



# IFN e-bulletin

October/November 2015

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If you have items which you would like considered for inclusion in the next e-bulletin please email these to [ifnet@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ifnet@interfaith.org.uk) by 24 November with 'e-bulletin' in the subject line. Submissions may be edited for length or style. The e-bulletin is designed primarily to flag up new developments and projects and future events. If your organisation distributes a programme, newsletter or e-bulletin, please add [ifnet@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ifnet@interfaith.org.uk) to your mailing list.

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Increasingly, IFN is making use of social media, in particular Twitter ([www.twitter.com/IFNetUK](http://www.twitter.com/IFNetUK)) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/IFNetUK](http://www.facebook.com/IFNetUK)).

Please take a moment to 'follow' and 'like' IFN and also Inter Faith Week ([www.twitter.com/IFWeek](http://www.twitter.com/IFWeek) and [www.facebook.com/IFWeek](http://www.facebook.com/IFWeek)) and also check in with the IFN website to see new items, which are added on a regular basis.

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## **FAITH AND PUBLIC LIFE UPDATES**

### **Faith and inter faith response to Refugee crisis**

Faith and inter faith groups are often in the forefront of reaching out to respond to the needs of asylum seekers and refugees with both practical and spiritual support.

In recent months, it is the Syrian refugee crisis which has been the main focus of much faith community response although there has also been stepped up engagement by a number with the issues more widely. See, for example, the many stories linked to at: <https://ctbi.org.uk/how-the-churches-are-responding-to-the-refugee-crisis/> and releases such as that from the Muslim Council of Britain <http://www.mcb.org.uk/british-muslims-join-calls-for-compassionate-response-to-refugee-crisis/>. A number of faith responses have also been made in the context of their links across Europe, for example <https://thebuddhistcentre.com/news/european-buddhist-union-calls-compassionate-refugees>.

There has also been widespread response at the local level from faith groups and also from inter faith bodies as the examples of Luton and Preston demonstrate: <http://www.itv.com/news/anglia/update/2015-10-14/community-leaders-come-together-to-respond-to-refugee-crisis/> and <http://www.prestonfaithforum.org.uk/>

The City of Sanctuary movement has been playing an active role with faith groups in Leeds, Newcastle and a number of other 'cities of sanctuary' responding.

Inter faith prayer vigils have taken place in a number of areas. One took place outside Westminster Cathedral organised by CitizensUK and in Wisbech, people of different faiths came together "in solidarity with the Syrian refugees in their desperate and dangerous journey into Europe".

Faith groups in a number of areas have offered practical assistance. For example in Southend, church and other faith leaders wrote to the local paper saying that they and community groups would host people in their own homes and fund school places and offer help and advice to Syrian refugees who may be resettled in Southend <http://www.echo-news.co.uk/news/>. At Surrey University, Jewish, Muslim and Christian students worked together to raise funds towards providing tents in Calais and support for refugees on the Greek Island of Kos. Volunteers from Woking Mosque will deliver the Interfaith Aid. <http://www.jewishnews.co.uk/surrey-jsocs-pop-up-succah-inspires-interfaith-action-for-refugees/>

The topic was reflected at IFN's National Meeting, which took place on 14 October, both in presentations in plenary by Mustafa Field of Faiths Forum for London and MINAB and Nadine Daniel of Hope+ in Liverpool, and also in a special focus discussion group on 'welcoming the stranger' with contributions from the Revd Fleur Houston of the Churches Refugee Network and David Walsh of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Interfaith Scotland's AGM on 4 November will be accompanied by a public talk on Scotland's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

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## **Report on First Minister's interfaith summit in Scotland**

The First Minister of Scotland, the Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP, called an Interfaith Summit in September to find out more about the work being done by inter faith organisations and faith communities in Scotland. She met with a cross-section of religious leaders from diverse faith traditions along with the Director of Interfaith Scotland and project managers of Interfaith Glasgow and the Edinburgh Inter-faith Association. She said, "Inter faith work and the contribution of faith groups is essential in transforming lives and building a strong, fairer and equal Scotland. By working together with all communities I want to see a safer, stronger and more inclusive society which we are all able to fully contribute to and benefit from".

Further information can be found at <https://firstminister.gov.scot/first-minister-welcomes-faith-groups/>.

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## **Counter Extremism Strategy**

On 19 October, Home Office Secretary Theresa May announced a counter-extremism strategy described as "aiming to tackle the full spectrum of harms caused by extremism: violent and non-violent, Islamist and neo-Nazi – hate and fear in all their forms". The release speaks of partnership at the heart of the strategy between government and individuals, groups and communities, who want to see extremism defeated - "a partnership that will not only seek to counter the ideology spread by extremists, but will stand up for the shared values that unite us as a country: values that include democracy, free speech, mutual respect, and opportunity for all."

The strategy sets out four areas in which action will be taken:

- confronting the extremist ideology head-on
- actively supporting those who want to fight extremism, but are too often disempowered or drowned out of the debate
- disrupting extremists, aggressively pursuing the key radicalisers who do so much damage

- building stronger and more cohesive communities, tackling the segregation and feelings of alienation that can help provide fertile ground for extremist messages to take root

The Strategy can be downloaded from:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/470088/51859\\_Cm9148\\_Accessible.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470088/51859_Cm9148_Accessible.pdf)

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## Community Engagement Forum

A Community Engagement Forum, foreshadowed in the Prime Minister's announcements of 20 July, met at Downing Street on 13 October to discuss countering extremism. This Forum is described at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-i-want-to-build-a-national-coalition-to-challenge-and-speak-out-against-extremism>.

In a holding Written Answer in the House of Commons, Home Office Security Minister John Hays said that "Attendance at forum meetings would rotate to allow ministers to hear directly from a wide range of individuals and groups taking a leading role in challenging extremism in our communities."

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## Separate recording of anti-Muslim hate crimes

According to the Home Office report, *Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2014/15*, in 2014/15, there were 52,528 hate crimes recorded by the police, an increase of 18 per cent compared with the 44,471 hate crimes recorded in 2013/14, of which: 42,930 (82%) were race hate crimes; 5,597 (11%) were sexual orientation hate crimes; 3,254 (6%) were religion hate crimes; 2,508 (5%) were disability hate crimes; and 605 (1%) were transgender hate crimes. There was an overall increase of 18% on the previous year.

Prime Minister David Cameron announced at the first meeting of the Community Engagement Forum that for the first time, police forces in England and Wales will be asked to record anti-Muslim hate crimes as a specific category in the recorded crime statistics, bringing them in line with reporting of anti-Semitic attacks. Creating a separate category is intended to enable police, prosecutors, local authorities and the communities they serve to have a better understanding of the prevalence of anti-Muslim hate crime and allocate resources accordingly and to provide the first accurate picture of the extent of anti-Muslim hate crime in England and Wales.

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## Funding for security of faith establishments

The Prime Minister announced on 13 October that new funding will be made available for the security of all faith establishments.

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## Review of Coroner Services

When the coroner reforms in the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (“the 2009 Act”) came into effect in July 2013, the Government made a commitment to review their impact after they had been in place for 18 months. The aims of the 2009 Act were described by Government as being to put the needs of bereaved people at the heart of the coroner service; for coroner services to be locally delivered within a framework of national standards; and to enable a more efficient system of investigations and inquests.

This review seeks to find out whether the coroner reforms are operating as planned and whether there have been any unintended consequences. The Ministry of Justice is interested in hearing about people’s experiences of aspects of coroner services that were reformed under the 2009 Act.

This review will run from 15 October 2015 to 10 December 2015. The Government’s response will be published in early 2016.

The consultation survey can be accessed at: <https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/post-implementation-review-of-coroner-reforms>

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## EHRC report on Review of equality and human rights law relating to religion or belief

Earlier this year the EHRC published the results of its consultation on how religion or belief affected experiences at work or when using services. It commissioned Oxford Brookes University to build on the findings of its consultation by reviewing the legal framework in Great Britain, the way courts have developed case law, and how experts have analysed this. The review looks at such key issues as how religion and belief are defined in the law, the legal protection for religion or belief, the balancing of competing rights, and the idea of a duty of reasonable accommodation, which is part of the law in Canada and America. The review takes a neutral approach and considers different views on these issues.

The review finds that the legislation and case law protects people with a religion or a belief and those who lack a religion or belief, but that several areas need more thought. These include the definition of belief and the position of the religious employer and religious service provider, and areas where the law is unclear such as the relationship between individual and group rights.

Further information can be found at <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/research-report-97-review-equality-and-human-rights-law-relating-religion-or-belief>.

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## **EHRC guide to increasing diversity in television broadcasting**

The EHRC has produced a guide intended to increase diversity in television broadcasting. Figures show that some groups may be experiencing barriers to getting into the sector and progressing when they get there. The television industry has long been aware of the need to increase diversity, both on- and off-screen so that the industry can attract the best talent, but also because of the unique role television broadcasting has in shaping and reflecting society's values. The guide is aimed at decision-makers within the industry, at independent production companies as well as broadcasters, talent suppliers and others – from production managers to legal and business affairs executives, directors and commissioning editors.

The guide can be downloaded from <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/thinking-outside-box-supporting-television-broadcasting-industry-5>.

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## **INTER FAITH PROJECTS, PROGRAMMES AND DEVELOPMENTS**

### **Inter Faith Week**

A wide array of events are being held this year: open door days at places of worship in many areas; social action projects including collections for local food banks; reflection events such as a 'Space for Peace' at the Vedic Temple in Southampton with dancers, singers and musicians from various faiths; youth-led events such as 3FF Parliamentors led 'Interfaith Summit; tree plantings in a number of cities - this year also a multi faith spring bulb planting at Shenley Park in Hertfordshire; talks on topics from 'welcoming the stranger' to religious freedom to faith in the work place, as well as exhibitions, competitions, quizzes and special programmes of events within particular institutions such as in the Royal Hospital in Truro where the Cornwall Faith Forum will be running a special programme of events.

Details of events registered so far can be found on the Inter Faith Week website: [www.interfaithweek.org](http://www.interfaithweek.org) but, to whet your appetite: check out what those at the Royal Hospital in Truro may be experiencing: <http://dorkemmyrn.org.uk/interfaith-week-15-21comes-to-the-royal-cornwall-hospital/>

**If you are planning an event or activity to mark Inter Faith Week, do take a few minutes to register it so that we can give it good profile on the Inter Faith Week website and let the public and the media know about it.**

The event submission form can be found on the IFW website. There is also a downloadable pdf form for those who prefer that and if you would like help, just ring and one of our Inter Faith Week volunteers will be happy to help!

Facebook posts about the Week are proving popular. Check out and 'like' our Facebook Page at: [www.facebook.com/IFWeek](http://www.facebook.com/IFWeek) so do take a look and 'Like' the page.

If you are using Facebook or Twitter in ways linked to your Inter Faith Week events or activities, please do connect with us. The FB link is above and we are on Twitter [@IFWeek](#) and using the hashtag #IFWeek.

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## **Inter Faith Network National Meeting and AGM**

IFN held its National Meeting and AGM on 14 October at the Bond Co in Birmingham.

The National Meeting was on the theme of 'Living Well Together'. 'Living well together' is an ongoing project: a journey, and learning from one another along the way is part of this. The meeting was a chance to explore many different dimensions of this and how inter faith cooperation can contribute to this yet further.

During the plenary session, Mustafa Field of the Faiths Forum for London spoke on 'Interconnecting in inter faith contexts for the common good'; Dr Karen Jochelson of the Equality and Human Rights Commission spoke on 'Equality and diversity'; Nadine Daniel of Hope+ and Merseyside Council of Faiths spoke on 'Reaching out at times of need'; Dr Maureen Sier of Interfaith Scotland spoke on 'Appreciating diversity; negotiating difference'; and Reflections on themes of the day were offered by Krishan Kant Attri of Newcastle Council of Faiths and Hindu Chaplain to the Armed Forces; Julie Jones of the Inter-faith Council for Wales and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Wales; Dr Norman Richardson of the Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum; and Jatinder Singh Birdi of Warwick District Faiths Forum.

Discussion groups were held on: 'Living well together: cooperating for community benefit', with a presentation by Mgr Daniel McHugh and colleagues (Khalid Mohammed and Mauricio Silva) from the Communitas wellbeing project at BIRINUS Birmingham; 'Living well together as neighbours', with a presentation from the Revd Mark Poulson of the Church of England and Near Neighbours; 'Living well together: faith communities and responding well to refugees and asylum seekers as part of our shared life', with presentations from the Revd Fleur Houston of the Churches Refugee Network and David Walsh of the Board of Deputies of British Jews; 'Living well together: snapshot from campus', with a presentation from Sukhi Kainth of the National Union of Students; 'Living well together within the workplace', with a presentation from Dr David Perfect of the Equality and Human Rights Commission and reflections from Dr Shuja Shafi of the Muslim Council of Britain; and 'Equipping us to live together well: religious literacy and chaplaincy', with presentations from Prudence Jones of the East of England Faiths Agency and the Revd Prebendary Michael Metcalf of the National Association of SACRES and Stafford and District Friends of Faith.

A report on the Meeting will be published in due course.

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## Report on day event for local inter faith practitioners

As noted in the July/August issue of the e-bulletin, on 30 July IFN held a day event for local inter faith practitioners in London. This was the second of two such events held this year. The first was held in Sheffield in March.

The report of the July event was published in September and includes a summary of the plenary presentations and discussions and the workshop discussions as well as some images from the day. A copy of the PowerPoint presentations is available, together with the report, on the IFN website ([www.interfaith.org.uk](http://www.interfaith.org.uk)).

Many topics were discussed, including:

- Local inter faith relations and cooperation
- The contribution of local inter faith organisations to our shared society
- Developing programmes with impact
- Communicating the message well
- Dialogue, friendship and trust
- Inter faith cooperation, social action and social justice
- Women and local inter faith activity
- Active involvement of young people
- Responding together at times of tension
- Using Inter Faith Week to raise profile and widen engagement
- The value of different approaches - from grassroots dialogue and community projects to consultation and partnership with public agencies and other bodies
- The importance of initiatives that work with many faiths and also of those working with two faiths or three
- Resourcing the work
- The future of local inter faith - possibilities and challenges
- The vital importance of the work

National and regional faith, inter faith and academic and educational bodies in IFN's membership also make a vital contribution to the development of local inter faith understanding and cooperation. Some of the important ways that they do this have been covered in National Meetings and category meetings.

Local inter faith practitioners often comment on the significant impact that there can be from encouragement by national faith community organisations and other national and regional bodies to their local members to play an active role in local inter faith initiatives. It is hoped that the reports of the two day events may be useful in this work.

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## **Inter faith and educational and academic bodies meet**

A combined meeting for member National and Regional Inter Faith Organisations and Educational and Academic bodies took place in London on 8 September. The meeting included discussion on some of the outcomes of the November 2014 Young Voices, Young Agents for Change meeting; and the question of 'religious literacy' and different programmes that are being developed to address this (at all ages) as part of increasing understanding about and between faiths.

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## **Westhill NASACRE awards – an inter faith dimension**

The Westhill/NASACRE Awards have, for a number of years, been encouraging schools to engage with diversity through projects which will generate compelling learning experiences in RE for young people, relevant to today's context. Each year grants of up to £4,000 have been awarded to support suitable projects submitted by schools through their Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs). At IFN's Young Voices, Young Agents of Change event last Autumn, young people from one such project – Redbridge Ambassadors of Faith and Belief – spoke about their project which is about RE and also has a strong inter faith dimension. Among the 2015-16 grant recipients is a Faith Ambassador scheme in Barnet and Enfield where secondary School students are being trained as Faith Ambassadors, and delivering presentations in their local Primary Schools, and a digital project with secondary pupils, exploring Middlesbrough's religious heritage and connecting with faith communities today.

Further information at: <http://www.nasacre.org.uk/westhill-nasacre-awards>

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## **Nisa-Nashim Jewish-Muslim Women's Network launched**

A new initiative bringing together Jewish and Muslim women aimed at breaking down barriers and enabling joint work on projects helping wider society was launched at the Islamic Girls School in London this month. It is called Nisa-Nashim - made up of the word for women in Hebrew and Arabic. It also aims to promote women's leadership. The project received a start-up grant from the Department from Communities and Local Government.

Early activities have included visits to mosques and synagogues, hosted kosher-halal meals, the launch of a business network and support for programmes to help refugees.

For further information see: <http://www.womeninjewishleadership.org.uk/how-to-get-involved/nisa-nashim-jewish-muslim-womens-network/> or email: [sam.clifford@bod.org.uk](mailto:sam.clifford@bod.org.uk)

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## **St Ethelburga's project on 'No wealth but life'**

St Ethelburga's is running a 5 part series of events in November exploring how people can strengthen their capacity for peace building through new economic models that create systemic change.

This series of practical and participatory events will focus on five interconnected themes: participatory economics, not-for-profit/social enterprise models, re-inventing organisations, alternative finance and the co-operative and commons movement.

The series will give participants the opportunity to: learn from leading practitioners and case studies; explore how learning can be applied in your own work; engage in a community case study; and participate in a vibrant community of practice.

For further information, visit <https://www.stethelburgas.org/no-wealth-life-sharing-resources-key-peace>.

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## **Multi cultural cookbook**

York Racial Equality Network is collating recipes from different backgrounds and cultures to create a multi-cultural cookbook. They are looking for a mix of recipes and are interested in hearing from anyone who would like to contribute. For further information, contact [info@yren.co.uk](mailto:info@yren.co.uk) or write to YREN, 20 Falsgrave Crescent, York YO30 7AZ.

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## **Network Rail Multi Faith Network**

The Network Rail Multi Faith Network (MFN) is Network Rail's newest employee network open to thousands of staff across the company across all faith groups. Having launched earlier this year in April, the MFN's membership has grown into the hundreds, with staff from Glasgow to London, across many faiths.

The MFN arranges staff networking events, publishes periodic newsletters and Intranet articles on faith matters relevant to staff, advises Diversity & Inclusion Employee policy on faith issues, and arranges training workshops for staff in faith awareness in the workplace. The MFN is looking to increase membership and to work more closely with senior leadership to advise on faith issues that affect employees and branch out to other faith networks in different companies and industries.

For further information, contact [Hasan.Ahmed@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:Hasan.Ahmed@networkrail.co.uk) or telephone him on 07711 602483.

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## Sussex Police appoint 'Interfaith Champion'

Sussex Police have appointed an 'Interfaith Champion'. Sergeant Simon Kind holds this role alongside his full-time job as a response team sergeant. He describes his purpose as to assist Sussex Police meet its public sector equality duties of eliminating unlawful discrimination and fostering good relations between people with and without protected characteristics, including religion and belief. He chairs an internal Interfaith Forum where staff of any faith or belief can raise issues on how force policies may be affecting them. During Inter Faith Week they are hoping to host a series of blog posts on the force website where staff members describe how their faith or belief assists them in an often-difficult job.

The force also has four faith champions for Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism. They tend to be 'outward facing', dealing with groups in the community. Sergeant Kind is also responsible for engagement with other religions and beliefs, including Paganism and Humanism.

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## 3FF Mixed Up Chorus

3FF's 'Mixed Up Chorus' is an "intercultural and intergenerational 80-voice choir [which] unites members and audiences through a love of music with regular performances, a global repertoire and exciting collaborations with other artists."

It sings music from all traditions, old music, new music, commissions, improvisations and collaborations; and is led by Jeremy Haneman, conductor and director of the Royal Opera House's Community Chorus.

The choir is open to new members three times a year, in January, May and September. The next opportunity to join will be in January.

Further information is at <http://www.3ff.org.uk/mixed-up-chorus> and any questions can be addressed to [MixedUpChorus@3ff.org.uk](mailto:MixedUpChorus@3ff.org.uk).

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## Inter faith cricket heads to the Vatican

This summer the e-bulletin contained a special feature on inter faith cricket. The Vatican's cricket club has just played a Yorkshire squad made up of Muslim players. The St Peter's XI, which was formed in 2013, played Mount Cricket Club from Batley, West Yorkshire, in Rome, in its latest bid to build bridges with sportsmen from other faiths. Huddersfield Examiner reports that the home team clinched a narrow win in the last over. It is hoped that the Vatican team will come for a return match at Headingley.

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## RESOURCES AND TRAINING

### Interfaith Scotland resources for school, youth and community groups

Interfaith Scotland has a wide range of resources to download from its website, including resources for this year's Scottish Interfaith Week on the theme of 'Care for the Environment'. It also has ideas of activities to run in local communities; possible talks to give in schools or communities about inter faith dialogue; inter faith videos and workshops created by Interfaith Scotland. They can all be downloaded from:

<http://www.interfaithscotland.org/scottish-interfaith-week/resources-for-school-youth-and-community-groups/>.

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### Maimonides Interfaith Foundation – Interfaith Explorers

The Maimonides Interfaith Foundation has a free resource entitled Interfaith Explorers, [www.interfaithexplorers.com](http://www.interfaithexplorers.com), which offers guidance and support for how inter faith dialogue, RE as well as PSHE and Citizenship learning can be used to support teachers in these areas.

This resource, supported by UNESCO, aims to help pupils at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 respect cultural and religious diversity. With a focus on the three Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – it supports core personal and social skills development as well as self-directed, exploratory learning. Designed to compliment RE and PSHE teaching, alongside citizenship education it promotes universal core values and the development of ethical thinking. It also responds to the new Prevent Duty.

For further information, visit <http://interfaithexplorers.com/>.

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### Holocaust Memorial Day 2016 resources

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) has launched its resources for 2016, the theme for which is 'Don't stand by'.

There are many resources including activity packs, ways to take action, guides for workplaces, libraries, local authorities, trade unions, faith and inter faith settings, universities, museums and galleries, emergency services and cinemas on how to get involved, and activity templates for different length activities.

National and Regional Resources provide tailored advice for marking HMD in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Each guide features specific local experiences to help in planning an HMD event.

In partnership with Diversity Role Models HMD has also produced a guide exploring LGBT themes related to HMD. This explores the Nazi Persecution of LGBT people and offers contemporary perspectives on discrimination.

For further information and to download the resources, visit <http://hmd.org.uk/resources/theme-papers/hmd-2016-dont-stand>.

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## **Faith and Place Network policy briefing: Faith Groups and the Planning System**

The Faith and Place Network policy briefing on ‘Faith Groups and the Planning System’ was launched at the House of Commons in October. The evening was opened by Stephen Timms MP reflecting on faith and place, followed by the Network leaders giving an overview of the briefing recommendations. Responding to the briefing were Mustafa Field MBE (Faiths Forum for London) and the Revd Katei Kirby (Ruach City Church). A panel was convened to discuss ways in which the recommendations will be taken forward.

The briefing can be downloaded from <http://faithandplacenetworg.org/>

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## **JOBS, INTERNSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERING**

### **Equality and Human Rights Commission - Chair**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is seeking to appoint a new Chair to succeed Baroness Onora O’Neill from April 2016.

The closing date for applications is 30 November full details of the role, including how to apply, can be found at

<http://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/appointment/chair/> .

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## **CALLS FOR INFORMATION, COMPETITIONS, AND NOMINATIONS**

### **FaithAction – Call for information on end of life care**

FaithAction is looking for examples of faith and community places and groups that provide good spiritual care at the end of life. It was recently announced that end-of-life care in the UK has been ranked as the best in the world. The UK was praised, in a study of 80 countries, for both the availability of services here, and the quality of them. The hospice movement in particular was singled out – a movement which has its roots in faith – and it is often faith that motivates people to provide care and comfort for others as they come to

the end of their lives.

FaithAction would like to highlight the care provided by faith communities and groups and would be interested to hear from anyone providing this kind of care. Anyone with information to share, should contact Rodie Garland at [rodie.garland@faithaction.net](mailto:rodie.garland@faithaction.net) or on 0845 094 6350.

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## **Excellence in Diversity Awards**

The Excellence in Diversity Awards aims to recognise the nation's most inclusive organisations and those that lead in equality, diversity and fairness, in all aspects of business. Corporations, charities, organisations and individuals can be nominated for their commitment to promoting diversity and making a positive difference to other people's lives. The nominations are now open and further information can be found at

<http://www.excellenceindiversity.co.uk/nominate/>.

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## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Heritage Lottery Fund grants to commemorate First World War**

The Heritage Lottery Fund has made an additional £4million of funding available so that more communities can get involved in projects marking the Centenary of the First World War.

Projects applying for funding must be able to meet one of a number of successful outcomes based on heritage, people and communities. Grants can be given between £3,000 and £10,000. There is no current deadline for applications.

Further information can be found at <https://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/first-world-war-then-and-now>.

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### **Near Neighbours programme**

The Near Neighbours programme, a partnership between the Church Urban Fund and the Archbishops' Council, awards small grants of between £250 and £5,000 to projects that enable people of different faiths or none to work together for the benefit of the community. This is a rolling programme with no deadlines available in certain parts of England (maps showing eligible areas can be found at <http://www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours/grants/eligible-areas>). Its second phase is due to run until December 2015.

Details on eligibility and how to apply can be found online at <http://www.cuf.org.uk/near-neighbours/grants>.

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### **First Steps programme**

The Faith Based Regeneration Network, in partnership with Locality, the Community Development Foundation and others has launched a new programme of support for local community action, funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government, called 'First Steps'. The programme will initially be working to support at least 115 local neighbourhoods or areas to work collaboratively in their communities to create a community action plan by March 2016. Grants of up to £2,500 are available to assist community groups in putting together their first plan. The Starter Pack and Guidance Notes can be downloaded from <http://cdf.org.uk/content/funding-programmes/first-steps>.

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### **Funding Central website**

Funding Central - <http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/default.aspx> - is a free website for charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises that provides access to thousands of funding and finance opportunities, together with tools and resources for supporting organisations to develop sustainable income strategies appropriate to their needs.

Funding Central is managed by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, in partnership with Idox Information Solutions Ltd, and funded by the Government's Office for Civil Society.

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### **Comic Relief Stronger Communities grants**

Comic Relief's grants programme now has five themes, one of which is 'Stronger Communities'. Grants for the Stronger Communities theme are managed by Local Community Foundations and range in size from £1,000 to £10,000 per year. Priority is given to small, locally-based groups or organisations in areas of disadvantage that have a clear understanding of the needs of their community and are undertaking actions as a means of addressing these needs. Anyone wishing to apply for a Local Communities grant should contact their local community foundation. Further details can be found online at [http://ukcommunityfoundations.org/programmes/comic\\_relief/](http://ukcommunityfoundations.org/programmes/comic_relief/).

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## SPECIAL WEEKS/DAYS

### **National Inter Faith Week in England, Wales and Northern Ireland - Sunday 15 to Saturday 21 November.**

National Inter Faith Week is a programme of the Inter Faith Network for the UK. Its aims are:

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

Many different kinds of organisation will be holding events to mark the Week: faith community bodies; inter faith organisations; non-religious belief bodies; schools and Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs); universities and colleges; local authorities and Police and Fire and Rescue Services; hospitals; businesses; voluntary organisations; chaplaincies; and others.

Just a few possible ways of marking the Week are:

- Faith trails and open door days – opportunities to visit places of worship
- Highlighting an inter faith project or programme of your organisation
- Launching a new inter faith project or resource
- A social media inter faith awareness campaign
- Joint social action – like a community litter-pick or charity fundraising
- Dialogues, debates and talks
- Quizzes, poster and photography competitions
- Inter faith sports events
- Hands-on learning activities and exhibitions
- Exchange visits between members of different places of worship
- Whole school and classroom activities
- A young people's inter faith forum event
- Arts and cultural events
- Faith and food events

This year, why not consider a hands-on social action project – from tree planting to volunteering together in another way that helps the local community. Or hold a discussion about how living well together as people of different faiths and beliefs and how we contribute to our shared society.

The listing form for events for 2015 went live on 31 July. If you are holding an event, please take a few minutes to register it so that the IFN office can add it to the map and it can inspire others to take part and to hold events too.

For further ideas, resources, event information and to register your own event and put it on the map, go to [www.interfaithweek.org](http://www.interfaithweek.org)

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### **Mitzvah Day - Sunday 22 November**

Mitzvah Day is a Jewish led day of social action – around the world thousands of people take part in hands on projects to support existing charities and to build stronger communities. People are encouraged to volunteer for projects in their communities and anyone can take part regardless of their background. This year, Mitzvah Day takes place on the day following Inter Faith Week but the Week is delighted to include its events as part of the calendar.

Mitzvah Day 365 takes place year round and is a catalyst in building local communities by bringing together over 37,000 people each year, to take part in collective, hands-on social action projects which make a real difference to local issues. For further information, visit [www.mitzvahday.org.uk](http://www.mitzvahday.org.uk).

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### **Scottish Interfaith Week - Sunday 22 to Monday 30 November**

Scottish Inter Faith Week is led by Interfaith Scotland. The theme this year is ‘Care for Creation’. Further information is online at <http://www.interfaithscotland.org/events/>.

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### **Holocaust Memorial Day – 27 January**

Holocaust Memorial Day provides an opportunity for everyone to learn lessons from the Holocaust, Nazi persecution and subsequent genocides and apply them to the present day to create a safer, better future. The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day 2016 is ‘Don’t Stand By’.

A list of events taking place throughout the UK can be found on the HMD website at <http://hmd.org.uk/page/activities>. Anyone interested in organising an event to mark HMD can order or download an Activity Pack at <http://hmd.org.uk/campaign-pack>.

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### **World Interfaith Harmony Week – First week of February**

World Interfaith Harmony Week is a UN recognised Week which takes place each year during the first week of February. The Week was proposed to the UN General Assembly by HM King Abdullah of Jordan, and the first UN World Interfaith Harmony Week took place in

February 2011. Further information about the Week, including its aims and objectives, can be found on its website at <http://worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com>.

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## DIARY DATES

This section includes some of the events taking place around the UK.

IFN has been trialling the inclusion of diary date information received between e-bulletins on its website at <http://www.interfaith.org.uk/take-part/events>. Your feedback on that is welcome.

**Events taking place for Inter Faith Week, 15 to 21 November are listed separately on the Inter Faith Week website at [www.interfaithweek.org](http://www.interfaithweek.org).**

**Norwich Inter Faith Link** is holding an event, with **Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust**, on Tuesday 27 October on 'Faith Leaders and Mental Health: Supporting people in your community with mental health problems'. The event is being held from 2pm to 4.30pm in the Dereham Room, Hellesdon Hospital, Drayton High Road, Norwich, NR6 5BE. To book, visit [www.surveymonkey.com/r/flmh2015Oct](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/flmh2015Oct).

**Interfaith Wolverhampton** is holding a series of talks, each from a different faith perspective. The first of these will be held on Wednesday 28 October and will be a talk on 'Jewish Spirituality' by Rabbi Natan Levy. The events will all take place at 7pm at the Newman Centre, Haywood Drive, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton WV6 8RF. In case of queries, ring Erik on 01902 750440. Further details and a booking form can be downloaded at <http://ifwton.org.uk/SpiritualityTalksBookingForm2015.pdf>

**Horsham Interfaith Forum** is holding a joint 'Faiths in Sussex' meeting on Saturday 31 October. The theme of the meeting, which takes place from 1.30pm to 5.30pm will be 'Conversations about Life & Death'. It is being held at Hove Methodist Church, Portland Road, Hove, BN3 5DR. For further information, contact [info@horsham-interfaith.org.uk](mailto:info@horsham-interfaith.org.uk).

**York Interfaith Group** is holding its next event on Saturday 31 October. This will be an International Shared Meal arranged jointly with the York Baha'i Community and York Racial Equality Network. The Meal takes place at 6pm at Acomb Parish Hall, Acomb, York YO24 3BX. For further information, contact [yorkinterfaithgroup@gmail.com](mailto:yorkinterfaithgroup@gmail.com).

**Building Bridges Burnley** is holding its next Share Faith Share Food event on Tuesday 3 November. This event is open to women only and is a place to share friendship, fun, food and faith. It begins at 7pm and is being held at the Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre,

Barden Lane Campus, Burnley BB10 1JD. For further information, contact [buildingbridgesburnley@gmail.com](mailto:buildingbridgesburnley@gmail.com).

**Interfaith Scotland** is holding its Annual General Meeting and Public Talk on Wednesday 4 November. This theme of this year's talk is 'Scotland's Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis' and the speaker will be John Wilkes of the Scottish Refugee Council. The event begins at 6pm, with the Public Talk at 6.30pm and the AGM at 7.30pm. It all takes place at Linlithgow Burgh Halls, Cross House, Linlithgow EH49 7AH. To confirm attendance, contact [calum@interfaithscotland.org](mailto:calum@interfaithscotland.org) or telephone 0141 420 6982.

**South London Inter Faith Group** and the **Christian Muslim Forum** are continuing their series of Conversations for the Soul, which include one to one inter faith conversations about beliefs and practice. The next event takes place on Wednesday 4 November at the SGI UK Buddhist South London National Centre, 1 Bernays Grove, London SW9 8DF. The event runs from 6.45pm to 8.30pm with light refreshments from 6.30pm. For further information, text John Woodhouse on 07908 888586 or email [woodhousesopten@btinternet.com](mailto:woodhousesopten@btinternet.com).

**York Interfaith Group** is holding its next event on Wednesday 4 November on 'Progressive versus Fundamentalist Religion: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Battleground'. The speaker will be Ben Rich, who will be presenting a Jewish case study. The event is being held at 7.30pm at the Priory Street Community Centre, York YO1 6ET. For further information, contact Mark Cosens at [yorkinterfaithgroup@gmail.com](mailto:yorkinterfaithgroup@gmail.com).

**Heythrop College** and the **Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales** are holding an international conference from Thursday 5 to Saturday 7 November entitled 'Celebrating Nostra Aetate'. The conference will focus on achievements and challenges in the Church's relations with non-Christian religions in the fifty years since the Second Vatican Council. The conference takes place from 10.30am on Thursday until 4.30pm on Saturday, with an earlier finish time on the Friday for those leaving for Shabbat, at Heythrop College, University of London, Kensington Square, London W8 5HN. For further information and to book tickets, visit <http://www.heythrop.ac.uk/events/celebrating-nostra-aetate-international-conference>.

**The Feast** youth project is holding an event from Friday 6 to Sunday 8 November on 'Faith and Friendship: faith based youth work in a multi faith society'. The conference will offer: the chance to meet youth workers from different faith backgrounds and different countries; the opportunity to see a multi-faith youth encounter taking place; practical help on multi-faith youth work; time to talk to young people about their experiences of encountering peers of different faiths; and space to consider multi-faith youth work in the light of people's own faith or beliefs. For further information, and to book, visit <http://www.thefeast.org.uk/events/>.

The **Avon branch of the Council of Christians and Jews** is holding its next meeting on Monday 9 November on the theme of ‘Made in the Image of God’. The discussion will focus on ‘How do we experience ourselves and others in the light of this description of humankind?’. It will be held at 7.30pm at Bristol Multi-Faith Chaplaincy, 1 Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1AU. For further information, contact [avonccj@gmail.com](mailto:avonccj@gmail.com).

**The Council of Christians and Jews** is holding an event on Tuesday 10 November entitled ‘In Our Time: What is the Future of Christian-Jewish Relations?’. Panellists include the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave OBE, Rabbi Dr Michael Hilton, Sister Teresa Brittan, Dr Stephen Innes and Rabbi David Mason. The event takes place at 7pm at The Jewish Museum, London, Raymond Burton House, 129-131 Albert St, London NW1 7NB. Tickets should be obtained in advance from the Jewish Museum website at <http://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk/whats-on?item=658>.

**Bristol Multi-Faith Forum** will be holding its AGM and Conference on Tuesday 10 November. The conference will discuss and explore the City of Sanctuary. Details on time and venue will be published when available.

**The Arts and Humanities Research Council, University of Leicester and University of Bangor** are holding a conference on Friday 13 November on ‘Collective Worship and Religious Observance in Schools: An Evaluation of Law and Policy in the UK’. The conference aims to present findings and recommendations to a wide audience, and to involve interested parties from beyond academia in the debates around collective worship and religious observance in schools. The conference will also feature presentations from a number of influential figures from the UK and overseas. The conference will be held from 10am to 4pm at the University of Leicester’s main conference centre, College Court. Registration is essential by contacting Ms Teresa Rowe at [teresa.rowe@le.ac.uk](mailto:teresa.rowe@le.ac.uk).

The **Media Society** in collaboration with **BBC Religion and Ethics** is holding a seminar on Monday 16 November on faith communities’ responses to the refugee crisis. The Panel of Aaqil Ahmed, Peter Hitchens and Claire Fox will be chaired by Roger Bolton. The seminar is being held at 6pm for 6.30pm at the Council Chamber, Old Broadcasting House, London W1A 1AA.

**Culham St Gabriel’s Trust and Goldsmiths, University of London** are holding an event on Thursday 26 November entitled ‘What should young people leave school knowing about religion and belief?’. This is the question posed by a new national study of teaching and learning about religion and belief in schools in England, being carried out by the Faiths and Civil Society Unit at Goldsmiths and funded by the Culham St Gabriel’s Trust. The event will launch the report of the research study and speakers will include Professor Grace Davie, Daniel Hugill and Mark Chater. It runs from 5pm to 6.30pm at Grey Coat Hospital School, St Andrew’s Building, Greycoat Place, London SW1P 2DY. Places should be booked in advance with Tim Stacey at [t.stacey@gold.ac.uk](mailto:t.stacey@gold.ac.uk).

**Elmbridge Multi Faith Forum** will be holding its Annual Gala Evening on Saturday 28 November. This will take place at 7pm for 7.30pm at the Grenfell Centre, Claremont Fancourt School, Claremont, Cobham, KT11 2JL. The evening will include a buffet supper and intercultural entertainment. For further information, including costs, contact Geoffrey Morris at [geoffreymorris@emas-bc.co.uk](mailto:geoffreymorris@emas-bc.co.uk) or on 01932 868454.

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**For more information on events and projects in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales see:**

Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum: [www.niinterfaithforum.org](http://www.niinterfaithforum.org)

Interfaith Scotland: [www.interfaithscotland.org](http://www.interfaithscotland.org)

Inter-faith Council for Wales: [www.interfaithwales.org.uk](http://www.interfaithwales.org.uk)

If you have items which you would like considered for inclusion in the next e-bulletin please email these to [ifnet@interfaith.org.uk](mailto:ifnet@interfaith.org.uk) by **24 November** with 'e-bulletin' in the subject line. Submissions may be edited for length or style.

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

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