden Rule'. It is being held at 6pm. For more information, and to register, email admin@worldfaiths.org.

More information on events and projects in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales:

Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum: www.niinterfaithforum.org

Interfaith Scotland: www.interfaithscotland.org

Inter-faith Council for Wales: <https://www.interfaithcouncilwales.cymru/>

IFN also carries news and information at www.twitter.com/IFNetUK www.facebook.com/IFNetUK and, about Inter Faith Week, at <https://twitter.com/IFweek> and www.facebook.com/IFWeek.

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You can sign up to IFN mailings at any time by using the form on IFN's website at: www.interfaith.org.uk/news/gdpr or let us know that you would like to unsubscribe by emailing ifnet@interfaith.org.uk.

**SUPPORT THE INTER FAITH NETWORK'S WORK
TO INCREASE INTER FAITH UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION**

The Inter Faith Network for the UK works for inter faith understanding and cooperation in the UK. Please help us grow this vital work by making a donation at: <https://interfaith.org.uk/donate> (including PayPal option).

Donations can also be made by sending a cheque payable to 'The Inter Faith Network' to: The Inter Faith Network for the UK, Mary Sumner House, 24 Tufton Street, London, SW1P 3RB.

Donations are used with care to make a real difference.

Thank you!

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**MAKE A GIFT TO SUPPORT THE INTER FAITH NETWORK'S WORK IN REMEMBRANCE
OF A FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND OR THROUGH A LEGACY**

If you would like to make a gift in memory of a loved one, please get in touch by emailing remember@interfaith.org.uk or call us on 0207 730 0410.

By leaving a gift in your will to the Inter Faith Network for the UK, you can leave a living inheritance to help deepen and strengthen inter faith understanding and cooperation in this country – for now and for the future. If you are thinking about making a will, the best thing to do is to get in touch with a professional will writer, such as a solicitor or advocate; they can help to ensure it is legally correct and that your wishes are met. If you have already made a will, you can still make an addition or amendment in the form of a codicil. If you would like to pledge a gift, please provide our name and address, along with our registered charity number 1068934.

Please get in touch with us if you have any queries.

You can call us on 0207 730 0410 or contact us at remember@interfaith.org.uk.

Remember a Charity has produced a helpful resource called 'Making a Will - your complete guide'. This can be found at <https://www.rememberacharity.org.uk/making-a-will/>.

Submissions for next issue

If you have items about inter faith projects or future events which you would like considered for inclusion in the next newsletter please email these to ifnet@interfaith.org.uk **by 10 November** with 'newsletter' in the subject line. Submissions may be edited for length or style.

If your organisation distributes a programme, newsletter or e-bulletin, please add ifnet@interfaith.org.uk to your mailing list.

Disclaimer: Information in this newsletter has been sourced and compiled with care. IFN does not take responsibility for accuracy of information supplied by external organisations and inclusion of items within this newsletter does not imply endorsement or validation by IFN of the events, publications or the bodies which have produced these.

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