



Promoting mutual respect
and understanding
Annual Review 2007/2008

The Inter Faith Network for the UK

The Inter Faith Network for the UK was founded in 1987 to “advance public knowledge and mutual understanding of the teachings, traditions and practices of the different faith communities in Britain, including an awareness both of their distinctive features and of their common ground” and to promote good relations between people of different faiths in this country.

The Network links over 160 member bodies including: national representative bodies of the Baha’i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian faiths; national, regional and local inter faith bodies; and educational and academic bodies with an interest in inter faith relations. It works with its member bodies and other agencies to help make the UK a place marked by mutual understanding and respect between people of different religions where all can practise their faith with integrity. It seeks to increase the opportunities for people of all ages to learn more about the importance of good inter faith relations – in schools, within faith communities and in society more widely. It:

- provides a trusted neutral, non-denominational framework for people of different faiths to discuss issues of shared concern, reflecting on both the distinctive aspects and the common ground of their individual traditions
- runs a helpline and publishes resources to help people working to promote good inter faith relations
- links, shares good practice between and supports with advice and information, the growing pattern of inter faith initiatives in the UK at national, regional and local levels
- in cooperation with the Scottish and Welsh national inter faith linking bodies and the English regional faith forums, fosters local inter faith co-operation and offers advice on patterns of local inter faith initiatives suitable to particular local area as well as helpful contacts
- assists member organisations and other agencies, such as local authorities and other public bodies, to help strengthen their inter faith programmes and good practice
- fosters joint working by the faith communities on social issues
- arranges seminars and conferences and carries out research to pursue particular issues in greater depth, such as building good relations on campus, educating for shared citizenship, and women’s inter faith initiatives

The Inter Faith Network’s way of working is firmly based on the principle that dialogue and cooperation on social action can only prosper if they are rooted in respectful relationships which do not blur or undermine the distinctiveness of different religious traditions. In its work, it proceeds by consensus wherever possible and does not make statements on behalf of member bodies except after full consultation.

Further information about the Network can be found on its website: www.interfaith.org.uk or by writing to its office at ifnet@interfaith.org.uk or 8A Lower Grosvenor Place, London SW1W 0EN.



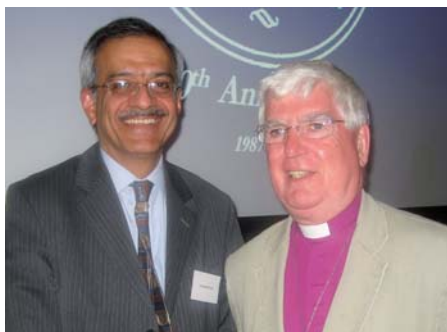
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Co-Chairs' Message



*Dr Nawal Prinja and Rt Rev Dr Tom Butler,
Co-Chairs, Inter Faith Network*

2007/08 has brought significant change in the operating landscape for the Inter Faith Network and for its member bodies. A key reason for this has been the development and publication of the first ever Government document devoted specifically to inter faith dialogue and faith based social action: *Face to Face and Side by Side: A Framework for Partnership in our Multi Faith Society*.

The publication is, of course, a Government one and reflects, as is appropriate, the Government's perspective. But we were pleased that the Inter Faith Network for the UK was able to take an active role in helping develop the document. The Trustees of the Network presented a detailed submission at the consultation stage; member bodies were encouraged to respond to the consultation (and many did); and the Network office was part of the Department for Communities and Local Government's working group. We believe that the way forward set out in this document can increase very significantly the profile of inter faith issues in the UK and encourage much wider participation from people of all ages.

The Government's document has a focus on 'community cohesion'. While this is welcome, inter faith engagement is, of course, not just about 'community cohesion' or general social harmony. People of faith engage with each other because they have particular religious beliefs and forms of practice which shape their lives. It is vital that the Inter Faith Network keeps firmly in the frame the religious and spiritual dimensions of dialogue and inter faith encounter and – as a body which brings together faith based organisations – never forgets this fundamental rootedness in faith and belief and the profoundly personal dimension to our encounters as people of different faiths.

It was for these reasons that we took as the theme for the 2008 National Meeting, "Face to face' and 'heart to heart': people of faith in dialogue" and focused on the importance of dialogue: from everyday discussions as part of our social and working lives to organised encounters and in depth dialogue between members of particular faiths. Young and old, whatever our faith, we all need to listen, hear, talk and learn to move past fear and misconceptions, engage with differences, find common ground and work from this towards a society rooted in shared values and characterised by respect and mutual hospitality.

The 2008 AGM saw a number of new bodies coming into Network membership. There has been an astonishing growth in recent years, particularly at local level, in the number of bodies being set up to develop good inter faith relations. This is due to a number of factors, ranging from the impact of overseas and domestic events (such as the London bombings of 2005) to the Government's Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund (administered by the Community Development Foundation). But it is due also very much to the quiet but growing impact of the work of faith communities, national inter faith organisations and educators to make clear the importance of inter faith work.

There are, of course, challenges which come with the substantial and rapid increase in the number and diversity of inter faith organisations. There can be unintentional duplication of work between bodies and competition for limited amounts of funding. There can also be confusion on the part of potential users or members about how the different initiatives relate to one another. And there has been evidence of this at times across the last year. But the immensely positive side of this diversifying landscape is that there are more hands to the pump and many exciting projects being taken forward.

Linking and promoting the sharing of news and good practice is at the heart of the Inter Faith Network's work. During this year, the Network has stepped up the number of meetings of link meetings for local inter faith bodies in England at regional level, holding these with regional forums, to enable local groups to meet and discuss common challenges and opportunities. Its meeting for national inter faith member bodies in May was a time for these bodies to look at the inter relationship of their work, as was the meeting for the inter faith linking bodies of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and the UK in June. And in the autumn of 2007, a meeting was held for the inter faith personnel of the major faith communities to discuss how their work was developing and how they could learn from each other. As well as Network meetings, the Network office has continued to work with the Faith Based Regeneration Network to service the new English Regional Faith Forums Network.

The Inter Faith Network's Faith Communities Forum has had two meetings this year. One of these was a 'historic first', bringing members together at Church House, at the invitation of the Church of England. This visit – which including an opportunity to see the Church of England Synod in progress – initiated what we hope will be an ongoing programme for faith community members to learn more about each others' work on 'public square issues'. The place of our faith communities within wider society is under increasing debate and it is important for faith communities to do what they can to contribute clearly and effectively to this in constructive ways.



Promoting mutual respect and understanding between the faith communities of the UK

We would like to express our warm appreciation of the work of Network member bodies for their support and involvement this year and the many ways that they are working to build good inter faith relations. The year has seen all of the Network's categories of member bodies developing their own programmes of work to develop good inter faith relations. To find out more about these, visit the Network's website at www.interfaith.org.uk and select the links to their websites.

It has, though, been a challenging year for many inter faith and religious organisations. The year has seen ever greater interest in inter faith issues but many of the bodies responding to this are short on resources. The Inter Faith Network has been advancing the case within Government and more widely for greater support for this area of work. Continuing to do so will be an important part of the Network's work in the coming year. Working with members on raising their profile and making good use of media will be part of this and we were pleased to welcome as a new member of staff in May Paresh Solanki who joined the Network as its Assistant Director (Communications and Development).

The Inter Faith Network itself, while receiving a significant and warmly welcomed Government grant towards its core work, still needs additional resources if it is to take forward its full programme of work. We are most grateful for the donations which have come in from trusts and individuals. We welcome such support and use it well: donations at every level help us deepen the work of building good inter faith relations in the UK. If you are not already a supporter, please consider becoming one and helping the Network continue its vital work.

Last but not least we would like to thank the Network's staff and our fellow officers and other trustees whose hard work and commitment have helped the Network to develop its work further and to rise to new challenges. We are particularly grateful to Harriet Crabtree who has handled her first, very demanding year as Director with skill and enthusiasm.



Rt Rev Dr Tom Butler
Co-Chair, Inter Faith Network



Dr Nawal K Prinja
Co-Chair, Inter Faith Network

Faith communities: working together through the Inter Faith Network

The national representative bodies of the Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian faith communities share a common commitment to working for the wellbeing of wider society and, as part of this, helping to build good inter faith relations in the UK. One very important way they do this is through working together as members of the Inter Faith Network for the UK and being part of its Faith Communities Forum.

Discussing issues of common concern

Participation in the Inter Faith Network helps the national faith community representative bodies as they develop their work in the areas of public life and social action. Their representative bodies meet together as the 'Faith Communities Forum' (FCF) of the Network. Two meetings of the FCF were held during 2007/8. The first of these took place on 13 November in London. The meeting discussed the Government's programme on 'Preventing Violent Extremism'; the report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion and the Government's preliminary response to this, including its proposal for the development of an 'inter faith strategy'; the new Equality and Human Rights Commission and related work of the Religion and Belief Consultative Group; the forthcoming meeting of the Government's Faith Communities Consultative Council; and the FCF's future work. It also discussed the engagement of faith communities with public life issues more generally.

The second meeting of the FCF was held at Church House in London on 14 February. The meeting discussed the Government's consultation document '*Face to Face and Side by Side: A framework for inter faith dialogue and social action*'; the Government's proposal to repeal the blasphemy laws; the recent work of the Religion and Belief Consultative Group and developments relating to the Equality and Human Rights Commission; and planning for the 2011 Census.

Following the FCF's meeting there was a lunch reception and presentation by representatives of the Church of England on the role of the Church in relation to

Responding to consultations: opportunity and challenge

Faith communities contribute in many ways to life in the UK. During the 1990s and early 2000s the Inter Faith Network has worked hard, alongside its members, to raise awareness of the importance of their contribution.

A combination of increased Government willingness to consult, combined with some agencies now having a duty to consult on a range of issues (and to consult all key stakeholders), as well as the ease for consulters of circulating email surveys and consultations has, however, been creating what amounts to something of a quiet crisis in terms of resources within many organisations - not least some faith community bodies.

At the November meeting of the Faith Communities Forum and at various points during the meetings of the Executive Committee and at the National Meeting there has been discussion about the impact on faith community bodies of the ever-growing requests for their advice and assistance.

Members of the Network's Faith Communities Forum attending a session of the Church of England General Synod

L to R: Syed Ali Ausat and Moulana Shabid Raza; Ramesh Kallidai; Aviva Dautch and Rev Daniel Otieno-Ndale; Dr Indarjit Singh

PHOTO: GEOFF CRAWFORD



As many faith community bodies are relatively small and often staffed chiefly by volunteers it can be at times a challenge to respond – especially where consultations are of a detailed nature and call for respondents to sound out their membership. So a number of faith community bodies have this year been stressing the need for capacity building to enable them to develop structures which can engage more strongly with consultations.

They have also expressed a hope that those consulting them will target their consultations more effectively and with more realistic timetables, and will ask for comments at a stage when these can really make a difference rather than when the key decisions seem to have already been made.

At the same time, faith communities continue to welcome the increased opportunities for engagement with Government and other public bodies.

public life issues, including the work of the General Synod. This initiated what is planned to be an ongoing programme within the work of the FCF enabling members to learn about each others' ways of handling 'public square' issues. There was then an opportunity for FCF members to hear some of the afternoon session of the Synod from the public gallery. This was a historic 'first'.

Special focus meeting on national faith communities' inter faith work

A special focus meeting was held by the Inter Faith Network in November for faith communities' personnel with responsibility for inter faith issues. This was a chance to learn from each others' work through discussing programmes and the development of resources to encourage members of faith communities to engage well with people of other faiths.

A major issue flagged up at the November meeting and in a number of other contexts during the year is that there is a real shortage of funding and staff within most faith communities to do this vital inter faith work. It is easier to find donors within a community to support the building of places of worship or development of single faith programmes than to support inter faith work. And Government support through the new Faith in Action Programme will be principally targeted at regional and local inter faith initiatives. Capacity building support to help national faith bodies to deepen their inter faith work is of growing importance.

The Network office continued, during the year, to offer support and advice where requested by the national faith community bodies and to attend and speak at many of their events.

Links to the websites of the national faith community bodies in membership of the Inter Faith Network can be found at www.interfaith.org.uk/mem_faithreps.htm.

Working with the national inter faith linking bodies of Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales

The Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum, the Scottish Inter Faith Council and the Inter Faith Council for Wales are member bodies of the Inter Faith Network for the UK. Each carries out its own programme of work. In the case of the Scottish Inter Faith Council, this includes direct support to, and linking of, local inter faith bodies in Scotland.

To supplement the regular contact which the Inter Faith Network office has with these national bodies over the year, the Network holds an annual meeting with their representatives to exchange news and discuss issues of common concern. In 2008 this took place at the University of Glasgow in June. The Scottish Inter Faith Council was the 'host' national inter faith body for the meeting and its Convenor, Dr Salah Beltagui, welcomed the participants. The University of Glasgow Inter Faith Chaplaincy arranged the meeting rooms for the day. Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond, who was present in the building for a separate meeting that day, joined participants for an informal discussion.

The Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum reported on a refreshing and strengthening of its work this year as well as on plans currently under discussion for an all-Ireland inter religious council. The Inter Faith Council for Wales highlighted a report shortly to be launched on developing inter faith structures for Wales. The Scottish Inter Faith Council reported on wide range of projects, from Scottish Inter Faith Week and the Religious Leaders bi-annual meeting, to a youth work programme and the annual inter faith retreat for women, to work on areas such as prisons, health, education, chaplaincy, immigration and 'stop and search'. The Network office reported on the range of the Network's work and highlighted the significance of the development of English Regional Faith Forums in the context of considering the pattern of future meetings of the Inter Faith Network with the national linking bodies for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Representatives of the national linking bodies of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

Top (L to R) Rev Aled Edwards, Dr Salah Beltagui, Edwin Grabam, Pramila Kaur; Major Alan Dixon, Regina O'Callagan, Nigel Antony, Dr Harriet Crabtree; (L to R) Alex Salmond, Pramila Kaur and Major Alan Dixon; Dr Salah Beltagui



There was discussion at the meeting about a range of issues affecting the UK and national inter faith linking umbrella bodies. In all cases there are questions about how to relate well to Government and how to ensure that the linking bodies help increase the profile of inter faith and faith issues in a way which complements the direct relationships which bodies such as national faith community representative bodies need to have with Government. Facilitation, linking and advocacy – speaking ‘on behalf of’ only where agreed, and not ‘speaking for’ or ‘speaking instead of’ their members is crucial. Other issues discussed included patterns of membership of the different bodies, the relationship between ‘inter faith’ and ‘equalities’ work, and the challenge of funding national inter faith linking work.

English regional faith forums

Regional faith forums are now in place or under development in all of England’s nine regions. While those in London and in the North East have not been formally constituted yet, this year saw them entering the final stages of development. The existing forums are members of the Inter Faith Network which works with them directly and through the new English Regional Faith Forums Network.

What are ‘regional faith forums’ and why are they important?

Every region of England has a Regional Economic Strategy. These strategies are drawn up by the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in consultation, to date, with unelected Regional Assemblies (although these will disappear in 2010) and other partners and stakeholders. Regional faith forums help enable faith groups in their regional contribute to the development of these strategies. They also help contribute to other policy initiatives at regional level.

But the work of regional faith forums has become much broader, especially across the last year. Many work to support faith based social action in their regions and some work with local inter faith bodies to help link and support these. Their key role in the future development of inter faith work in England has been given strong encouragement in the Government’s document *Face to Face and Side by Side*:



East of England Faiths Council guide to Working and consulting with faith communities



Website of Northwest Forum of Faiths



Meeting of the English Regional Faiths Forum

(L to R) Elizabeth Simon, Mgr John Devine, Rev Inderjit Bhogal, Rev Dr John Hall, Dr Harriet Crabtree, Stella Opoku-Owusu, Urmi Raval, Rt Rev James Langstaff, Top - Rev Heather Pencavel, Steve Miller, Dr Doreen Finneron



Website of West Midlands Faiths Forum

A framework for partnership in our multi faith society, which announced that the Government will provide a package of investment and support for the regional forums worth in total £1.89 million across the three year period 2008–2011. The second and third years of the grant will be administered by the Community Development Foundation (CDF) which has also been given a capacity building role in relation to these regional faith forums. CDF, the Inter Faith Network and the Faith Based Regeneration Network (FbRN) will be liaising closely over their work with the forums.

The Inter Faith Network and regional faith forums

The Inter Faith Network has given a good deal of time this year to work in support of the regional faith forums because of their great potential to strengthen inter faith work at local level across the English Regions.

The Network has been working with FbRN since 2006 to help regional forums work together and engage effectively with Government. At the forums' invitation they have, since last year, serviced a new 'link' between these: the English Regional Faith Forums Network (ERFFN). This links those regional faith forums which are recognised by regional governance instruments as the primary forum in their region. Representatives of the forums in development in the London and North East regions attend meetings of ERFFN as participant observers.

This year was a critical period for the development of the forums because of the work being taken forward on developing the Government's inter faith strategy. Three meetings of ERFFN took place in September, January, and May. These enabled forums to discuss their work and their engagement with this process and to formulate points which they wished made to make jointly to the Department for Communities and Local Government and to invite officials for discussion of the development of the strategy eventually set out in *Face to Face and Side by Side*.

It is particularly important for the work of the forums to complement the work of local inter faith bodies. Regional faith forums see themselves as there to 'add value' *not* to undercut local inter faith work.

It is also important for the Inter Faith Network and the regional forums to work in complementary ways in their support for local inter faith work. During the year research was carried out by the Network office with the regional forums to look, in particular, at the complementarity of work at regional and national levels to support local inter faith initiatives. This built on some preliminary research last year by the Network office on the perspectives on this of local inter faith bodies.

During the coming year working out in more detail the relationship between inter faith work at national, regional and local level in England will be a high priority.



Faithnetsouthwest team



*Mark Gifford, Minorities of Europe, and
Dr Brian Walker, Religions for Peace (UK)*



David Gifford, Council of Christians and Jews



*Anne Vince, United Religions Initiative and
Julian Bond, Christian Muslim Forum*

National and special focus inter faith bodies

Among the member bodies of the Inter Faith Network are 17 inter faith organisations and programmes whose work is carried out at UK or national level or which, while holding programmes in a more limited geographical area, are used as a resource by people from across the country. Links to their websites with further information about their work can be found on the Inter Faith Network's website www.interfaith.org.uk

A number of these bodies, such as the Christian Muslim Forum, the Council of Christians and Jews and the Three Faiths Forum work primarily with particular traditions (although in some cases using their bilateral and trilateral expertise to work more broadly). Others, such as the World Congress of Faiths, work with people of any religion or belief. A number focus on particular issues, such as international peace and justice in the case of Religions for Peace (UK) and work with young people in the case of Minorities of Europe. A few, such as the St Philip's Centre for Study and Engagement in a Multi Faith Society and Christians Aware Faith Awareness Programme, are initiatives which are run by particular faith traditions and have a focus on the engagement of these with wider society but seek also to increase understanding between and about faiths beyond their tradition. All these bodies play a vital role in helping provide resources for inter faith work and a wide range of training and opportunities for individuals to take part in and deepen their skills for dialogue.

Keeping these organisations in touch with each other and raising awareness about their work is an important part of the Inter Faith Network's work. It organises an annual meeting of their representatives which this year was held in London in May. As well as sharing news of their work the bodies discussed how the Network might help raise their profile further.

Also discussed at the May meeting of these bodies were issues which fed into the Government's document, *Face to Face and Side by Side: A framework for partnership in our multi faith society*.

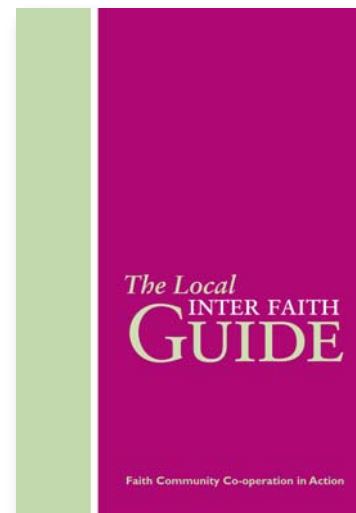
Face to Face and Side by Side focuses on local interaction. However, national inter faith organisations constitute key resources for local projects and they are increasingly called on to provide speakers and ‘know how’. But many are struggling with funding problems which can undercut their ability to help as many people as they would wish. In its exchanges with Government on the development of its inter faith strategy the Inter Faith Network emphasised the importance of this dimension of the work of national inter faith organisations. It was helpful, as one step to enable this, that the Government agreed that these organisations should be eligible to receive funding under the Faiths in Action funding programme for work carried out in support of local inter faith activity.

Inter faith interaction at local level

Local inter faith forums, councils, groups and associations bring people of different faiths together to learn more about one another’s faith and to co-operate in giving advice on religious issues to local public service providers. They also ensure that key members of the different faiths in a locality meet regularly at meetings or special functions. These personal links are crucial to promote mutual understanding; to facilitate constructive engagement on matters of common concern; and to ensure rapid and effective response if problems occur such as attacks on places of worship or tension between different communities. This bringing together of the faiths, in meetings and in civic contexts, also has symbolic importance – not to be underestimated – giving a visible sign of principled peaceful coexistence and co-operation within our society.

Supporting the strong development of inter faith work at local level is a vital part of the Network’s work – both directly and through its work with the Inter Faith Council for Wales, the Scottish Inter Faith Council and English Regional Faith Forums.

The Inter Faith Network’s website has a ‘local inter faith zone’ which gives examples of work that local groups are doing and advice on developing programmes. This resource is widely used by local inter faith practitioners. So too are its helpline and





Local groups are involved in a wide variety of inter faith activities

Clockwise from top left:
Tree planting by a group of volunteers of the Bradford District Faiths Forum
(PHOTO: MICHELLE HESELTINE)

Faith Walk at Luton Central Mosque with Luton Council of Faiths
(PHOTO: ANDREW ADAMS)

Different faiths taste the delights of different foods with Dineatmine – Wycombe Sharing of Faiths
(PHOTO: WSF)

Playing the board game ‘Carom’ – West Wiltshire Interfaith Group
(PHOTO: K HARTLEY)

Young people at Faiths United Tameside event
(PHOTO: FUT)



advice service and its publication *The Local Inter Faith Guide*. Network staff and trustees also visit local groups and respond to speaking requests. These visits are an important part of keeping the Network office in touch with local developments. Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Crawley, High Wycombe, Peterborough, and Redbridge (London) are just a few of the places visited in the past year.

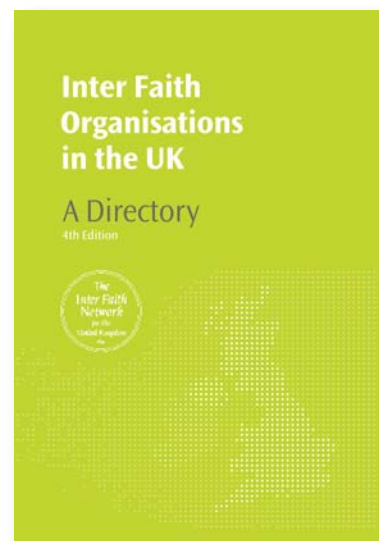
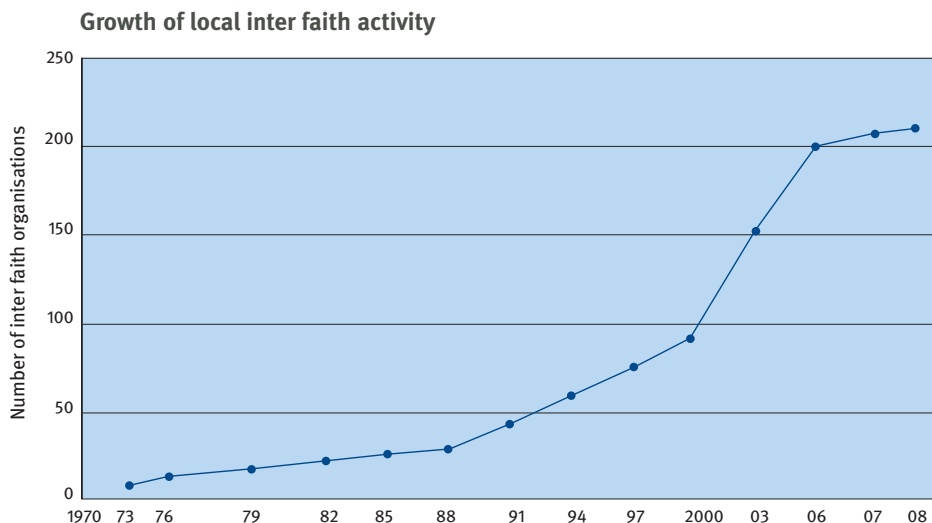
The Inter Faith Network publishes a directory, *Inter Faith Organisations in the UK*, which lists national, regional and local inter faith bodies around the country. Research carried out for the forthcoming 2009 edition shows that around the UK over 275 local inter faith organisations are now working to encourage and develop respect and understanding about and between people of different faith traditions and to increase knowledge about them.

215 of the local organisations are inter faith groups, councils or forums operating on a multi faith basis and working with people from all or most of the major faiths in their areas. New initiatives are continuing to come into existence in towns such as Hastings and Oxford and metropolitan boroughs such as the London Borough of Lambeth and districts of cities such as Pollokshields in Glasgow, as well as larger areas such as Leicestershire and West Cumbria.

Around 60 of these local inter faith bodies operate on a bilateral or trilateral basis, such as the nearly 50 branches of the Council of Christians and Jews and the groups of the Three Faiths Forum, or other particular dialogues, such as ones focusing on Buddhist-Christian, Sikh-Christian, Hindu-Christian or Jewish-Muslim relations/dialogue.



Link Meeting in Warrington



Inter Faith Organisations in the UK: A Directory, The Network's detailed guide to over 250 inter faith organisations

Link Meetings

The Inter Faith Network holds, in association with the relevant regional faith forums, 'link' meetings for organisers of local inter faith groups in the English Regions. The meetings provide an opportunity for organisers to share news and discuss issues of common concern as well as suggestions for running effective and interesting programmes. This year, meetings were held in the Northwest in Warrington on 19 May, the East Midlands in Nottingham on 10 July and the East of England in Peterborough on 28 July.

A separate gathering for Scottish inter faith groups is held in Scotland by the Scottish Inter Faith Council.



*East Midlands Link Meeting (L to R)
Rev Dr Ted Hale, Rev Dr Chris Goacher,
Jenny Dixon, Jacqueline Hall, Petra Lucas,
Dr Angela Jagger, Derek Markie, Jim Ward,
George Ballentyne, Stella Opoku-Owusu,
Anil Rande, Anne-Marie Aigner, Dr Alan
Race, Dr Harriet Crabtree, Tasib Yusuf
Mughal, and John Murray*

These tradition-specific dialogues offer a key route for more in depth engagement and developing friendships between members of particular communities.

During the first half of 2008, the Inter Faith Network worked in partnership with the Local Government Association on an LGA survey of local authorities in England and Wales, looking at how they are engaging with faith groups and inter faith organisations in their area. The survey covers issues such as patterns of consultation and work with and support of local inter faith structures. Early findings fed into the Government's *Face to Face and Side by Side* document. The full research report is due in December and will be available on the LGA's website www.lga.gov.uk.

Just a few of this year's local inter faith enquiries to the Inter Faith Network office:

- We are thinking of holding an event on spirituality and the environment from different faith perspectives. Can you suggest speakers?
- What funding is there available for local inter faith organisations?
- We are revising our constitution. Can you provide us with examples of constitutions of other local groups and are there any particular issues we should be thinking about?
- A regional faith forum is being developed in our region. Can you tell us what these forums do – and why and how, as a local inter faith body, we should engage with them?
- How can we encourage more young people to be involved in our work?

This year, questions about involvement and membership have been particularly frequent:

- Our forum has been going for some while but is having difficulty getting strong participation from some Christian denominations and a number of the mosques and gurdwaras in our area. How can we strengthen the pattern of faith community involvement?
- A particular faith group wants to join our faith forum. It is one which is seen by the majority within the faith tradition of which it sees itself part as a 'sect' or 'break away group'. If this group were to come into membership it is quite likely that the community of the faith tradition in question may pull out. They are one of the biggest faith communities in our area and if they do stop coming it could undercut our ability to promote good inter faith relations locally. We would like to be as inclusive as possible but this is presenting a real challenge. How are others handling similar issues? Are there helpful ways forward on this?

Educating for inter faith understanding

During the year the Inter Faith Network office continued to keep in touch with developments on the educational and academic front through its participation in the Religious Education Council for England Wales and the Shap Working Party on World Religions in Education as well as providing advice to the Religion and Society Programme of the European Humanities Research Centre and Arts and Humanities Research Council.

The year saw continued enquiries from schools and youth organisations. The Network's publication *Connect: Different Faiths, Shared Values*, published with TimeBank and the National Youth Agency, continued to be in high demand.

The year saw a particular focus on chaplaincy issues within Higher and Further Education. The Network office assisted on aspects of the research project carried out by Rev Jeremy Clines of the University of York St John for the Church of England which led to the report *Chaplaincy for All: Faiths in Higher Education*. The Network's Director spoke at the launch of the report in January.

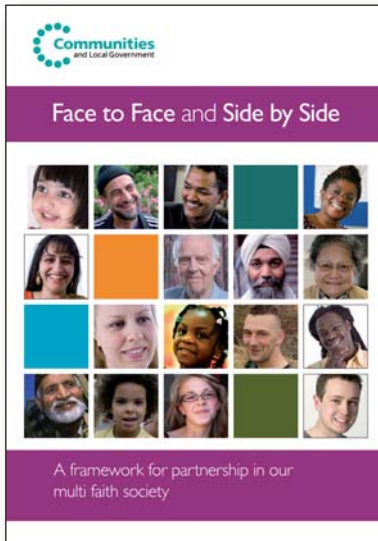
The Network's Adviser on Faith and Public Life took part in a meeting in March organised by the National Union of Students to discuss issues relating to the work of faith-based student bodies on campus. The meeting was held at St Ethelburga's Centre in London and was facilitated by consultancy organisation get2thepoint. It was helpful for a link to be made between this NUS initiative and the work previously undertaken by the Network on inter faith relations on campus which led to the joint statement issued last summer by student faith-based organisations, as reported in last year's Annual Review.

A number of Network member bodies such as the Council of Christians and Jews, the Three Faiths Forum, Minorities of Europe and the Woolf Institute of Abrahamic Faiths have been developing important resources and programmes for young people and the Network has been making these more widely known. Some of these member bodies are involved in a new initiative linking a range of bodies with a focus on both inter faith and intercultural work with young people, the Culture, Faith and Youth Connective.



Connect: Different Faiths Shared Values - The Network's full colour inter faith action and resource guide for young people, free to download at www.interfaith.org.uk/connect

Face to Face and Side by Side: A framework for partnership in our multi faith society



The Inter Faith Network for the UK and its member bodies are committed to helping inter faith understanding flourish at all levels and to encouraging more people to become involved in building good relations between different faith communities.

This year a priority for the Network has been engagement with the process leading to the publication in July of the first Government document devoted specifically to inter faith interaction and faith communities working together: *Face to Face and Side by Side: A framework for partnership in our multi faith society* as this has the potential to play a major part in stimulating greater involvement in inter faith activity and faith based social action.

The document relates only to England, reflecting the primary geographical focus of CLG's work. During 2008 the Scottish Government/Executive began a separate, parallel initiative. The committee which is overseeing the development of the Scottish document will be continuing its work into 2009. At present there are no plans for a similar process in Northern Ireland and Wales.

Face to Face and Side by Side, which can be downloaded at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/facetofaceframework>, sets out "to create more local opportunities both for face to face dialogue which supports a greater understanding of shared values as well as an appreciation of distinctiveness; and for side by side collaborative social action where people come together and share their time, energy and skills to improve their local neighbourhood."

It explains how the Government, in the words of Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, over the next three years, "will support a stronger dialogue between people of different faiths and beliefs in every community and encourage the kind of practical inter faith co-operation that can make pleasant and harmonious neighbourhoods for all".

The document encourages further work to increase inter faith understanding and social cooperation by faith communities, inter faith bodies, local authorities, schools, colleges and universities and others. It acknowledges what has already been achieved in the inter faith field and its suggestions for action seek to build on this. It emphasises the desirability of national, regional and local organisations working in complementary ways.

The document and its implementation forms part of the Government's response to the report, published in the summer of 2007, of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, of which Harriet Crabtree, the Inter Faith Network's Director, was, in a personal capacity, a member. Last year's Annual Review gave an account of the report, which underlined the importance of inter faith engagement, saying "we believe that the way relations between people of different faiths and beliefs develop in the coming years, in England's diverse local areas, will be very important to integration and cohesion". The new document also responds to the desire expressed by Prime Minister Gordon Brown, soon after he took office in the summer of 2007, to see a stronger pattern of inter faith dialogue at local level.

Why is 'Face to Face and Side by Side' so important?

This new document is of great importance because of its potential to encourage yet further the widening of the circle of those learning about, and contributing to, inter faith understanding and cooperating in the area of social action. The Government, of course, has a specific and limited role in such matters (as the document recognises) but because of its role and its networks the document is likely to have an impact far beyond the usual inter faith circles, prompting engagement on a much greater scale by local authorities, schools and institutions of higher and further education, voluntary organisations and others. It can thereby complement the work being carried out by faith and inter faith bodies, educators and others.

Inter faith engagement has already diversified and grown over recent years thanks to a range of factors, including the work of faith communities and of inter faith bodies and that of educators, chaplains, Government and other public agencies. The Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund of CLG, administered by the Community Development Foundation across 2006–2008, was also an important contributor.

But it remains the case that inter faith work continues to be taken forward by a relatively small number of very dedicated people within each of the faith communities and inter faith projects remain thin on the ground, despite past funding schemes. *Face to Face and Side by Side*, with its implementation policy



Face To Face And Side By Side: A Framework For Partnership In Our Multi Faith Society

Clockwise from top left:
 Rev Dr John Hall with Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Hazel Blears MP

Members of The Board of Deputies of British Jews at their stand during the launch

The then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Parmjit Dhanda, with Network staff member Gaylina Nyugen

Yorkshire and Humber Faiths Forum with Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Hazel Blears MP



and associated funding package, has the potential to push up dramatically the level of interest and engagement in building good inter faith relations across the faith and public sectors. It was, therefore, vital for the Inter Faith Network to engage well this year with the process of its development.

During the autumn of 2007 the Network office contributed to discussion with CLG on the content of a consultative document to be published at the end of the year. The consultative document, entitled '*Face to Face and Side by Side, a framework for inter faith dialogue and social action*' was issued in mid-December and the attention of Network member bodies was drawn to it by the Network office. The Network's Executive Committee discussed the consultation document at its January meeting and a detailed and wide ranging response to the consultation was submitted on its behalf which took account of points made by member bodies to the Network office, following a request for these.

There then followed an extensive period of further engagement over the contents of what became the final document. The Network office was represented on the working group which took part in these discussions, alongside FbRN, CDF and members from the Faith Communities Consultative Council in CLG. The final document emerging from this consultation process, '*Face to Face and Side by Side: A framework for partnership in our multi faith society*', was, of course, the responsibility of the Government and reflected its policy concerns. But it did reflect, in a number of respects, the concerns and aspirations of Network member bodies.

The document was launched in late July at Central Hall, Westminster, by Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Local Government. Harriet Crabtree was one of the speakers at the launch and in her comments emphasised the importance of the work and also of appropriate resourcing for the work and careful partnership working between Government and faith communities which respects the autonomy and modes of operation of each.



For the faith communities and inter faith organisations this framework offers new opportunities and challenges. As it does for Government – central, regional and local. How we rise to these challenges and opportunities together will have a significant impact on our society. The next three years will be very important. We have a trust to work well and work cooperatively at every level to create a society where people of different faiths and beliefs live amicably and cooperatively making, each from their own distinctive traditions, their contribution to the welfare of society.

Harriet Crabtree
Speaking at the launch of *Face to Face and Side by Side* in July

Inter Faith Week

In *Face to Face and Side by Side*, the Government announced that it will be working in partnership with the Inter Faith Network to support an 'Inter Faith Week' in 2009.

This was a suggestion which was made in the Network's submission at the consultation stage, drawing on experience of a week of this kind in Scotland.

It is hoped that the week will encourage communities at national, regional and local levels to hold events to celebrate and raise awareness of the positive inter faith work that is being undertaken everywhere.

The shape and thrust of the document

Core principles

Face to Face and Side by Side is underpinned by three "core principles":

- Partnership: valuing the contributions made by partners and working together to increase their impact;
- Empowerment: people and government, working together to make life better;
- Choice: local communities deciding what works best for them.

It is structured around four 'building blocks':

- Developing the competence and skills to 'bridge' and 'link'
- Shared spaces for interaction
- Structures and processes which support dialogue and social action
- Opportunities for learning which build understanding.

Each of the four 'building blocks' concludes with a range of suggested practical ideas for local authorities and faith communities (including through local inter faith initiatives) to consider implementing.

Regional faith forums

The document refers to the Government's support for the development of regional Faith Links (regional hubs for local authority faith leads) within each of the English regions by 2011 which will be coordinated by Government Offices in the regions and will provide local authority faith leads with guidance, support and networking opportunities. It also announces that the Government will be working with the Local Government Association (LGA), Improvement and Development Agency, Inter Faith Network, FbRN and the CDF to update the existing guidance for local authorities contained in *Faith and Community* which was published in 2002 by the LGA with partners including the Inter Faith Network.

Funding for local activities and initiatives

The document also announced a 'Faiths in Action Programme' (FiA) of funding across 2008–2011 to support local activities and initiatives that have a direct link to one or more of these building blocks; and a three year programme of investment, support and capacity building in regional faith forums in England which it is planned will have a growing role in helping support local inter faith and faith based social action work. The FiA programme is open to national, regional and local faith, inter faith, voluntary and community organisations and groups in England and is administered and managed by the Community Development Foundation on behalf of the Department for Communities and Local Government. The programme has £4 million to distribute.

‘Face to face’ and ‘heart to heart’: People of faith in dialogue 2008 National Meeting

In an era of ever greater intermingling of people on a worldwide scale, with more and more transnational links and increasing ease of information access through the internet and other media, it is crucial for people of different faiths to engage well with each other. And nowhere more so than in today’s Britain. A vital route for this is dialogue: from everyday discussions as part of our social and working lives to organised encounters and in depth dialogue between members of particular faiths. Young and old, whatever our faith, we all need to listen, hear, talk and learn to move past fear and misconceptions, engage with differences, find common ground and work from this towards a society rooted in shared values and characterised by respect and mutual hospitality.

The theme of the 2008 National Meeting held at Glaziers Hall in London on 30 June was ‘Face to face and heart to heart: People of faith in dialogue’. The meeting was attended by nearly 150 people of different faiths from Network member bodies from around the UK.

The meeting offered an opportunity to explore aspects of the ‘face to face’ – and indeed the ‘heart to heart’ – processes which can tackle misunderstandings and prejudice and help build good relations. It also formally launched the Network’s ‘Soundings’ programme which will, in the coming two years, be looking in depth at range of issues in inter faith dialogue in Britain today.

Harriet Crabtree, the Inter Faith Network’s Director offered some opening reflections on the current dialogical landscape. She discussed some of the different kinds of dialogue: the dialogue of every day life and encounters; dialogue in the work of local inter faith organisations; in the engagement of faith communities in dialogue at a national level; the work of national inter faith organisations and the importance of bilateral and trilateral as well as multilateral dialogue; dialogue on current social issues; dialogue between faith communities and secular organisations; and dialogue in education.



Angela Jagger, Riaz Ravat, Rev Christopher Wren and Anna Elgee



Father Phil Sumner and Martha Besser

She also gave a preview of the Network's new 'Soundings' programme. It is planned that across a two year period from September 2008 to August 2010, the Network will hold a series of 'by invitation' consultative meetings and seminars to look at particular issues in greater depth. These will help inform the Network's own work and development but they will also have a wider value – giving participants an opportunity to talk through some of the issues affecting their organisations directly and to share good practice and discuss potentially fruitful areas of joint work. In each case there will be careful consultation with the member category in question about the nature of the event and findings from the 'sounding' meetings will be fed back into the Network's Executive Committee and AGM processes. In some cases, but not necessarily all, a report or other publication may emerge from the event.



Father Michael Cooke and Dr Rao



Network staff members Hannab Mercer, Gaylina Nguyen and Mankiran Jobal

Changing patterns of inter faith engagement

The issues and the 'players' in every sector of inter faith engagement are shifting and evolving. This has become even more pronounced in the last twelve months:

- with a variety of new initiatives coming into existence;
- concerns on the part of faiths other than Abrahamic about the risk of their traditions being ignored or marginalised in high profile dialogue and funding contexts;
- the stepping up of debate about how 'non-religious' belief groups are reflected in patterns of inter faith dialogue and in consultation by central and local Government on policy and service delivery issues;
- discussion about the pattern of faith communities and belief groups (including less mainstream ones) which are, or could be, formally involved in inter faith dialogue at local, regional and national level;
- the rise of multiple initiatives in certain areas of inter faith work
- faith communities keen to play an active role in public life but often over extended and finding it hard to respond to the growing weight of consultation at the same time as maintaining their primary functions
- And of course the ever increasing focus from Government and a new framework for inter faith dialogue and social action on the horizon – the increasing engagement by Government brings undeniable benefits but equally it will be important for faith communities and inter faith organisations to ensure that they continue to address their own agendas at the same time as working together with Government on its agenda.

Harriet Crabtree

This scene setting introduction was followed by three presentations on ‘Dimensions of Dialogue’ given by Dr Nawal Prinja of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (UK) and Co-Chair, Inter Faith Network; David Gifford, Chief Executive of the Council of Christians and Jews; and Sughra Ahmed, Adviser on Women in Faith and Research Fellow of the Islamic Foundation.

Dr Prinja offered some personal reflections on why dialogue matters; how it is shaped; and on the ways in which the Hindu community has contributed to this process and in which this process has been of value to it. He described the contribution of Swami Vivekananda to the 1993 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago whose three opening words, ‘Brothers and sisters’, encapsulated for him the whole concept of dialogue which Hindus have of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, that the world is one big family. He stressed the importance of learning about one another’s faith more by talking directly to each other than relying on what we learn about other faiths from the media. He suggested that there is a spiritual and political need for dialogue, and mentioned various dialogue initiatives to which he has contributed in recent years, such as the setting up of a Hindu Christian Forum at national level, Altrincham Interfaith Group and Manchester Hindu-Jewish Association. He noted some concern on the part of the Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh and Jain faiths that they are perhaps not getting their full share of these institutional dialogues, nor of Government funding initiatives compared to Abrahamic initiatives.

David Gifford reflected on what the Council of Christians and Jews has learned about dialogue in the course of its 66 years of work. He stressed that dialogue is not an easy activity and indeed can be a risky business. Dialogue is a journey, not a destination. New skills are needed for dialogue including the important skill of listening. Building relationships takes time and regular meetings. Dialogue means having agendas that reflect the concerns of both sides taking part in it. It is important to begin with breaking down basic misconceptions rather than tackling big and controversial issues and “to start from where we are”.

Where I have seen growth has been where there has been a group of Jews and Christians meeting together, building relationships in lively meetings. That in itself has created a magnet for others to come in and see the richness that we bring to one another. If there is one goal that I would commend to any kind of inter faith interaction, it is that no one who enters it leaves it poorer. You will leave an inter faith dialogue or inter faith relationship much richer than when you entered.

David Gifford

Sughra Ahmed described the process involved in creating and coordinating a ‘Women in Faith’ course at the Islamic Foundation and the Network of Muslim Women which has developed from this. The course had helped participants to



Hindus have looked for some role model of an ethnic minority living in this country. We are great admirers of the way the Jewish community has established itself. They have integrated into the political system, the social system and the economic system, yet they have retained their religious and cultural identity and without creating too much friction in doing so. That is the pattern that we want our younger generation to follow and this was one of my own reasons for taking part personally in [the] Hindu-Jewish Association.

Dr Nawal Prinja



...[W]e at the Islamic Foundation fervently believe in inter faith activity as a means to increase awareness, break down barriers and as a vehicle to bridge the gaps within and across communities....[W]e realised that there is a serious lack of women, particularly Muslim women, who are involved in such work. So we made a strategic decision to try to fill this gap through the 'Women in Faith' course. The aim now is to encourage Muslim women to engage in inter faith activities through the network called 'Women in Faith'. Its unique factor is that presently it is for Muslim women across the country and is actually led by Muslim women.

Sugbra Ahmed

(pictured right with Dr Natubhai Shah)

grow in self confidence and many of them are now involved in inter faith activities at the local and regional level. She also described a research project which worked with young Muslims which it was hoped would open the way for collaborative work on the concerns of young people across different faith communities.

There then followed the opportunity for some 'on the spot dialogue' where participants talked with their neighbours before resuming discussion in plenary.

To me it is 'relationship' and spirituality from which you start. Forget about talking about big issues; allow young people to come together in activities. We took a group of young people to Auschwitz, to Srebrenitsa. They formed a single group together quite naturally and they began to ask each other questions as their time together went on. It is John Paul Lederach's 'community cohesion web': if you can choose the right anchor points then the building of the web will continue naturally.

Father Phil Sumner, Oldham Inter Faith Forum

I think there are times when members of local groups can also develop a sense of what they have in common through dealing together with local matters....say, working on recycling schemes in the neighbourhood or a neighbourhood playscheme. Sometimes trust can be built up on matters of this kind on a small and local basis as distinct from the larger issues which I know all affect us.

Malcolm Deboo, Zoroastrian Trust Funds for Europe

The final presentation of the morning on 'Dialogue on the Menu' was given by the Network's Project Officer, Stella Opoku-Owusu. She gave a mouth-watering pre-lunch overview of inter faith events and projects around the country which centre on food and the value in building personal relationships of people sharing a meal together.

After lunch there were two presentations on 'Young People and Dialogue' given by Susan Moss, Project Manager of the 'Shared Futures' School Linking Programme of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and by Jasdeep Singh Degun and Ushna Moghal of the Yorkshire and Humber Youth Interfaith Council.

Susan Moss described work on the 'Shared Futures' project which contributes to a nationwide initiative called the School Linking Network. The project brings together teachers and pupils from different single faith schools, often from schools which are quite close to each other but which have not so far developed working relationships. The programme is designed to increase the knowledge and understanding which pupils have of different faiths and to provide them with opportunities for personal encounter with other pupils of a different faith.

There are all sorts of programmes we have prepared. In the one we are doing with the Three Faiths Forum we are looking at festivals, so we have three schools in

Kilburn, in north west London, a Muslim, a Jewish and a Church of England school for Year 5 pupils. They are going to visit each other's schools and do some work about festivals, to join in, learn some songs, make a peace tree, (which is going to move round the different schools so that all the children can add to it). There are going to be children giving presentations at each school and getting to know other children. At the end of it the three schools hopefully will know each other very well and can start planning the next project.

Susan Moss

Jasdeep Singh Degun and Ushna Moghal described the creation of the Yorkshire and Humber Youth Interfaith Council, launched in 2007. A number of young people from different faiths in Yorkshire and Humber went to Corrymeela in Northern Ireland in October 2007 and this led to the setting up of their Council later that year. The Corrymeela visit gave them an opportunity to meet each other informally and to explore issues directly related to young people such as faith and identity. They were able to share experiences of injustice and discrimination and knowledge of other faiths and how living among people from other faiths affects their personal relationships and those of their faith communities. Jasdeep and Ushna expressed the hope that youth forums like theirs would be set up across the country.

Dialogue between young people, even if faith is not important for their own personal growth, eradicates media stereotypes. If we want young people to continue participating in inter faith dialogue, we need to spark their interest. One of our projects, for which we hope to get your support while we are here, is our planned conference on youth, media and music, which is hopefully going to be held this autumn or in spring next year.

Meeting participants were then invited to take part in one of seven workshops on different aspects of dialogue, described below, and after the tea break they were offered a short summary of the key points emerging from them.

Dr Nawal Prinja then invited three of the day's participants to give their reflections on themes that had emerged from the day: Sarah Thorley of South London Inter Faith Group and a Religious Education teacher and writer; Dr Manazir Ahsan, Director General of the Islamic Foundation and a Vice-Chair of the Inter Faith Network; and Bishop Tom Butler.

Sarah Thorley mentioned her recent survey of inter faith activity in South London. This had found much good work was being undertaken by SACREs in local authority initiatives, by local inter faith groups and local faith communities but many were unaware of what the others were doing. It was very helpful to be able to exchange information about one another's work in the same locality, to share good practice and to avoid duplication. She spoke of the importance of the face to



We went to Corrymeela in Northern Ireland in October 2007 which was where we first got together as a group.For many of us this was probably the first time that we had spent so much time with people of different faiths. We were able to ask questions and celebrate our similarities as well as [talk about] our differences. As 16 year olds we do not really get to mingle much with people from different faiths. We do have friends in school, but we do not really go up to them and say, "Hello, do tell me about your faith." It is more like "What is the football like?" and stuff like that. But in Corrymeela we were up until 4am just talking about different faiths, our differences and our similarities.

Jasdeep Singh Degun

(pictured right with Ushna Moghal)



Participants at the National Meeting

Clockwise from top left:
Professor Brian Gates

Jaggiwan Singh and
Rev Modgala Duguid

Shabbir Lakha and Anil Randev

Dr Jabal Buaben and
Sarah Thorley

Ronny Milad and Yamuna Soto





“Prepared and used carefully within an inter faith context and with specific aims in mind, food has the ability to strengthen bonding, increase understanding of diversity and encourage learning.”

Stella Opoku-Owusu



Dr Manazir Ahsan and Sarah Thorley

face and heart to heart contact through regular meetings and making lasting relationships across faith communities before a crisis happens.

Academic work as well as meetings at national level are really important. But what I feel has come out of today is the absolutely essential need to meet other people and make relationships with them. And the value of having done so is never more important than when a crisis comes. We need to have made our relationships of trust before a crisis happens; before a local synagogue is desecrated, before bombs are dropped, before there is an earthquake in China. National or international events can still impact on our local area. We need to have made those relationships of trust in our local area so that we have something solid that can withstand the events that happen beyond our control out there and the reactions of the media.

Sarah Thorley, teacher and member South London Inter Faith Group

Dr Manazir Ahsan commented on the evident enthusiasm and sincerity of those taking part in the meeting which had enabled them to share their experiences and wisdom. He mentioned that in setting standards for mosques the new Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board had emphasised the importance of inter faith work. He also referred to the role which the Islamic Foundation had played in encouraging the plans for greater inter faith engagement on the part of Saudi Arabia. He said that many Muslim leaders from overseas come from the UK to learn how to engage in inter faith dialogue and he is always delighted to commend to them the resources produced by the Inter Faith Network. He closed with a call for genuine “heart to heart” dialogue, as the basis for working together.

Bishop Tom Butler welcomed the fact that inter faith work, community building and cohesion are now very much on the agenda of politicians, both nationally and locally and said that the Inter Faith Network, which has a wealth of experience, has managed to feed this into Governmental processes. He welcomed the way the National Meeting had encouraged cross-fertilisation between different areas of inter faith work; and thanked participants for the work they do in their home communities and with their own faith groups – work which is a major contribution to the life of the nation and the world, and of our faiths.

Seven workshops were held: The Art of Dialogue was facilitated by Regina O’Callaghan, Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum, and the presenter was Justine Huxley, St Ethelburga’s Centre for Peace and Reconciliation; Dialogue in Public Life was facilitated by Barney Leith, Principal Representative, Diplomatic Relations, National Spiritual Assembly of Baha’is and Chair of the Religion and Belief Consultative Group on Equality, Diversity and Human Rights, and the presenter was Rev Aled Edwards, Chief Executive, CYTUN/Churches Together in Wales and Inter Faith Council for Wales; Why Dialogue? was facilitated by Yann Lovelock,



Participants at the National Meeting

Clockwise from top left:
Justine Huxley and
Rabbi Alan Plancey

Rev Gareth Jones and
Mohammed Seedat

Dr Richard Boeke and
Rosalind Miller

Ven Bogoda Seelawimala and
Joginder Singh Bhambra

Rev Aled Edwards, Alan Bayes
and Hon Barnabas Leith



Inter Faith Co-ordinator, Network of Buddhist Organisations (UK), Vice-Chair West Midlands Faiths Forum and member, Birmingham Council of Faiths, and the presenter was Brian Pearce, Adviser on Faith and Public Life, Inter Faith Network; Faith Communities and Dialogue was facilitated by Dorab Mistry, Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe, and the presenter was Rev Peter Colwell, Secretary for Inter Faith Relations, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland; Young People and Dialogue was facilitated by Harriet Crabtree, Director, Inter Faith Network, and the presenter was Denise Chaplin, Chair, National Association of SACREs. From Action to Understanding was facilitated by Paresh Solanki, Assistant Director, Inter Faith Network, and the presenter was Anna Allen, Programmes Manager, Community Development Foundation (CDF). Dialogue on a Theme was facilitated by Dr Natubhai Shah, Founder President, Jain Samaj Europe, and the presenter was Anne Vince, Joint Chief Executive (South), United Religions Initiative (UK).

A full report on the day is available at www.interfaith.org.uk.

I have felt after this morning and afternoon that we have a group of people here who have assembled with great enthusiasm and sincerity. They want to share their experiences and, of course, their wisdom. In this way we have now come to a place where we can have heart-to-heart discussions, a heart-to-heart confidence, because we not only respect one another, but also have the enthusiasm to go forward together in such a way that we can achieve our goals. *Dr Manazir Absan*



National meeting workshop



Dorab Mistry, Rev Peter Colwell, David Storey, Julian Bond, Louis Rapaport

Engaging with public policy issues

Good inter faith relations can only flourish where people of different faiths feel valued and active members of society. The Inter Faith Network office has worked through the year to brief its member bodies on relevant issues to support the faith communities' work together in the sphere of shared engagement with public life issues.

In her foreword to *Face to Face and Side by Side: a framework for partnership in our multi faith society*, published by CLG in July, its Secretary of State, Hazel Blears, said "I am committed to promoting a strong relationship between government and faith communities. I look forward to continuing to work across government and with faith stakeholders to ensure that the relationship is based upon an informed, challenging, consultative and collaborative approach." In the course of summer 2008 CLG initiated some 'scoping' work on ways to engage better with faith communities. The Network office has been in informal discussion with CLG officials on some of the issues arising in this review.

It has continued to encourage Government and other agencies, at UK, regional and local level, to involve the faith communities in discussion about policy and service delivery. In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, the member national linking inter faith bodies have also carried forward this work.

The Network's relationships with Government departments and other public bodies are important in its work of building good inter faith relations. Its main link with the Government is through the Cohesion and Faiths Unit in the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG). It is also in touch with other Government Departments, including the Department for Children Schools and Families, the Government Equalities Office and the Ministry of Justice.

A Faith Communities Consultative Council (FCCC) meets within CLG and the Network office is directly represented on this. The FCCC met twice in the course of the past year. At its meeting on 20 November the main item of discussion was the Government's consultation on its inter faith strategy which was then about to take place. It also discussed the Government's proposal to abolish the blasphemy laws. On 8 February members of the Council met to discuss with Lord Goldsmith his review of citizenship. A second meeting of the Council was held on 20 May. It heard a presentation by Rev Joel Edwards, now a Commissioner of the Equality

and Human Rights Commission, describing its role and forward plans; received an update on the Government's work towards the publication of its inter faith strategy; and discussed the scope for national indicators of faith based social action and engagement in civil society on the basis of a presentation by Doreen Finneron of the Faith Based Regeneration Network (UK).

Equality and Human Rights Commission and new Equality Bill

Over the last few years the Network's Annual Reviews have reported on important developments in the field of equality and human rights and the steps which led to the setting up, under the Equality Act 2006, of a new Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) covering the six discrimination strands of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age and religion and belief. The Commission, chaired by Trevor Phillips, formerly Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, was 'open for business' from the beginning of October 2007 and has now become fully operational. The three key 'pillars' of its work are to be "equality/discrimination", "human rights" and "good relations" (including good "inter faith" relations). The Equality Act requires the new body to give particular attention in its work on 'good relations' to issues relating to race and religion/belief.

There has been a range of constructive meetings between staff of the new Commission and its key stakeholder organisations, including the Network and the Religion and Belief Consultative Group. As mentioned in earlier Annual Reviews the Religion and Belief Consultative Group, whose formation the Network helped to facilitate, brings together faith community representative bodies and representatives of the British Humanists Association and the National Secular Society. It has met regularly over the last year to review developments in the equality field. The Network office is represented at its meetings and also at meetings of the Equality and Diversity Forum which brings together representatives from organisations linked to all the six 'strands' with which the EHRC is statutorily engaged. It has been agreed that over the coming year there will be meetings at two monthly intervals between the RBCG and staff of the EHRC.

In July 2008 the Government published its response to the submissions which had been made to it on its consultation document, issued in the previous summer, which followed on from the Discrimination Law Review setting out its proposals for a Single Equality Bill for Great Britain (ie England, Scotland and Wales). The Government plans to introduce its new Bill in the forthcoming Parliamentary session. The main pillars of this include the proposal for a duty on public bodies to promote equality, which will apply not only to race, disability and gender, where there is already such a duty, but also to age, gender reassignment, religion and

belief and sexual orientation, where there currently is not. In practical terms, the Duty will require public bodies to consider how their policies, programmes and services affect different disadvantaged groups in the community. The Duty will also require public bodies to tackle discrimination and promote equality through their purchasing functions. The Government has set up a Stakeholder Advisory Group to work with it across the full range of measures to be included in the Bill and Hon Barnabas Leith, Chair of the Religion and Belief Consultative Group and a member of the Network's Executive Committee, is a member of this Advisory Group.

The Network has continued to keep its member bodies in touch with developments in this area of Government policy.

Public benefit test for charities

In January the Charity Commission provided general guidance on the application to charities of the new 'public benefit' provisions included in the Charities Act 2006. In February the Commission launched a consultation on draft supplementary guidance on 'Public Benefit and the Advancement of Religion' and the Network office drew this to the attention of its member bodies and was represented at a consultation meeting held by the Commission in October. The Commission received over 250 submissions in response to this consultation and a summary of the responses is available on the Commission's website at www.charity-commission.gov.uk/enhancingcharities/pbresponse.asp. It hopes to produce a revised version of its guidance, taking into account points made in the consultation, by the end of the year.

According to the Charity Commission there are currently over 29,000 'religious' charities. The Commission has emphasised that the new requirements for charities as part of their reporting duties to report specifically on their public benefit will, for the most part, only involve existing charities presenting in a different format information already needed for their annual report. Different levels of detail are required for charities on either side of a £500,000 income threshold.

Abolition of blasphemy laws

Following consultation with the Church of England, other Churches and faith communities, and discussion in the Faith Communities Consultative Council, the Government legislated to abolish the blasphemy laws through provisions in the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act which received Royal Assent in May.

Revision of Government Circular on Religious Education

Circular 1/94 issued in 1994 by the then Department for Education set out formal guidance to local education authorities on religious education and on collective worship. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, at the request of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), has initiated a review of the content of this Circular relating to religious education. A steering group, on which the Inter Faith Network is represented, has been set up to supervise this work. This is jointly chaired by a DCSF official and Professor Brian Gates, a member of the Network's Executive Committee, in his capacity as Chair of the Religious Education Council for England and Wales. The intention is that there will be a full formal consultation in due course on a draft document.

Census 2011

In 2001 a question was included in the Census for the first time in modern times on religious identity. Plans are now well underway for the Census to be carried out in 2011 and a question on this will again be included in the separate Censuses in England and Wales; Northern Ireland; and Scotland.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is working towards the publication of a single White Paper on the Census for England and Wales to be presented later this year both to the UK Parliament at Westminster and the National Assembly for Wales. The White Paper will set out proposals for the date of the Census; the questions to be included in it; arrangements for carrying out the Census; the processing of the data which is collected; and the dissemination of the Census results. The necessary secondary legislation will be brought forward following public and Parliamentary debate on the White Paper. A similar timetable is being followed for the separate White Papers on the 2011 Census to be prepared by the General Register Office for Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

As part of its engagement on Census issues, the Inter Faith Network arranged a meeting in December 2007 between faith community representatives and the Office's relevant officials for a discussion on the wording and handling of the question on religious identity to be included in the 2011 Census; aspects of the arrangements for the Census itself; and the analysis of the data collected in the course of it.

Consultation on issues relating to CLG White Paper on local government

Last November, the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) published a consultative document, *Principles of Representation: A Framework for Effective Third Sector Participation in Local Strategic Partnerships*. This discussion paper was produced in consultation with a working group on which a number of voluntary and community sector organisations were represented, including the Network office. It was, however, not a document which had been agreed with members of the group but resulted from the process of consultation with them. A final version of the document was published by CLG, in association with the Office of the Third Sector and the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action, on its website this summer (www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/923277.pdf). It offers a guiding set of principles by which third sector bodies can organise themselves to be effectively represented on Local Strategic Partnerships and in local public life more generally.

Response to Government's consultation on cohesion guidance for funders

Following consultation with the Inter Faith Network's Executive Committee, the Network office submitted a short response to the Government's consultation on Cohesion Guidance for Funders. This emphasised that there will be many cases in which there are strong arguments for 'single group funding' despite the criticisms of this expressed in the report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion.

Faith, citizenship and values

Following the publication last year of the document prepared under the auspices of the Network's Executive Committee on 'Faith and Citizenship: Shared Life in Britain Today', the Network's Director kept in touch with developments relating to the review of citizenship which Lord Goldsmith carried out at the invitation of the Prime Minister. The small reference group of which she was a member met three times to offer a sounding board on some of the issues which Lord Goldsmith was considering. He also consulted members of the Faith Communities Consultative Council. The results of Lord Goldsmith's review, which reflected his personal evaluation of the issues under consideration, were published in March.

Statement by the Network's Trustees on Governance of Britain website

During the summer of 2008 the Network's Executive Committee responded to an invitation to provide a short statement on 'values' in the context of the Ministry of Justice's current project on 'The Governance of Britain'. Their statement has been placed on the Governance of Britain website (<http://governance.justice.gov.uk/british>).

Reflections on 'values', faith and life in Britain

For use at a special Millennium celebration in the Houses of Parliament on 3 January 2000, the UK's faith communities developed, with the Inter Faith Network, the following Act of Commitment:

"In a world scarred by the evils of war, racism, injustice and poverty, we offer this joint Act of Commitment as we look to our shared future.

We commit ourselves, as people of many faiths, to work together for the common good, uniting to build a better society, grounded in values and ideals we share:

community, personal integrity, a sense of right and wrong, learning, wisdom and love of truth, care and compassion, justice and peace, respect for one another, for the earth and its creatures.

We commit ourselves, in a spirit of friendship and co-operation, to work together alongside all who share our values and ideals, to help bring about a better world now and for generations to come."

The values at the heart of this commitment are reflected in many aspects of our society: both in our institutions and in our daily lives. But they are also 'ideals' which lead us on and inspire us to work together for the common good.

There are other values and principles, too, which Britain's faith communities have highlighted in some of the documents they have worked on through the Inter Faith Network, such as:

- courtesy and good neighbourliness
- a concern for rights, balanced by a sense of social responsibility – each to one another
- a commitment to fair and transparent social processes which can help us as people of many different backgrounds live together well and justly

- a belief in the importance of personal freedom and a willingness to defend this – while at the same time recognising that we sometimes need mutually to negotiate limits to this for the well being of all
- working to resolve disagreements and remedy injustice without recourse to violence
- a willingness to speak out when necessary and be a ‘critical friend’ to one’s country
- a commitment to our British society and its flourishing, while always remembering we are citizens, too, both of its individual nations, of Europe and of a wider world
- And, of course, for each religious community, belief in God or recognition of an ultimate law or principle underpins all human values.

The Trustees of the Inter Faith Network



Informing and advising

Enquiries

The Inter Faith Network office provides information and advice to a wide range of organisations and individuals. For some types of enquiries, the Network's role is to flag up relevant sources of guidance such as ACAS guidelines on religious identity and the workplace or the Shap calendar of religious festivals or to help the enquirer make contact with the relevant faith or inter faith bodies. On enquiries from national, regional and local inter faith bodies or from people wishing to develop these, the Network's assistance may be direct and ongoing over a long period.

The organisations using the information and advice service during 2007–08 included a wide range of faith communities, inter faith organisations, Government Departments, local authorities, other public bodies, voluntary organisations, schools and educational institutions and the media. One World Week; the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services; Girlguiding UK, Rugby Football League, the Organ Donation Taskforce are just a few of those who have talked through aspects of their projects with the Network or been put in touch with its members to assist them.

The Inter Faith Network's website at www.interfaith.org.uk provides information about its work and publications. It also allows the downloading of some of its publications as well as providing links to the internet pages of other projects with which the Network has been involved. The number of visitors to the web site is growing and now averages around 2,500 a month.

Newsletter

The Network's newsletter, *Inter Faith Update*, usually published three times a year and distributed to subscribers, member bodies and supporters of the Network, has only been published twice this year due to pressure of other work.

Some of the enquiries this year

- I am thinking of establishing a multi faith football tournament. Is anyone else doing this?
- Are there any plans for inter faith projects to mark the 2012 Olympics?
- Is there any guidance on setting up multi faith prayer spaces?
- How many local inter faith bodies are there now in the UK?
- Is there a Hindu-Muslim dialogue organisation?
- Our local church is planning an inter faith dialogue event. Who should we approach within our Church at national level for advice on this?
- How do I get in touch with an RE specialist who can tell me about coverage of inter faith issues in the classroom?
- We are arranging a special event and want to invite leaders of other faiths. Can you give us contact details?

Sharing news and good practice between the UK and the wider world

A number of the Inter Faith Network's member bodies, such as the International Interfaith Centre, have a particular focus on international issues. The focus of the Inter Faith Network's work is on inter faith relations in the UK. At the same time, it is interested to learn about relevant developments in inter faith work overseas and has a commitment to sharing the experiences of British inter faith work with practitioners in other countries. It also, as the opportunity to do so arises, helps its member bodies make overseas links which can strengthen this mutual learning.

In the course of this past year members of the Network staff spoke to Bulgarian delegates at the St Ethelburga's Centre; and students from Malaysia at the Muslim College; and met with a number of overseas visitors such as a student from New York University setting up an inter faith organisation; a researcher from Monash University working on an inter faith project; Ms Dell Higgle, a visiting New Zealand Government official, at an event hosted by the New Zealand High Commissioner; and Mr Vebjorn Horsfjord, General Secretary of the European Council of Religious Leaders – Religions for Peace; and attended a seminar in June organised by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 'Faith and Culture in a Modern Europe'.



Brian Pearce, Inter Faith Network's Adviser on Faith and Public Life

The Network's Adviser on Faith and Public Life has a particular responsibility for links with overseas developments relevant to the UK and he was invited by the UK Government to be a rapporteur at a meeting in June in Amsterdam on inter faith dialogue held under the auspices of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) which brings together representatives of Asian and European Governments to discuss matters of mutual concern. He also took part in July in the World Conference on Dialogue in Madrid hosted by the Muslim World League and attended the conference of Religions for Peace (Europe) in Rovereto in May.

20 years: milestones on the journey

In 2007, the Inter Faith Network marked its twentieth year. A special brochure was created: *The Inter Faith Network for the UK: Milestones on the first 20 years of our journey together towards greater inter faith understanding, respect and cooperation in Britain.*

Opening with messages from Her Majesty the Queen and from the Prime Minister, it highlighted progress during the last twenty years and gives a short history of the various areas of the Inter Faith Network's work.



Launch of the Inter Faith Network in June 1987 (Left to right) The late Rabbi Hugo Gryn, Sir Sigmund Sternberg, the late Bishop Jim Thompson, Om Parkash Sharma, Dr Indarjit Singh, Brian Pearce and Dr Mugbram Al-Ghamdi

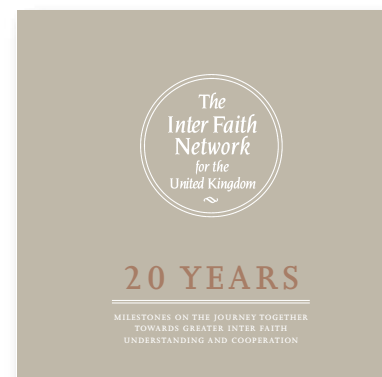
“In many ways the vital work of the Inter Faith Network for the UK encapsulates some of the key issues of our time: the need to respect and work with the distinctive aspects of our identities whilst always seeking our common ground and shared values as a bedrock for our lives together as citizens of our country.”

Prime Minister Gordon Brown

The journey is ongoing. But it is good to pause, to appreciate and to celebrate.

“Across the twenty years, inter faith understanding and cooperation have moved from the margins to centre stage in the UK. We believe this has been in no small measure due to the endeavours of the Inter Faith Network and its member organisations: national representative bodies of the Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian faith communities; inter faith organisations at local, regional and national level; and educational and academic bodies. This progress has also, of course, been due to the extensive work of other organisations – including central and local Government and other secular agencies such as local voluntary organisations, the Police, SACRES, and Race Equality Councils. And we take this opportunity to affirm the importance of the endeavours of all – both with the faith communities and beyond – who have contributed across the last twenty years to building good inter faith relations.”

*Co-Chairs' foreword to
20th anniversary brochure*



The Inter Faith Network for the UK: Milestones on the first 20 years of our journey together towards greater inter faith understanding, respect and cooperation

(www.interfaith.org.uk/publications/20anniversary.pdf)

Looking forward



HRH Prince of Wales speaking to participants in the Young People's Faith Forum for the Golden Jubilee in 2002

At their meetings in 2007, the Network's Trustees agreed the following strategic priorities for the coming three years:

- Maximise opportunities for inter faith interaction and dialogue at every level within the UK
- Raise awareness about the importance of inter faith engagement, cooperation and dialogue and empower people of all ages to take forward inter faith work and to gain understanding and skills in this area
- Consolidate and demarcate the Inter Faith Network's unique UK inter faith linking role and its role as 'voice' and 'advocate' on inter faith issues
- Increase faith communities' engagement in 'public square' discussion about issues such as citizenship and strengthen links with civil society
- Remain clearly focused on inter faith relations in the UK but enable sharing of good practice between the UK and other countries, particularly those in Europe and the Commonwealth (of both of which the UK is a part), about tackling issues similar to those being dealt with by the Inter Faith Network.

Very importantly, they also included the strategic priority on the resources front:

- Give the Inter Faith Network a secure operational basis.

Supporting the work of the Network

Without resources, the good work cannot continue. At the back of this report, the people and organisations who have helped the Network achieve what it has this year are listed with gratitude. If you would like to join them and help this work continue, you can give by cheque payable to the Inter Faith Network. The Network office can provide information on how to Gift Aid your donation so that the Network receives additional money without any extra cost to you.

Network membership

At the Inter Faith Network's 2008 Annual General Meeting, held in London on 30 June fifteen organisations were accepted into membership:

- Bristol Multi Faith Forum
- Clapham and Stockwell Faith Forum
- Doncaster Interfaith
- Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum
- Hillingdon Inter Faith Network
- Kingston Inter-Faith Forum
- Lincoln Inter Faith Forum
- Liverpool Faith Network
- Norwich InterFaith Link
- Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity Inter Faith Group
- Rossendale Faith Partnership
- Sandwell Multi-Faith Network
- Welwyn Hatfield Interfaith Group
- West Wiltshire Interfaith Group
- Windsor and Maidenhead Community Forum

The AGM noted that the Interfaith Foundation has now closed down and has therefore been withdrawn from Network membership.

The total number of the Network's member bodies is now 164.

The AGM also noted the name changes of three member organisations: the Swaminaryan Hindu Mission has now become BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha; the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches Inter Faith Subcommittee has now become the Inter Faith Panel of the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches Faith and Public Issues Commission; and Wellingborough Multi-Faith Group has now become Wellingborough Inter Faith Group.

The AGM also discussed, as part of the ongoing review of the structures and patterns of Network membership, draft amendments to its Articles of Association.

Trustees



Dorab Mistry



Vivian Wineman



Ann Noonan

At the AGM, Rt Rev Dr Tom Butler and Dr Nawal Prinja were re-elected as Co-Chairs. Dr Manazir Ahsan, Dr Indarjit Singh and Mr Vivian Wineman were re-elected as Vice-Chairs. Mr Dorab Mistry of the Zoroastrian community was elected as Vice-Chair in succession to Dr Natubhai Shah of the Jain community (in pursuance of the relevant guideline for a Vice-Chair appointment to be drawn in rotation from the smaller communities represented within the Network).

Mr Vivian Wineman has taken over from Dr Shah as Chair of the Network's General Purposes Subcommittee.

Venerable Tawalama Bandula, Mr Sudarshan Bhatia, Ms Priti Shah and Mr Alan Schwartz all stood down from the Executive Committee and were thanked for the important contribution which they had made.

Mr Sanjay Jagatia, Ms Jyoti Mehta, Venerable Bogoda Seelawimala and Mrs Diana Soffa (all of whom are new to the Committee) were elected to serve on the Committee for the coming year.

Mrs Ann Noonan

Ann Noonan died, after a period of illness, on 18 September. She served from early 2000 as the staff member of the Secretariat of the Catholic Bishops' Conference for England and Wales with responsibility for inter faith work and was a Trustee of the Inter Faith Network from June 2005 until her death. She made a significant contribution to developing inter faith relations – both within her own community and more widely. She was much loved and will be very sadly missed.

Executive Committee Members for 2008–09

Co-Chairs:

Rt Rev Dr Tom Butler
Dr Nawal K Prinja

Vice-Chairs:

Dr Manazir Ahsan MBE
Mr Dorab Mistry
Dr Indarjit Singh OBE
Mr Vivian Wineman

Treasurer:

Mr Ramesh Shah

Other members:

Ms Sughra Ahmed
Rev Peter Colwell
Ms Aviva Dautch
Professor Brian Gates
Mr David Gifford
Mr Sanjay M Jagatia
Ms Pramila Kaur
Mr Ayub Laher
Mr Shabbir Lakha
Hon Barnabas Leith
Mr Yann Lovelock
Ms Jyoti Mehta
Mrs Ravinder Kaur Nijjar
Mrs Regina O'Callaghan
Rev Daniel Otieno-Ndale
Mr Nitin Palan
Rabbi Alan Plancey
Dr Narayan Rao
Moulana M Shahid Raza OBE
Imam Dr Abduljalil Sajid
Ven Bogoda Seelawimala
Mr Resham Singh Sandhu MBE
Dr Natubhai Shah
Mr Jagiwan Singh
Mrs Diana Soffa
Rabbi Jacqueline Tabick
Rev Canon Guy Wilkinson

Staff



Paresh Solanki

Dr Harriet Crabtree has served this year as the Inter Faith Network's Director having taken up this role in September 2007. She was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for services to community relations.

The Network's former Director, Brian Pearce, has continued, on a voluntary basis, in his part time role as Adviser on Faith and Public Life.

In May, Paresh Solanki joined the Network's staff as Assistant Director (Communications and Development). Stella Opoku-Owusu has continued in her role as Project Officer (Regional and Local Inter Faith Support). Mankiran Johal worked in the office one day a week for six months as a Clerical Assistant. Hannah Mercer, from the ProspectUs employment agency, continues in her role as PA/Administrator. Bhupinder Singh continues to design and maintain, on a freelance basis, the Network's website.

Gaylina Nguyen left her post as Finance and Administration Assistant in May. A farewell supper was held to mark her six years of work for the Network. Her post is being covered by temporary staff until a new member of staff is appointed. Urmi Raval, Project Officer, was in post until March before moving to work for CAF/CASS.

Statement of Financial Activities

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

For the year ended 31 December 2007

	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	Total
	£	£	2007	2006
	£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources				
Incoming Resources from generated funds				
Voluntary Income	26,545	252,838	279,383	277,152
Investment Income	–	5,083	5,083	3,950
Incoming resources from charitable activities	–	16,058	16,058	10,867
Total incoming resources	<u>26,545</u>	<u>273,979</u>	<u>300,524</u>	<u>291,969</u>
Resources expended				
Cost of Generating Voluntary Income	803	11,814	12,617	13,006
Charitable Activities				
Consultation, Information and Advice	8,113	119,294	127,407	105,813
Meetings and Conferences	3,444	50,641	54,085	75,229
Publications	9,421	35,746	45,167	69,069
Research	2,089	30,704	32,793	–
Governance Costs	2,675	39,328	42,003	33,833
Total resources expended	<u>26,545</u>	<u>287,527</u>	<u>314,072</u>	<u>296,950</u>
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year	–	(13,548)	(13,548)	(4,981)
Funds brought forward	–	114,480	114,480	119,461
Total funds carried forward	<u>–</u>	<u>100,932</u>	<u>100,932</u>	<u>114,480</u>

All the charitable company's operations are classed as continuing. All the charitable company's recognised gains and losses are shown above. The movement on reserves is shown above

Balance Sheet

As at 31 December 2007

	2007	2006
	£	£
Tangible Fixed Assets	7,287	9,794
Current Assets		
Debtors and prepayments	27,050	57,641
Cash at bank	91,905	56,430
	<u>118,955</u>	<u>114,071</u>
Creditors: amounts due within one year	<u>25,310</u>	<u>9,385</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>93,645</u>	<u>104,686</u>
Net Assets	<u>100,932</u>	<u>114,480</u>
Funds		
Restricted Funds	–	–
Unrestricted Funds	<u>100,932</u>	<u>114,480</u>
Total Funds	<u>100,932</u>	<u>114,480</u>

These Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2007).

These Financial Statements were approved by the Executive Committee on 4 June 2008 and signed on their behalf by Ramesh Shah, Treasurer.

Supporters in 2007

The Inter Faith Network's programme of building good relations between the different faith communities in the UK is funded through support from faith communities, Government, trusts and individuals supportive of its work, as well as through the subscription fees of its member bodies.

The trustees of the Network thank most warmly all those who have given financial support during the calendar year 2007 and also those who have given the gift of time to help it work for good relations between the faiths in the UK.

Trusts, foundations and companies

Ardwick Trust	P H Holt Charitable Trust
M E Pearce Trust	Rest Harrow Trust
Tolkien Trust	Michael and Anna Wix Charitable Trust

Government funding

During 2007 the Network received a strategy grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Faith community organisations*

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha
Church of England
Community Security Trust
Hindu Council (UK)
Methodist Racial Justice Projects Fund
National Council of Hindu Temples (UK)
Network of Buddhist Organisations (UK)
Network of Sikh Organisations (UK)
Sri Lankan Sangha Sabha of GB
United Reformed Church
Vishwa Hindu Parishad (UK)
Western Ch'an Fellowship
West London Synagogue Charitable Fund

*Some contributions to the funding received from member faith communities have come through individual donors and these are included in the list below.

Other donors*

Mr G Casey
Mrs Elizabeth Crabtree
Mr J A Ewan
The late Mrs Lalage Fair
Ms Elnora Ferguson
Mrs Eileen Forrester
The late Mr Tom Gulliver
The late Rt Rev Charles Henderson
Mr Duncan E Jones
Dr Dermot Killingley
Ms Kathie Morley
Mr J Nicholson
Mr M H Oliver
The late Miss Beryl Pearce
Mr Nigel Pounce
Ms Clare Salters
Mr Vasant Shend'ge
Southwark Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation Office
Mr David Stevens
Mr John Stubbs
Mr Rashid Siddiqui
Rev Richard Tetlow
Rev Geoffrey R Usher
Rt Rev Roy Williamson

And others who kindly gave donations but prefer not to be listed...

*These include donations from a number of individuals as part of the structured funding from faith communities.

Member Organisations of the Inter Faith Network 2007/08

Faith Community Representative Bodies

Arya Pratinidhi Sabha (UK)
Baha'i Community of the United Kingdom
BAPS Swaminaryan Sanstha
Board of Deputies of British Jews
British Muslim Forum
The Buddhist Society
Churches Agency for Inter Faith Relations in Scotland
Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
Churches Together in England
Committee for Other Faiths, Catholic Bishops'
Conference of England and Wales
Council of African and Afro-Caribbean Churches (UK)
Friends of the Western Buddhist Order
Hindu Council (UK)
Hindu Forum of Britain
Imams and Mosques Council (UK)
Inter Faith Panel, Unitarian and Free Christian
Churches Faith and Public Issues Commission
Islamic Cultural Centre, Regents Park, London
Jain Samaj Europe
Jamiat-e-Ulama Britain (Association of Muslim Scholars)
Muslim Council of Britain
National Council of Hindu Temples (UK)
Network of Buddhist Organisations (UK)
Network of Sikh Organisations (UK)
Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith
Relations
Sri Lankan Sangha Sabha of GB
Vishwa Hindu Parishad (UK)
World Ahlul-Bayt Islamic League
World Islamic Mission (UK)
Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe

Inter Faith Organisations

Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum
Scottish Inter Faith Council
Inter Faith Council for Wales/
Cyngor Cyd-Ffydd Cymru
East of England Faiths Council
Faiths Forum for the East Midlands
Northwest Forum of Faiths
South East of England Faiths Forum
South West Council of Faiths
West Midlands Faiths Forum
Yorkshire and Humber Faiths Forum
Alif Aleph UK
Christian Muslim Forum
Christians Aware Interfaith Programme
Council of Christians and Jews
East of England Faiths Agency
International Association for Religious Freedom
(British Chapter)
International Interfaith Centre
Joseph Interfaith Foundation
London Society of Jews and Christians
Minorities of Europe Inter Faith Action Programme
Religions for Peace (UK Chapter)
St Ethelburga's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation

St Philip's Centre for Study and Engagement in
a Multi Faith Society
Three Faiths Forum
United Religions Initiative (Britain and Ireland)
Westminster Interfaith
World Congress of Faiths

Educational and Academic Bodies

Cambridge Inter-Faith Programme
Centre for Christianity and Interreligious Dialogue,
Heythrop College, University of London
Centre for the Study of Interreligious Relations
Community Religions Project, University of Leeds
Institute of Jainology
Islamic Foundation
Multi-Faith Centre at the University of Derby
National Association of SACRES
Religious Education Council for England and Wales
Shap Working Party on World Religions in Education
Sion Centre for Dialogue and Encounter
Woolf Institute of Abrahamic Faiths

Local Inter Faith Bodies

Altrincham Inter Faith Group
Barnet Multi Faith Forum
Bedford Council of Faiths
Birmingham Council of Faiths
Blackburn with Darwen Interfaith Council
Blackpool Faith Forum
Bolton Interfaith Council
Bradford Concord Interfaith Society
Bradford District Faiths Forum
Brent Inter Faith
Brent Multifaith Forum
Brighton and Hove Inter-Faith Contact Group
Bristol Inter Faith Group
Bristol Multi Faith Forum
Building Bridges in Burnley
Calderdale Interfaith Council
Cambridge Inter-Faith Group
Canterbury and District Inter Faith Action
Cardiff Interfaith Association
Clapham and Stockwell Faith Forum
Coventry Multi Faith Forum
Crawley Interfaith Network
Derby Open Centre Multi-Faith Group
Forum of Faiths for Derby
Doncaster Interfaith
Dudley Borough Interfaith Network
Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum
Gateshead Inter Faith Forum
Gloucestershire Inter Faith Action
Greenwich Multi-Faith Forum
Harrow Inter Faith Council
Hillingdon Inter Faith Network
Horsham Interfaith Forum
Hounslow Friends of Faith
Huddersfield Interfaith Council
Islington Faiths Forum
Keighley Interfaith Group

Kingston Inter-Faith Forum
Lancashire Forum of Faiths
Leeds Concord Interfaith Fellowship
Leeds Faith Communities Liaison Forum
Leicester Council of Faiths
Lincoln Inter-Faith Forum
Liverpool Faith Network
Loughborough Council of Faiths
Luton Council of Faiths
Faith Network for Manchester
Medway Inter Faith Action
Merseyside Council of Faiths
Middlesbrough Council of Faiths
Interfaith MK (Milton Keynes)
Moseley Inter Faith Group
Newcastle Council of Faiths
Newham Association of Faiths
Newham Faith Sector Forum
North Kirklees Inter-Faith Council
North Staffordshire Forum of Faiths
Northampton Faiths Forum
Norwich InterFaith Link
Nottingham Inter Faith Council
Oldham Inter Faith Forum
Oxford Round Table of Religions
Building Bridges (Pendle)
Peterborough Inter-Faith Council
Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural
Diversity Inter Faith Group
Portsmouth Interfaith Forum
Preston Faith Forum
Reading Inter-Faith Group
Redbridge Council of Faiths
Redbridge Faiths Forum
Rochdale Multifaith Partnership
Rossendale Faith Partnership
Rugby Inter Faith Forum
Sandwell Multi-Faith Network
Sheffield Interfaith
South London Inter Faith Group
Southampton Council of Faiths
Southwark Multi Faith Forum
Suffolk Inter-Faith Resource
Swansea Faiths Forum
Faiths United (Tameside)
Telford and Wrekin Interfaith Group
Tower Hamlets Inter Faith Forum
Waltham Forest Faith Communities Forum
Wandsworth Multi-Faith Network
Warrington Council of Faiths
Watford Inter Faith Association
Wellingborough Inter Faith Group
Welwyn Hatfield Interfaith Group
West Wiltshire Interfaith Group
Westminster Faith Exchange
Whalley Range (Manchester) Inter Faith Group
Windsor and Maidenhead Community Forum
Wolverhampton Inter-Faith Group
Wycombe Sharing of Faiths

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The Network is a registered charity No.1068934 and a company limited by guarantee No. 3443823 registered in England.

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