

# Embracing the present Planning the future

*Social action by the faith communities of Leicester*



**£4.99**

*Report by Riaz Ravat for the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project  
sponsored by the Diocese of Leicester, Leicester Council of Faiths  
and VAL through the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.*



**Leicester 2004**

# Acknowledgements

A number of individuals and organisations deserve thanks for this report. The Diocese of Leicester, Leicester Council of Faiths and Voluntary Action Leicester have shown their commitment to the faith communities by sponsoring this project. Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) should be praised for their role in assisting the faith communities' engagement with social regeneration.

My line manager The Venerable Richard Atkinson OBE has been immensely supportive and his knowledge and advice have been invaluable. Needless to say but the report would have been poorer without his involvement. Members of the faiths regeneration project advisory group including my former line manager Revd. Martin Wilson deserve thanks for their patience and expertise. Debbie Watson and Pat English from Church House worked very hard in the production of this document. My mother should also be mentioned for putting up with me throughout this endeavour!

Others to acknowledge include Peter Cozens and Paul Winstone from Leicester City Council and Elizabeth Simon (London Churches Group).

**Riaz Ravat**

May 2004

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Designed and Printed by St Edmundsbury Borough Council Printing Services,  
St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Borough Offices, Angel Hill, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1XB  
Telephone: 01284 757124 Email: david@st-eps.com

*Photographs courtesy of Leicester Shire Promotions Ltd, Leicester Council of Faiths and the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project*

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# Embracing the present, planning the future

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# 1. Foreword

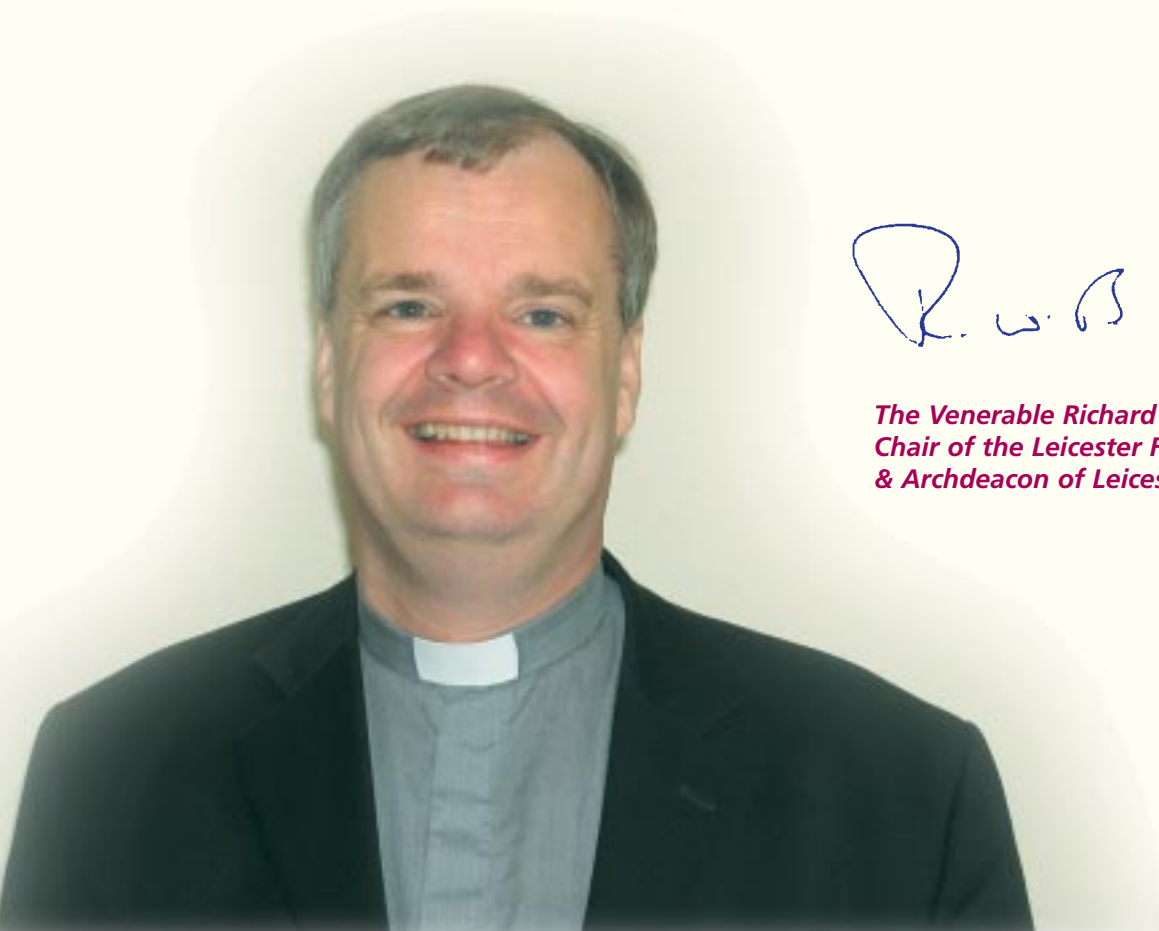
A cold December evening found me touring Leicester on the 'Discover Leicester Faiths Bus Tour'. Despite the driving rain, the sheer number and diversity of places of worship within the city was obvious. The tour took us past a number of holy places including St. Nicholas Church - the oldest building in the city dating back to Saxon times, Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Shree Swaminarayan Mandir, Masjid Ul-Imam-Il-Bukhari and the only Jain Centre in Western Europe. Not only are these centres of worship, they are also the focus of community-based regeneration.

As the primary multi-faith and multi-cultural city in the UK, Leicester has encouraging relations between the faith communities. The City Council was awarded community cohesion beacon status in March 2003. The task is now for the faith communities to work in partnership to further enhance what is being offered for the good of all our communities.

Huge potential exists in the worshippers of the diverse faiths. High levels of volunteer time and expertise are already being donated to faith-led community projects, many of which serve some of our most needy citizens. The report details recommendations for the faith communities and other social partners on how this contribution can be advanced.

As faith communities we are committed to working within the city for the good of the whole community. You will read in this report of a number of inspirational faith-based community projects happening in Leicester.

This is a pioneering report. It sets a benchmark for the engagement of the faith communities with social regeneration. It embraces the present and plans for the future. I urge social partners both locally and nationally to support us by resourcing the faith communities and working with them to further unlock this potential.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Atkinson'.

*The Venerable Richard Atkinson OBE,  
Chair of the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project  
& Archdeacon of Leicester*



As Chair of the Leicester Council of Faiths one of the oldest inter-faith bodies in the UK, I welcome this report. The report is a first for Leicester because of its unique insight into the value and contribution made by the faith communities to the life of the city. The report also shows examples of good practice and areas that need further development.

If we are to continue as the primary multi-faith and multi-cultural city in the UK, then statutory bodies and other service delivery agencies must work in partnership with the faith communities to challenge social exclusion and resource their valuable work. This report shows just how much work the faith communities do which up to now we knew very little about.

The Leicester Council of Faiths is proud to support the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project. I commend this report and encourage all partners to act on its recommendations.

***Resham Singh Sandhu MBE, Chair Leicester Council of Faiths***



The Diocese of Leicester has taken a leading role in the creation and development of the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project in partnership with the Leicester Council of Faiths and Voluntary Action Leicester. This report shows that the time has come for the faith communities and other social partners to unite to assist the economic and social regeneration of our city.

Around the UK, we see cities moving forward with this agenda which central government has encouraged. Leicester is proud of its diversity and cultures but the time has come for the faith communities to assert their mark on a city where over three quarters of its population belong to a faith tradition. Leicester's faith communities are active in serving the city through a range of projects and services. This report is an invaluable asset because it analyses in detail the social contribution of the faith communities to life in the city, as well as highlighting priorities and opportunities for future work.

***The Rt. Revd Tim Stevens, Bishop of Leicester***



This report is a first for Leicester's faith communities. Never before have we had such an inclusive and wide-ranging picture of the contribution that faith communities make to the city. It provides a real insight into the services and activities that faith groups provide to their local communities and the people of Leicester. It documents the huge input of volunteers into making things happen on the ground where they count for the most disadvantaged and excluded people in society.

There is something for everyone in the report. Policy and decision makers and funders can harness the commitment of faith organisations to make a significant contribution to addressing inequality and social injustice. Faith communities can draw inspiration from the work of others and learn from their examples and experiences. Individuals may be inspired to volunteer their services or learn that there is somewhere that may be able to meet their needs. Above all this report provides a strong baseline from which we can all continue to build upon and develop to ensure that Leicester is always a place celebrated for its diversity and unity.

***Carol Varley, Policy Director VAL (Voluntary Action Leicester)***

## 2. Executive summary

*As the primary multi-faith city in the UK, does anyone know how Leicester's diverse faiths help the well being of local communities?*

*This comprehensive report tells you!*

For the first time we are able to find out about the scale of this contribution.

### **This comprehensive report discovered that:**

- ❖ 240 faith groups across 14 faiths operate in Leicester
- ❖ 443 social projects function including support for people with HIV & Aids, assistance for asylum seekers and refugees, football coaching and childcare provisions.
- ❖ Faith groups service all parts of the city, with at least two faith organisations in every city ward
- ❖ Over half of all faith groups are engaged in social action (52%)

**Volunteering within the faith communities is extensive.** 83% of projects are aided by volunteers, an in-kind contribution of nearly £5 million per year.

**Faith groups operate in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Leicester** such as Spinney Hills and New Parks where they provide 'social arenas' where community activities can flourish.

**They are trusted organisations rooted in local areas,** able to cater for hard to reach groups by offering faith and culturally sensitive environments for their spiritual and social needs.

*Faith communities face many challenges.* Communities could be better supported if barriers such as the poor record of faith groups accessing external funding and the need for more volunteers were removed. Currently only 22% of faith-led projects receive external funding.

Social partners such as criminal justice agencies and health service providers need to *increase the levels of partnership working* with faith communities to better understand each other, share resources and launch joint initiatives to combat social exclusion.

The Regeneration Development Officer for the faith communities Riaz Ravat, conducted this survey on behalf of the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project which is sponsored by the Diocese of Leicester, Leicester Council of Faiths and VAL through the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. All 240 faith groups were contacted for this research during the second half of 2003.

The research was enhanced by the following:

- ❖ 67% response rate overall.
- ❖ Over 50% response rates from the four largest faith communities in Leicester (Christian, Hindu, Islam & Sikh).
- ❖ Responses received from smaller faiths including Brahma Kumaris, Quaker and Unitarians.

Recommendations include the need for *increased funding and assistance for faith-led community projects; more local inter-faith networks* to build on the work of the Leicester Council of Faiths and other existing faith partnerships; and *faith groups to adopt structures and working practices that encourage greater youth and female involvement* particularly at committee level.

**Central government believes firmly that faith communities matter.** If Leicester is to 'embrace the present and plan its future' by maintaining its reputation of being an inclusive city, it must pioneer new ways in inter-faith relations to set the standards for other cities throughout the UK and beyond.

# 3. Research methodology

## RESEARCH DESIGN & BRIEF

This report is the product of the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project which is co-sponsored by the Diocese of Leicester, Leicester Council of Faiths, and VAL (Voluntary Action Leicester) through the Community Empowerment Fund. The project has employed Riaz Ravat as Regeneration Development Officer for the faith communities.

The intention of this report is to 'map' the contribution which faith groups make to the well being of local communities, to highlight the problems which they face in ensuring that the services being offered are effectively delivered and sustained and to suggest ways forward as to how faith groups can become more actively involved in the social regeneration of Leicester. Leicester is well known for its reputation of being a diverse city but there is no history of a study focusing on the city's faith communities and regeneration on this scale.

The research contacted groups or organisations based on a faith or faith tradition. Individual members of faith communities were not canvassed for their own personal contributions to social regeneration but instead the focus of the research was on collective, regular and organised social projects. The work was enhanced because of data available from the 2001 Census which for the first time contained a question about religious identity. This allowed the research to be put into the wider context of the diverse faith demographics of Leicester.

The Faiths Regeneration Project Advisory Group approved the questionnaire which was sent to faith organisations to complete. The questionnaire built on the model set up by Elizabeth Simon of the London Churches Group in 2002<sup>1</sup>. This survey asked a total of 15 questions which included:

- The types of activities/ projects being conducted
- The range of social groups being supported
- The ethnic origins of the beneficiaries
- Numbers of full and part-time staff being employed on projects
- The sources of funding for the activities
- Problems/ barriers faced in the delivery of services
- Methods of communicating with beneficiaries

The questionnaire contained a large number of tick box questions but also provided space for elaboration of key points such as providing further comments about the barriers faced by the faith organisation in delivering social projects.

## RESPONSE RATES

The absolute deadline for replies was 1st September 2003. The follow-up strategy had paid dividends. The research identified 240 faith groups in the city. From this 161 had replied to the questionnaires which produced a response rate of 67%. This included response rates of over 50% from the four largest faith communities in Leicester, Christian, Hindu, Islam and Sikh. The survey was also successful in attracting

Faith	Sent	Received	Individual response
BAHA'I	1	1	100%
BRAHMA KUMARIS	1	1	100%
BUDDHIST	2	2	100%
CHRISTIAN	142	99	70%
CHRISTIAN SCIENTIST	2	1	50%
HINDU	27	15	56%
ISLAM	44	26	59%
JAIN	1	1	100%
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES	4	4	100%
JEWISH	3	3	100%
QUAKERS	1	1	100%
SIKH	9	6	67%
SPIRITUALIST	2	0	0%
UNITARIAN	1	1	100%
<b>TOTAL: ALL FAITH GROUPS</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>67%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Regenerating London: Faith communities and social action (2002) London Churches Group and Greater London Enterprise

responses from a number of smaller faiths and denominations such as the Unitarians, Serbian Orthodox, Latter Day Saints and Shia Muslims.

The Faiths Regeneration Project Advisory Group adopted a self-classification system of categorising faiths and traditions. Faith groups were allowed to decide which faith and/ or tradition they belonged to. By taking this approach, the project allowed itself to retain its focus on matters of regeneration not religion and hence avoided charges of being selective in its work.

This report will use the terms "faith communities", "faith organisations" and "faith groups". A simple definition of faith could be the beliefs and values of a person. In the context of this report, faith is linked to the following and observance of religious codes and practices. Therefore those who were contacted for the research were either:

- Places of worship e.g. Churches, Mosques, Temples
- Service providers who deliver projects on premises belonging to a religious organisation. The religious organisation would be represented on the service provider's management committees. Examples include some community centres
- Organisations set up initially to service the needs of one faith community but may have evolved to support the needs of other faith groups
- Prayer groups who may not have their own building in which to worship and hence may rent premises for this purpose

The terms "faith organisation" and "faith groups" will be used throughout this report to describe those who subscribe to any of the four descriptions above. "Faith community or faith communities" will be used to describe the congregations or beneficiaries of faith organisations



# CASE STUDY: ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

## Moonbeam

Moonbeam is a mothers and toddlers club which began in 2002 and is based in Highfields. It takes place each Friday from 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at the St Saviour's Neighbourhood Centre. The area is home to large numbers of Muslim families and it was within this community that the idea of such a club and its associated activities came about.

In the years up to 2002, a network of mothers in the local area expressed concerns about the accessibility and suitability of existing mums and toddler groups in Highfields. At the time, only ten groups were operating in the area, which had approximately 1,600 under 4's resident.

Moonbeam caters for mums and toddlers from all faiths and ethnic backgrounds but because of the demographics of the area the beneficiaries are mainly Muslim. Salma Ravat one of the founder members commented that "Moonbeam provides a culturally sensitive but fun environment where we learn through play". This learning is not restricted to the children. Mums learn more from each other and friendships are made and consolidated.

"We do normal things", commented Ayesha Hajat, a mother who has used the club ever since it began. Activities are guided by themes. For example, leading up to Eid-UI-Fitr, children would be taught about Ramadan. Other activities include the teaching of the alphabet, colours and the seasons. Toys, crayons and friendships symbolise Moonbeam.

Moonbeam currently caters for between 20-25 children per week and due to cultural sensitivities, only allows female carers to participate in the club.

The mothers make a payment of 50 pence per child and the Islamic Society of Britain makes an additional contribution which pays towards the use of the building, cost of toys and craft materials.

The diversity and spread of Muslims throughout the world is mirrored inside Moonbeam. Beneficiaries come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The languages spoken include English, Arabic, Gujarati and Urdu. This richness and variety within Moonbeam introduces children to diversity at an early age.

Rabiha Hannan (President of the Leicester Branch of Islamic Society of Britain) believes that this is crucial because a key aspect of Islam is that **"we see ourselves as part of wider society. Moonbeam teaches us greater understanding of people of different cultures and backgrounds."** It is important to learn and understand more about each other as this will promote greater tolerance and respect for one another". Rabiha added that "Moonbeam also attempts to teach responsible etiquettes, morals, values and ways of living which often only faith-based practices can provide more effectively".

The future of Moonbeam has tremendous potential for growth and development. Since January 2004, there has been an explosion of interest in Moonbeam with as many as 35 children attending each week. The reason for this is simple, according to another organiser Nasreen Yusuf. "It is the power of the word of mouth". Moonbeam requires additional support and resources to cater for this surge in demand but this hasn't dampened ambitions. The intention is to build on Moonbeam by creating a youth club for the 11-16 age group.



## 4. Semper Eadem?: A brief history of Leicester<sup>2</sup>

### Summary of key points

- ❖ Faith communities' engagement with social regeneration is not a 21st century phenomenon. In the middle ages the monastic communities ran hospitals caring for the sick and poor
- ❖ 76% of Leicester's population state an adherence to a religion or faith (Census 2001)
- ❖ Leicester has the largest Indian population in the UK
- ❖ The city is on course to become the UK's first city with an ethnic majority. 50% of its primary school pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds<sup>3</sup>
- ❖ Every city ward has at least 2 places of worship
- ❖ Christians are the majority faith in 17 of the 22 wards
- ❖ 13 of Leicester's former wards are in the 10% of the most deprived wards in England
- ❖ Christianity is the largest faith (44.72%), followed by Hinduism (14.74%), Islam (11.03%), Sikhism (4.21%), Other religions (0.42%), Buddhism (0.23%) and Judaism (0.15%). 17.43% stated no religion and 7.07% refused to answer.

Semper Eadem (always the same) is Leicester's Latin motto which is an inaccurate description of a city which has transformed since the days of the Roman Empire in 43 AD when the city was known as Ratae Corieltavorum. Like today the city was a commercial magnet and the Romans built public baths on the site of what is now Jewry Wall Museum. The town was abandoned when the Romans left these shores in 407 but was revived by the Danes in 877. In the middle ages Leicester was governed by the Earl of Leicester, Simon De Montfort whose rebellion against King Henry III resulted in parts of the city being burnt down. In 1231, the Earl expelled all Jews from Leicester who were accused of exploiting the poor.

Faith communities' engagement with social regeneration is not a modern phenomenon. In the middle ages the monastic communities ran hospitals caring for the sick and poor. In the 16th century Henry VIII closed the abbey, friaries, and hospitals of St. Leonard and St. John. The King's confidante Cardinal Wolsey, is buried at the site of the former Abbey.

The city was briefly captured by the Royalists during the civil war of 1642 but the Battle of Naseby swung the pendulum back in the favour of the Roundheads. In the late 17th century, the city was home to a thriving hosiery industry. The 18th century and the industrial revolution gave rise to the engineering and

manufacturing industries. In 1801, the first Census noted a population of around 17,000. The mid 19th century saw a growth in the number of houses being built around Leicester's Southern and Eastern parts. In 1919 Leicester became a city and in 1926 was given a Cathedral and a Bishop. The engineering industry which employed only 6,000 people in 1900 rose to 29,000 by the 1950s. The city escaped heavy bombing during World War II and the post-war years have seen great demographic changes to the city.

The area of Highfields in the early 20th century was home to a Jewish community. After 1945 they were joined by Polish and other Eastern European refugees. In the 1950s families from the Caribbean arrived and the 1960s and 1970s saw Asians from the Indian sub-continent and East Africa settling in the city. Recent arrivals to the city have been from Eastern Europe and Somalis. The city's population now stands at just under 280,000.

Leicester is often cited as being a multi-cultural and multi-racial city but less emphasis is made on its multi-faith characteristics. The 2001 census, which for the first time included a question about religion, painted the following picture which showed the religious adherence of the city's population:

<sup>2</sup> Evidence in part obtained from 'A Brief History of Leicester' (Tim Lambert): [www.localhistories.org/leicester.html](http://www.localhistories.org/leicester.html)

<sup>3</sup> 'Ethnicity Breakdown for Pupils in Leicester City Schools as at January 2003'. Leicester City Council

Religion	% in Leicester	% UK
Buddhist	0.23	0.3
Christian	44.72	71.6
Hindu	14.74	1.0
Islam	11.03	2.7
Jewish	0.15	0.5
Sikh	4.21	0.6
Other religions <sup>4</sup>	0.42	0.3
Total: All religions	75.5	76.8
No religion	17.43	15.5
Religion not stated	7.07	7.3
All no religion/ not stated	24.5	23.2

Source: Figures derived from Census 2001 information from the Office for National Statistics, the General Register for Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

The evidence clearly shows that there is a rich blend of faiths in Leicester which is very different to the national picture. In particular, less than half the population describe themselves as Christian and there is an above national average population from the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh faiths. The majority of people from these faiths are of Indian origin. Leicester has the largest Indian population in the UK. The arrival of Somali migrants in recent years (not included in the figures) is estimated at between 8,000-10,000<sup>5</sup>. Many from this community subscribe to the faith of Islam. There are just under 250 faith-based organisations in the city who serve a population of 279,921.

***The census reveals that Leicester is increasingly an ethnically diverse city***

with 34% of its population from ethnic minority groups. This is the highest proportion of any city in the UK. There is also an overlap between particular faith communities and particular ethnic minority groups. For example, the three largest non-Christian faiths in the city Hindu, Muslim and Sikh, account for 29.98% of the population. This is just under the total ethnic minority population figure of 34%. Leicester is on course to become the UK's first city with an ethnic majority. Already 50% of its primary school pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds<sup>6</sup>. This supports the city's claim to be the UK's most multi-cultural and diverse city and re-enforces the view that *Semper Eadem* is not an accurate motto for the city.

The concentration of faiths communities within the wards of the city shows that Christians are the majority group in 17 out of the city's 22 wards. However, five

wards do not have a Christian majority. These are Belgrave (51.92% Hindu), Latimer (65.98% Hindu), Rushey Mead (40.99% Hindu), Spinney Hills (55.94% Muslim) and Stoneygate (31.52% Muslim) which is the most diverse ward in the city.

24.5% of the city's population do not belong to a faith or have not stated a faith. The social regeneration of the city must include people of all faiths and none. However, the remit of this research is to identify and highlight the contribution made by faith-based organisations and so the emphasis of the work is on such organisations.

13 out of Leicester's former 28 wards are within the 10% of the most deprived in England and nearly half of the city's population live in these wards. The government's index of multiple deprivation measures a number of indicators. These include the % of people reliant upon means tested benefits, employment rates, % of pupils achieving the national average level of GCSE passes, % of people suffering from coronary heart disease, % of people living in housing of a decent standard and the levels of crime.

Many of Leicester's deprived wards no longer exist in name because of boundary changes before the 2001 local elections. The list of deprived wards consists of: (beginning with most deprived)<sup>7</sup>

1. North Braunstone
2. Wycliffe
3. Spinney Hills
4. Saffron
5. New Parks
6. West Humberstone
7. Mowmacre
8. Belgrave
9. Eyres Monsell
10. Coleman
11. Beaumont Leys
12. Latimer
13. Charnwood

The ward map of the city<sup>8</sup> shows that despite being concentrated primarily in the inner city, faith organisations have a presence in every city ward. Even

<sup>4</sup> The Census figures did not provide a breakdown of the other faiths but this survey identified organisations representing the following faiths within the city: Bahá'í, Brahma Kumaris, Christian Scientist, Jain, Quakers, Jehovah's Witness, Spiritualist and Unitarian.

<sup>5</sup> Taking Forward Community Cohesion in Leicester p.17 Leicester City Council

<sup>6</sup> 'Ethnicity Breakdown for Pupils in Leicester City Schools as at January 2003'. Leicester City Council

<sup>7</sup> Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000

<sup>8</sup> Obtained from the Leicester City Council website 27/2/2004

on the outer estates of the city there is a faith presence via the Churches who are active in social regeneration. The outer estates which have predominantly white residents, are not without their own problems. The Community Cohesion<sup>9</sup> report recorded that many residents feel isolated and ignored in how the city is run. This stems from a perception that the inner city and its primarily ethnic minority population is a magnet for regeneration resources whereas the outer estates have fared less well.

This is not an accurate view because 7 out of the 13 most deprived wards (including the most deprived, North Braunstone) are on the outer estates and therefore qualify for a host of regeneration funds. For example, Braunstone has received £49 million as a New Deal for Communities pathfinder project. There are Sure Start schemes in Saffron (now Freeman) and Children's Fund projects in Beaumont Leys, Braunstone and New Parks. Despite the evidence, the perception

of unfairness over resources still exists and this cannot be ignored as this may lead to divisive groups exploiting these stereotypes for their own ends.

The cohesion report described the belief among some residents on the outer estates that the celebration of the city's diversity ignores essentially 'white' culture. Efforts have been made to celebrate religious and cultural events such as Diwali, Christmas, the Belgrave Mela and the Carnival but facilitating the contribution into the planning and delivery of such events from people living on the outer estates is crucial. Whilst there may be cohesion within communities, more work is needed on ensuring that there is positive interaction between people of different backgrounds otherwise the inner city/ outer estates 'parallel lives' scenario will deepen.



<sup>9</sup> Taking Forward Community Cohesion in Leicester (2002). Leicester City Council and the Improvement & Development Agency (I&DeA)

The other six deprived wards are primarily BME (black and minority ethnic communities) areas. Within the BME communities there are issues of social exclusion. The OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) inspection of 1999 found that Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Gypsy Traveller children's results were not improving. National evidence <sup>10</sup> shows that unemployment rates are higher than average among Black-African, Black-Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities. Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities also have the highest rates of worst self-reported health. So the evidence shows that social exclusion cuts across faith and ethnic lines. Despite the issues highlighted above, *the city has become a model of community cohesion which is looked up to by other UK and international cities.*

There is an acceptance of diversity within the city and a recent report <sup>11</sup> indicated that Leicester's residents see cultural diversity as a plus.

*The relative harmony must not be taken for granted* and as the city is increasingly changing and not 'semper eadem' (always the same), imposing a set model of integration would be unproductive. Instead, *the institutions of civil society including the faith communities have a role in promoting positive interaction between people of different backgrounds and the faith communities can offer an arena in which this interaction can take place.* Tolerance and acceptance of different cultures and backgrounds must underpin all social regeneration work.



<sup>10</sup> Focus on Ethnicity & Identity (2001) Office for National Statistics  
[www.statistics.gov.uk/focuson/ethnicity/default.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/focuson/ethnicity/default.asp)

<sup>11</sup> A Taste of Leicester: Results of an Attitudinal Survey (2004) Landry C, Bianchini F and Trotter-Landry M on behalf of Comedia

# CASE STUDY: SHREE PRAJAPATI ASSOCIATION

## Youth Club and Football Coaching

The Shree Prajapati Association (SPA) services the community from its purpose built community centre and adjacent Prayer Hall on Ulverscroft Road, Leicester. The Prajapati community of over 4000 in Leicester have their origins in the carpentry trade in the Gujarat state of India. The SPA is a close-knit community of the Hindu faith. The SPA bought the site of the community centre 12 years ago and members of the community generously donated their time and money in creating the centre.

Hansaben Mistry (Assistant Secretary) said that **"although one of the objectives of our constitution is to promote the Hindu religion, our services are open to all regardless of ethnicity or faith"**. As well as religious events such as Navratri, Janmastami and Ram Navmi, the centre holds other activities including Gujarati Language Classes, Ladies Keep-Fit, Yoga Classes for both genders and an active Youth Club, which is currently offering Football Coaching as well as normal Youth Club activities that are of interest to young people. The Youth Club provides a social environment as well as activities such as Cricket, Table Tennis, Netball and Snooker and holds workshops where issues affecting young people are discussed. Children as young as 4 years old take part and the participants pay a nominal charge for the club which takes place every Tuesday from 7pm – 8:30pm.

The Football is funded by SRB4 (Single Regeneration Budget) Community Safety Fund and is specifically for children from the Belgrave area. Ashok Patel who is the Football coach believes that the project has "kept youngsters off the streets and has promoted etiquettes

such as respecting each other and not swearing which have in turn, promoted good citizenship".

Hema Mistry who is a 22 year old Youth Committee member added that "I have made so many friends through the Youth Club and were it not for the club, I would have withdrawn from my culture". Amit Mistry, 18 years old and another Youth Committee member confirms this by stressing **"my faith provides me with a basis for life. It gives me identity, morals and hope which I will pass onto future generations"**.

Hansaben Mistry hopes that the future of the SPA will lead to more activities for women, the elderly and children from the Prajapati community and indeed the wider public. Provisions needed are those focusing on health awareness and education. Extra funding would be most welcome but Hansaben added "the training and development of volunteers is equally important as the centre is run and managed by dedicated volunteers from the community in its entirety. This would allow for more expertise support to be developed and sustained within and for the good of the community".

*The Prajapati community is a proud community motivated by the desire to help future generations to integrate within the wider community without losing their own identity. The SPA Centre builds community spirit because both children and parents join in with activities and the safe and comfortable environment in which services are delivered, builds a sense of ownership and belonging. An example of the SPA's duty to the wider community was evident in 2003 when they raised £20,000 for Children In Need.*



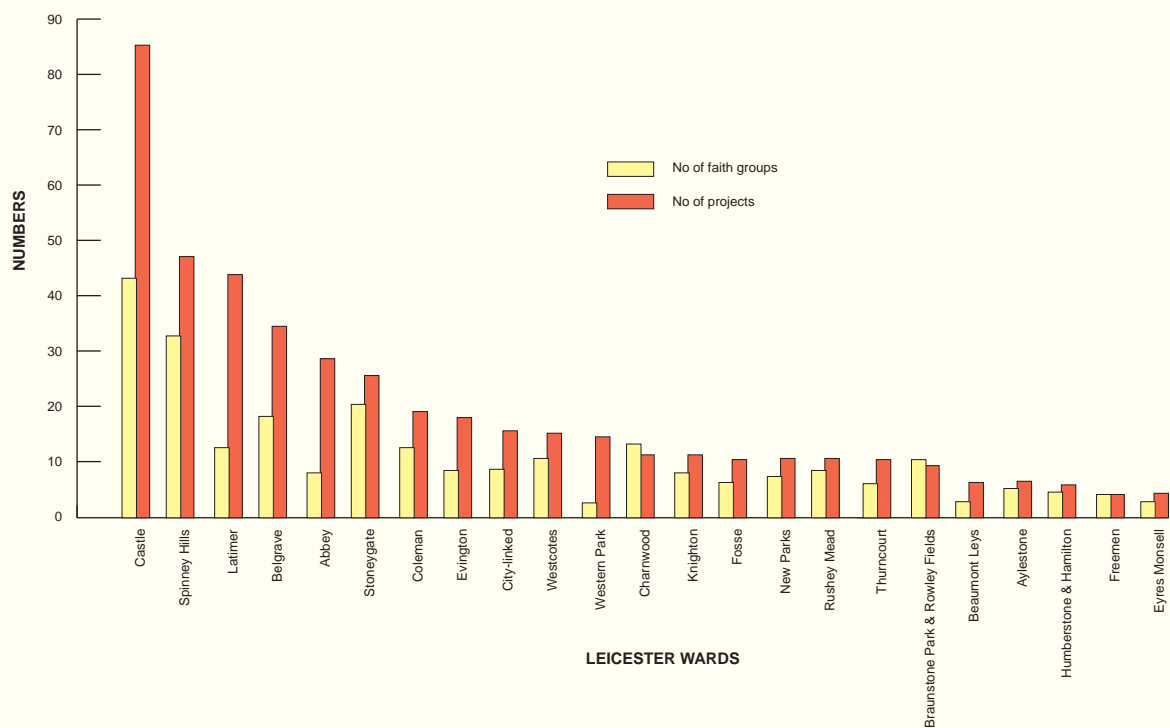
## 5. Faith-led community projects in Leicester

### Summary of key points

- ❖ The survey identified and contacted 240 faith groups
- ❖ Castle ward has the largest range and highest number of faith groups
- ❖ Christian, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh-led provisions amount to 97% of all faith-led services in Leicester
- ❖ There are 443 faith-led projects in the city
- ❖ 125 faith organisations deliver these services (52% of all groups)
- ❖ Sikhs deliver 9% of all faith-led projects which is over half their population size
- ❖ One in five organisations have purpose built centres
- ❖ 10% of groups do not have premises of their own
- ❖ The most popular project area is activities for young people whilst 'drugs/ substance/ alcohol abuse', 'legal advice', 'domestic violence' and 'social enterprises' are the least popular project areas
- ❖ The most supported social group is 'young people' but 'people with HIV/ Aids' and 'Travellers' are least catered for
- ❖ 6% of projects support people of other faith groups
- ❖ 70 organisations are involved in regular, working intra-faith partnerships
- ❖ 26 organisations have regular, working relationships with statutory, charitable and other non-faith bodies
- ❖ The lack of funding is the most important barrier preventing faith communities from delivering more and better projects
- ❖ 11% of projects are funded in full or part <sup>12</sup> by the local authority
- ❖ 22% of projects and 18% of faith groups receive external funding
- ❖ 83% of projects engage volunteers
- ❖ 21% of projects employ part-time staff and 13% full-time
- ❖ The estimated value of volunteering time given to faith communities amounts to nearly £5 million per annum
- ❖ Notices at worship is the most popular method of communication
- ❖ English is the most popular written and spoken language used to communicate with beneficiaries.

<sup>12</sup> 10 projects are funded by Leicester City Council and other match-funding organisations, hence the term part-funding. 37 projects are funded only by the City Council.

Leicester's diversity is evident by the number and variety of faith groups operating in the city. The survey identified and contacted 240 faith groups. The Castle ward which covers large parts of the city centre, houses the largest range of faiths (11 in total) including Bahá'í, Christian Scientist, Quakers, Spiritualists and Unitarians followed by Belgrave (6 faiths). Castle also has the highest number of faith groups (42) followed by Spinney Hills (34). There is a Church operating in every city ward and 8 wards only have Christian places of worship. These wards are made up of the outer estates which include Beaumont Leys and Eyres Monsell.



## Comparison of groups and projects by ward

## 5.1 Faith-led social action

This section provides an overview of faith-led community projects and services for all faiths collectively. Further information relating to individual faiths is available in the appendix section of this report. Christian, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh-led programmes will be highlighted more than others because these faiths together deliver 97% (430/443) of all faith-led services in Leicester. Inevitably, the level of information gathered from these faiths has substantially influenced the overall research findings. In addition, many activities do not fall under only one project area or social group. For example, the Social Sisters Group run by the Ramgarhia Board Gurdwara assists elderly women. Therefore the returned questionnaire showed that the activity supports both the 'Elderly' and 'Women' categories because it was deemed inappropriate to 'pigeon-hole' into only one group or another.

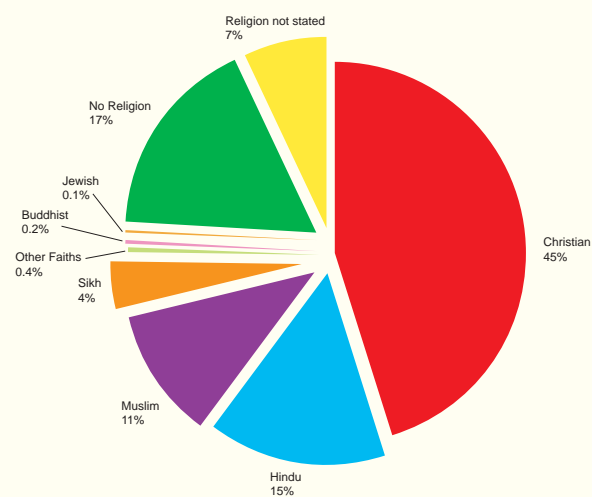
The research uncovered a total of 443 faith-led projects in Leicester. These projects are run, organised or managed by over half of all faith organisations identified by the survey (125/ 240). Therefore 52% of all faith organisations are engaged in social action.

The survey did not ask about independent organisations running projects on faith premises because the focus of the research was on actual faith organised, managed or run activities. However, there are many independent organisations operating on faith premises such as the Gingerbread group which supports lone parents and children of many faiths at Leicester Cathedral.

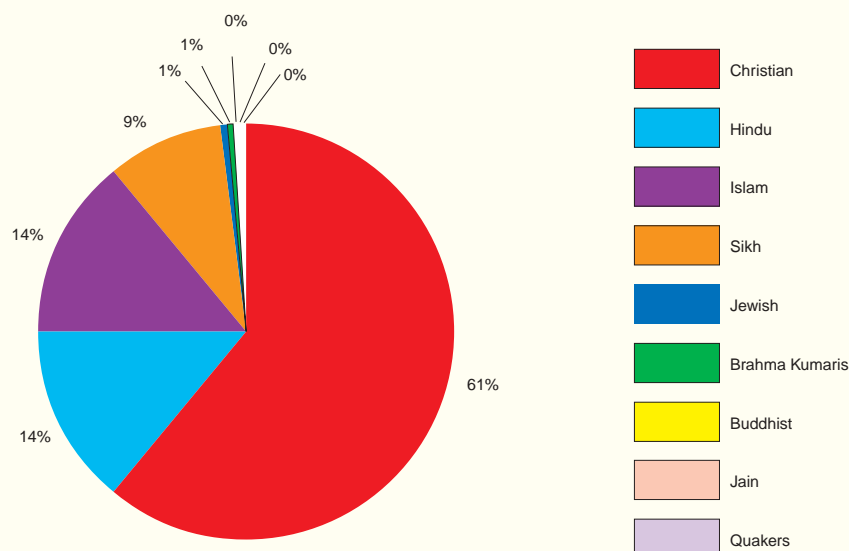
Analysis of each faith and their social action reveals an important picture. With only nine faith groups and a population of only 4.21%, the share of projects delivered by Sikhs is 9%. More than double their population size. One could argue that the Jewish faiths' percentage share of projects (1%) compared to their population (0.15%) is nearly seven times as big. However, in terms of scale the number of projects being delivered is only five in number whereas the number of projects being delivered by Sikhs is 39 which is why this stands out. 20% (47/240) of organisations have their own purpose-built centres whereas 10% (24/240) of groups do not have premises of their own. The majority of these are newer faith groups such as the Christian 'House Churches' which rent community centres or operate in a members' house for worship.

Religion/ Faith	Population of Leicester %	Number of projects	Share of all faith projects
Buddhist	0.23	2	0%
Christian	44.72	268	61%
Hindu	14.74	60	14%
Islam	11.03	63	14%
Jewish	0.15	5	1%
Sikh	4.21	39	9%
Other faiths <sup>13</sup>	0.42	6	1%

**Population of Leicester by faiths: Census 2001**



**% Projects delivered: All faiths**



<sup>13</sup> The 'other faiths' delivering projects are Brahma Kumaris (3), Jain (2) and Quaker (1).

The most popular project areas across all faith groups are 'young people's activities' <sup>14</sup> (20% of all projects), 'social facilities' for private use such as weddings and parties (10%), 'elderly projects' (9%) followed by 'education', 'sports', 'luncheon clubs', 'counselling' and 'family issues & parenting' (7% each). These project areas service the most obvious disadvantaged groups, the young and elderly. It shows that the faith communities invest substantially on people at the beginning of their lives and those nearing the end. In addition, provisions such as 'education' (which has its origins with the Church) and 'luncheon clubs' support the basic needs of both groups. The support of families is also of great importance to the faith communities.

The breakdown of the top five project areas by faiths, shows another pattern. For each of the four largest faiths (Christian, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh), 'youth activities' is the single most popular project area. The Behlool Society, formed in 2002 by a group of young people from the Shia Muslim community at Masjid E Hussein, caters for young males and females of all faiths and none. Activities have included holding seminars, producing audio CD's, setting up a website <sup>15</sup> and charity work. In 2003, 12 young girls between the ages of 10-12 raised over £1,000 for the Bam earthquake. The Behlool Society empowers young people by allowing them to plan and influence the work of the wider organisation and to take on key responsibilities.

Other patterns in the survey show 'education' and/or 'sports' featuring high with Muslim, Sikh and Hindu activities. 'Arts & Music', 'social facilities' and 'elderly' provisions feature strongly amongst Christians, Hindus and Sikhs. The project areas that need further development across all faiths are the 'environment', 'drugs/ substance/ alcohol abuse', 'legal advice', 'domestic violence' and 'social enterprises' (1% each). A rare example of a faith-led service in one of these areas is the domestic violence project run by the Apostolic Faith Mission International UK (AFMIUK) which assists perpetrators and victims of domestic violence. The AFMIUK is a new Christian group which meets regularly but does not have premises of its own.

Other project areas are less supported. 'Domestic violence' and initiatives tackling 'racism and discrimination' are less prevalent in Christian, Hindu and Sikh-led activities. 'Housing & homelessness' activities are not present within Hindu, Muslim and Sikh-led programmes. The survey noted issues of concern within the faith communities. These included crime, drugs, educational attainment, community cohesion and facilities and provisions for the elderly and young people.

The most supported social groups across all faith-led services are 'young people' (23%) <sup>16</sup>, the 'elderly' (16%) and 'women' (12%). This is also the pattern shown when each of the faiths' individual responses are examined. However, the social groups, which have not yet been effectively reached, are 'people with HIV/ Aids' and 'Traveller' communities (1% each) followed by 'drugs/ substance/ alcohol misusers', 'lone parents' and the 'homeless' (2% each). St. Patrick's Catholic Church provides a service offering counselling and advice on a range of issues such as relationships and finance as well as practical support such as form filling for those from the Traveller community. The Church also signposts Travellers to other provisions around the city.

Upon the examination of the project areas and social groups which are least supported, a pattern emerges. Many of the project areas and social groups e.g. 'domestic violence' and 'people with HIV/ Aids' are sensitive and specialist areas of work. There are a range of reasons for this lack in provision. Because existing support services do not monitor by faith, faith communities are unaware of the extent of such difficulties existing within their communities and indeed may deny that such problems exist at all. Secondly, there is the stigma attached with supporting particular disadvantaged groups because 'it may be a problem of the individuals own doing' which may go against religious or cultural norms and hence any support for such groups would result in a backlash from the wider community. There is also the additional issue of not being aware of the needs of a particular client group. Specialist service providers can work with the faith communities to determine what support is necessary and how this can be delivered within a faith sensitive context.

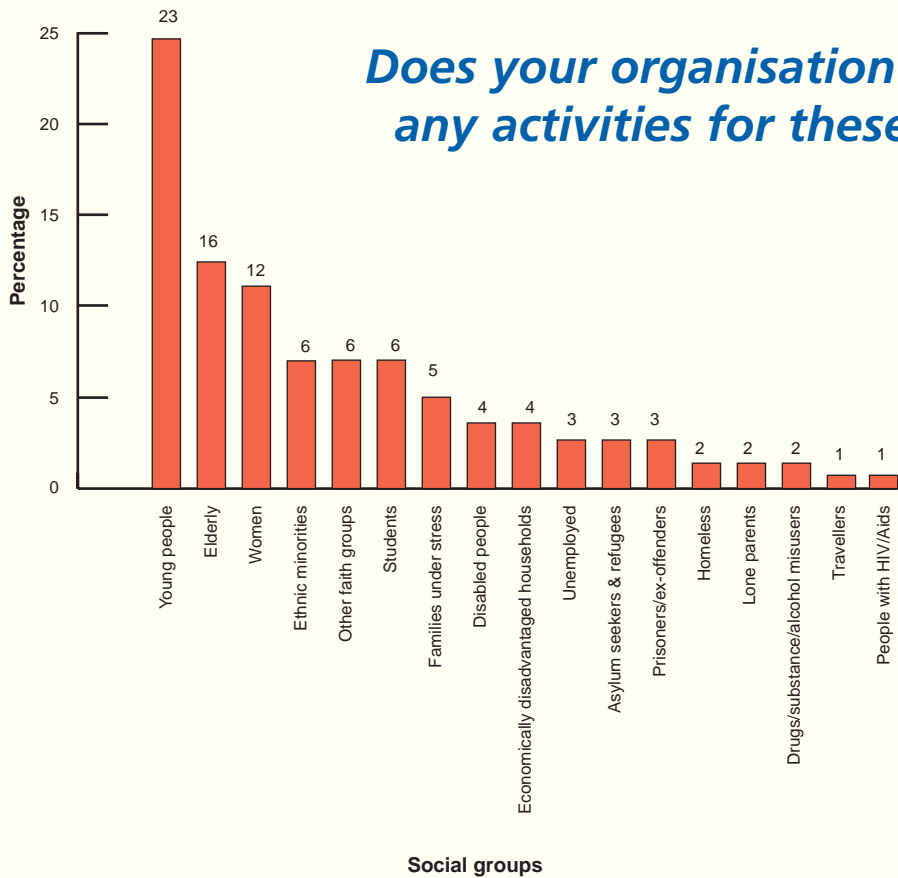
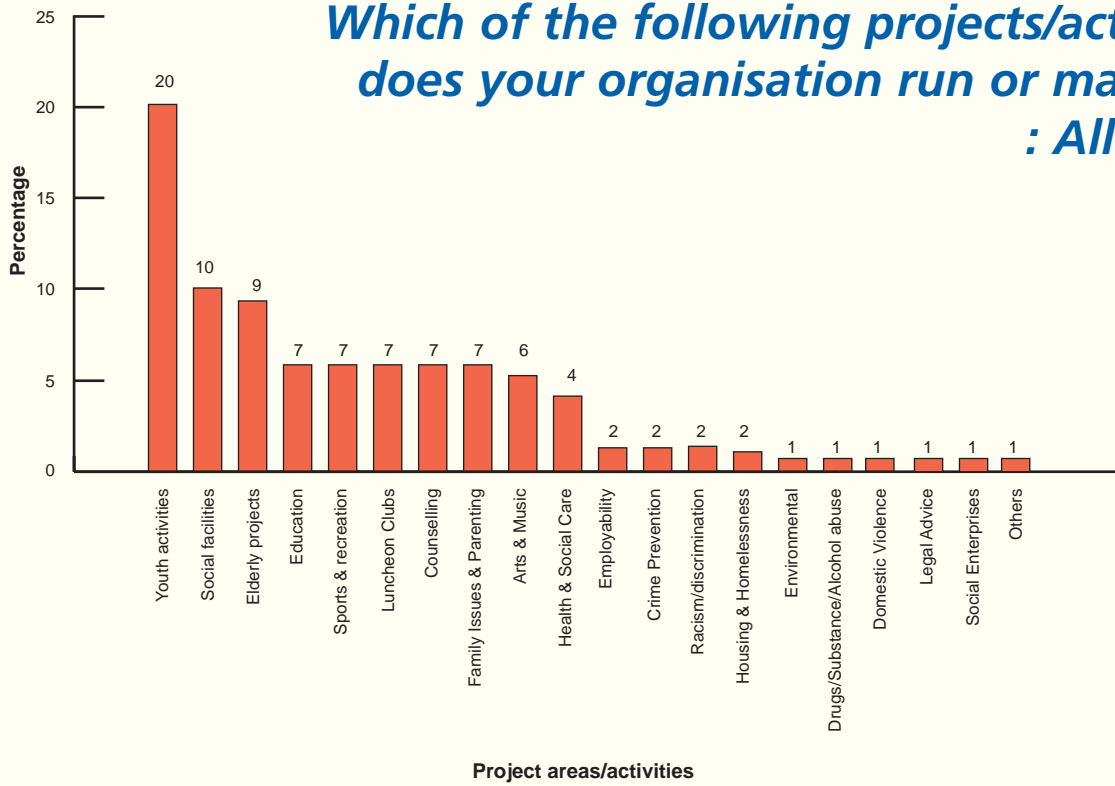
The smaller faiths in Leicester (Bahá'i, Jain, Jewish and Unitarian) do not have the staffing capacity or resources to cater for a wider range of disadvantaged social groups. The Unitarian faith has a very small congregation and is unable to deliver any projects but replies from the Buddhist faith showed that they support people from all of the disadvantaged groups highlighted by the questionnaire.

<sup>14</sup> 'Youth activities' includes the following 'Childcare (pre-school)', 'Children's activities (school age)' and 'Youth work'. For research purposes, the collective category of 'youth activities' was used.

<sup>15</sup> [www.behloolsociety.org](http://www.behloolsociety.org)

<sup>16</sup> Includes 'Children/ infants' and 'Teenagers'.

## Which of the following projects/activities does your organisation run or manage? : All faiths



## 5.2 Inter-faith and Intra-faith partnerships

The level of collaborative working within the faith communities' reveals that there are more intra-faith than inter-faith partnerships in the city. Of the inter-faith partnerships that exist, the extent of the relationships are either one-off celebration, charity, awareness raising events or more frequent inter-faith dialogue meetings. The Diocese of Leicester's Inter-Faith Advisor Canon Dr. Andrew Wingate has initiated a number of inter-faith dialogue groups around the city. The work of the dialogue groups has led to a number of joint initiatives between the faiths.

In 2002/3, Canon Dr. Andrew Wingate and Suleman Nagdi MBE from the Muslim-Christian Dialogue Group instigated an appeal for work amongst children in Afghanistan, through Save the Children. Nearly £6,000 was raised. In January 2003, a Ramadan/Advent appeal for two projects, one Christian administered (The Ali Arab Hospital) and the other Muslim administered (Community Centre in Kosovo) raised nearly £7,000. The contributions were divided half and half. Suleman Nagdi MBE commented that both appeals "were an important sign of our commitment to each other and to our common concern for those suffering tremendous disadvantage around the world. Examples like these should be given the credit which they deserve and I hope that in future, joint appeals with other faith communities can be launched".

The survey uncovered that only 6% of activities support people of other faith groups. These activities are delivered by one faith organisation but serve people of many faiths and none. The Sikh Community Centre on East Park Road is such a case. Projects include an under-fives playgroup, computer and reflexology classes. The centre employs Sikhs as well as a Christian, Muslim and Hindu. Inter-faith partnership working hasn't stretched to two or more different faith groups coming together to jointly manage and deliver social projects for local communities. Future development for the faith communities requires active and regular partnerships of two or more faith organisations to deliver social action. We have seen with the Afghanistan appeal that if inter-faith partnerships can exist for charitable work then there is no reason that this cannot be extended to the delivery of community projects.

15 organisations indicated that they engage in regular inter-faith dialogue work and occasional events through the Leicester Council of Faiths. However, intra-faith activity is strong particularly within the Christian faith with numerous ecumenical groups such as 'Churches Together' <sup>17</sup>. Churches Together in South West Leicester <sup>18</sup> (CTISWL) comprises of eleven churches whose work includes worship and promoting dialogue. In addition, CTISWL members have liaised with charities such as Christian Aid and CAFOD (Catholic Agency For Overseas Aid) to address issues of international aid, development and trade. They are also working to develop an ecumenical 'twinning' link with the Diocese of Tiruchi-Tanjore in the Church of South India.

If the city is to move swiftly on the community cohesion road, then the suggestion raised by Pastor Roberts of the Wesleyan Holiness Church in this report needs to be accomplished. His call for local inter-faith networks is supported by this report which discovered few, regular and working local inter-faith partnerships in the city. A possible way of creating such networks could be to use the model of 'Churches Together'.

70 organisations indicated some sort of involvement with intra-faith partnerships. These intra-faith partnerships are supported by a series of intra-denominational groupings such as the Anglican parishes, Methodist circuits and Catholic deaneries. This geographic classification has not been adopted completely by other faiths who organise themselves on a city-wide basis. There is scope for some of the faith communities to develop stronger structures at neighbourhood level so that there is much more active neighbourhood involvement.

Only 26 organisations have regular working relationships <sup>19</sup> with statutory, charitable and other non-faith bodies such as the Police, Primary Care Trusts and Refugee Action. The Salvation Army works in partnership with the Leicestershire Fire Service on a food assistance programme for Fire Service staff on call-outs.

<sup>17</sup> Other intra-faith partnerships include the Federation of Muslim Organisations, Muslim Burial Council of Leicestershire and the Leicester Hindu Festival Council.

<sup>18</sup> Member organisations are: Asian Christian Fellowship, Blessed Sacrament RC, Braunstone URC, Christchurch URC, Church of the Martyrs CofE, Friar Lane & Braunstone Baptist, Holy Apostles CofE, Narborough Road Christian Fellowship, Robert Hall Memorial Baptist, St. Peter's CofE and Trinity Methodist. Churches Together exist in many areas of the city including Belgrave and Evington.

<sup>19</sup> Many organisations engage in dialogue with for example the Police so the numbers would be higher but the emphasis of this part of the research was on regular working relationships at strategic and delivery level such as involvement on advisory panels or assisting the delivery of a project.

## 5.3 Problems faced & funding

Faith groups do not face one single and overwhelming problem which prevents the delivery of community services. Instead there are a number of inter-related problems. The lack of funding is the most important barrier overall (14%) followed by the lack of volunteers (13%), lack of staff (10%), unawareness of funding (10%) and inadequate infrastructure (9%).

The problems identified are inter-linked. For example, there are several sources of funding such as trusts, charities and government initiatives but these sources are less visible and less known. The Directory of Social Change <sup>20</sup> reports that £2.6 billion was made available by trusts in the UK in the 2001/02 financial year. In October 2003, Fiona Mactaggart (Charities Minister) launched a government website [governmentfunding.org.uk](http://governmentfunding.org.uk) which is a single point of access to £182 million of funding from the Department for Education & Skills, Department of Health, Home Office and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The first point of call for external funding and the most visible, is the local authority. However, only 11% (47/ 443) of faith projects are funded or part-funded in this way, this leads to a perception that there is a general lack of funding.

Complicated funding rules were highlighted by Hindu, Muslim and Sikh respondents as being an additional barrier. The distribution of funds, and in particular public funds comes with the need to have strong monitoring and evaluation systems. Since the majority of groups from these faiths do not receive any external funding of any sort, they do not have the required expertise or training to take on this responsibility. These organisations have long traditions of self-financed activities but would welcome the opportunity to engage in social regeneration.

There is a feeling within the faith communities that funding bodies discriminate against faith groups when assessing applications. The primary reason for this is the blur between religious activities and community-based activities. In order to open up more avenues of funding, faith organisations must distinguish between both types of activity in order not to be accused of proselytising. Many funding bodies set a condition that financial support will only be offered if it will not be used to fund activities of a religious nature. However, *the problem faith groups face is that because of their religious remit, the social action elements of their work become invisible to the outside world.*

Religion/Faith	Total no. of organisations	No. of organisations delivering projects	No. of organisations receiving funding	No. of projects delivered	No. of funded projects
Brahma Kumaris	1	1	-	3	-
Buddhist	2	1	-	2	-
Christian	142	82	27	268	54
Hindu	27	13	5	60	10
Islam	44	19	5	63	15
Jain	1	1	-	2	-
Jewish	3	2	1	5	2
Quakers	1	1	1	1	1
Sikh	9	5	4	39	17
TOTAL	-	125	43	443	99

<sup>20</sup> p8 A Guide to Local Trusts in the Midlands (2004). Directory of Social Change London

Only 99 of the 443 projects (22%) receive external funding. Therefore over three quarters (78%) of all faith-led community programmes are financed by voluntary donations or service user charges. 43 out of the 240 (18%) faith organisations identified by the research are recipients of external funding. Again, an overwhelming 82% of faith groups do not receive any external funding for running social projects.

Leicester City Council is the most popular source of grants funding or part funding 11% of faith-led initiatives (47/443). Faith communities would agree with the sentiment expressed by a Pastor in the city that as the primary and legitimate governing body for the city, "the local authority has a duty to support the faith communities". Education institutions (Colleges, Schools & Universities) support 15 projects followed by the National Lottery and its associated bodies e.g. Millennium Awards and New Opportunities Fund (13).

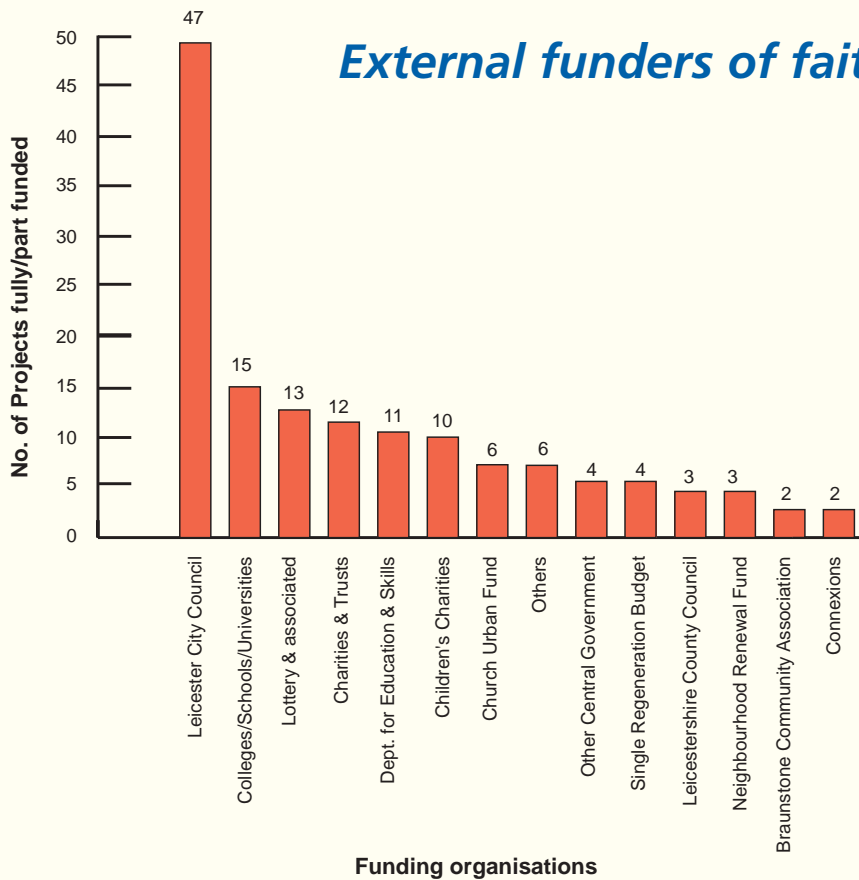
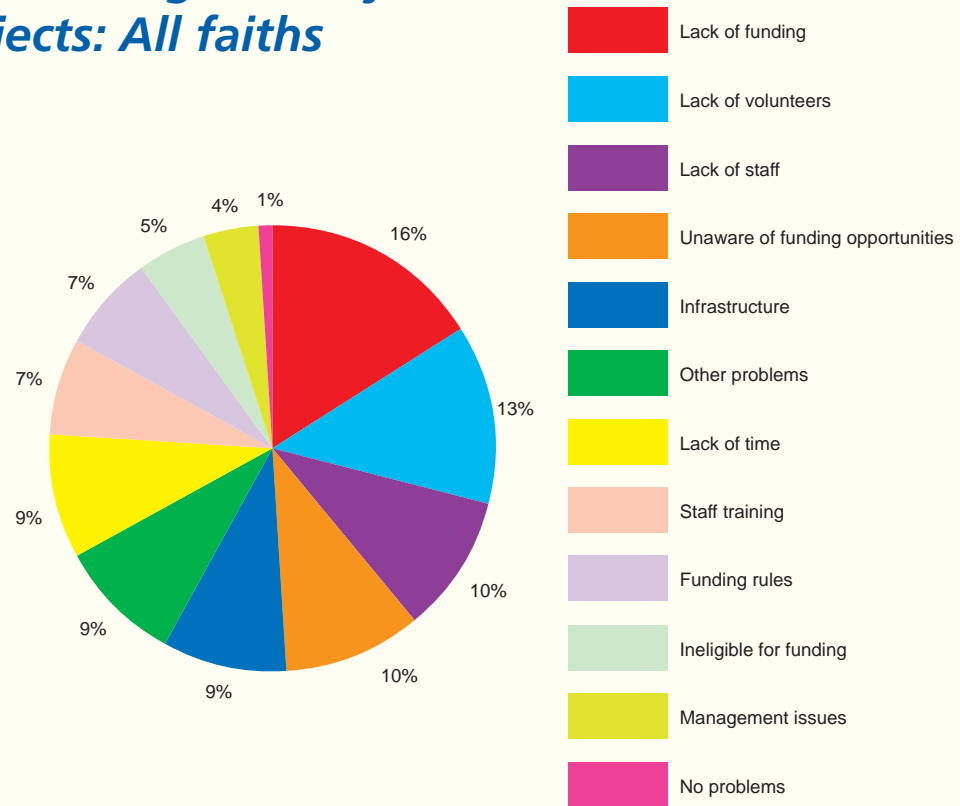
The faith take-up of neighbourhood renewal and other community regeneration grants such as the Single Regeneration Budget or Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, is low in comparison to the number of

faith groups operating in qualifying areas of the city. In addition the bar chart of external funders is revealing by the absence of particular funding streams. For example, there are no European Union, Commission for Racial Equality, Community Chest or Community Learning Chest grants shown, yet many of the objectives, groups supported and outcomes of faith-led projects would qualify for such grants. There are however, capacity issues such as the ability of faith organisations to be able to manage, monitor and evaluate spend effectively, particularly in relation to European funding which can often repel faith-led applications.

This report recommends the need for funding bodies to work with the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project and its faiths regeneration network to ensure that there is positive action when applying for funding. Faith communities should be given training and development opportunities to find out about funding opportunities, grant requirements support in wider project management matters.



## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: All faiths



## 5.4 Volunteering and project management

As with similar research about faith communities and regeneration in other parts of the UK <sup>21</sup>, volunteering is a crucial and underpinning foundation block of faith-led services. An overwhelming **83%** (368/443) **of projects engage volunteers** who provide different levels of support ranging from the day-to-day management of the organisation to service delivery support. **Without the assistance of volunteers, the levels of faith-led services would dramatically fall.** In addition to volunteer support, 21% (94/443) of projects employ part-time staff and even fewer 13% (59/443) employ full-time staff.

The biggest single problem identified by Christian respondents was the lack of volunteers (16%) followed by 'other problems' <sup>22</sup> (12%), the lack of funding and time (11% each). The lack of volunteers is a problem for non-Christian groups but not to the same extent. For example, the lack of volunteers registered as the 7th most important barrier faced by Hindu, Muslim and Sikh organisations. The responses by these faiths didn't specify any problems associated with elderly or low congregations which often prevent faith communities from broadening the scope of their activities.

This research found that when groups were asked to indicate the number of volunteers, staff and beneficiaries of services they had, the results were inconsistent. Because of the informal nature of faith-led activities, services are not subject to comprehensive monitoring and evaluation systems so there is often no need to capture outputs.

The survey requested information relating to beneficiary numbers by week, month, year and single occasion but the responses were not standard. For example, Hindu-led services monitored by trip, week, workshop and year. From those weekly projects there are a total of 12,322 beneficiaries. The numbers of volunteers engaged is 2,401. Readers should note that this doesn't mean that there are 12,322 separate, individual beneficiaries or 2,401 different volunteers because many beneficiaries and volunteers work on more than one project. However, the numbers shown are still valid because when they are examined with

each project, we are given an indication of how many people it takes to manage a project and the numbers supported.

As stressed earlier the majority of faith-led activities are not subject to project monitoring or evaluation mechanisms because these projects are funded 'in-house' with few conditions attached. Therefore the impact of these projects both quantitatively and qualitatively is difficult to measure. There is a tremendous amount of social regeneration work being undertaken in the city but its exact impact is difficult to gauge.

Monitoring is important because it allows organisations to check that activities are running to plan and to deal with issues as they arise. Problems can be identified early so that remedial action can be taken. Monitoring provides key information which helps to assess the performance of a project. Evaluation allows organisations to identify achievements and areas of weakness. It provides information relating to what happened, how it happened, why and whether the stated goals were achieved. Good practice can be determined as well as project outputs (what was done) and processes (how it was done). Evidence of this kind would strengthen funding bids, show that faith organisations can offer value for money and quantitatively strengthen the role of the faith communities in social regeneration.

It is recommended that religious/ faith identity be reflected in monitoring programmes. Religious monitoring would enable service provision to be more attuned to the needs of target groups and highlight particular social problems affecting faith communities. Mainstream service providers are urged to work in partnership with faith-based organisations because they may be the best vehicles for tackling problems within local communities. They are trusted institutions rooted in local areas whose ability to service hard-to-reach groups is strong. In addition, monitoring by faith would allow organisations to take into account issues of religious sensitivity. For example, it may be bad practice for a service provider to arrange a meeting with a Muslim client on a Friday at 1:30PM because of the clash with prayer time.

<sup>21</sup> Faith in England's North West (2003) Northwest Development Agency, Warrington UK

<sup>22</sup> Other problems are dominated by demographic factors such as elderly congregations and low membership numbers particularly amongst the young. Many respondents also repeated the problems of funding and infrastructure.

The remit of this report doesn't extend to examining in detail the motivations behind why people of faith volunteer but the sentiments expressed by participants who were interviewed, correlates with the findings of the report by the Institute for Volunteering Research <sup>23</sup>. There is a strong sense that volunteering allows one to carry out their duties to serve God. It is expressed in the following ways:

- To help others by giving time and/or money
- To live according to the spirit of one's religion and the values it proposes
- To act selflessly
- To help people in need
- To be concerned about social injustice and inequality

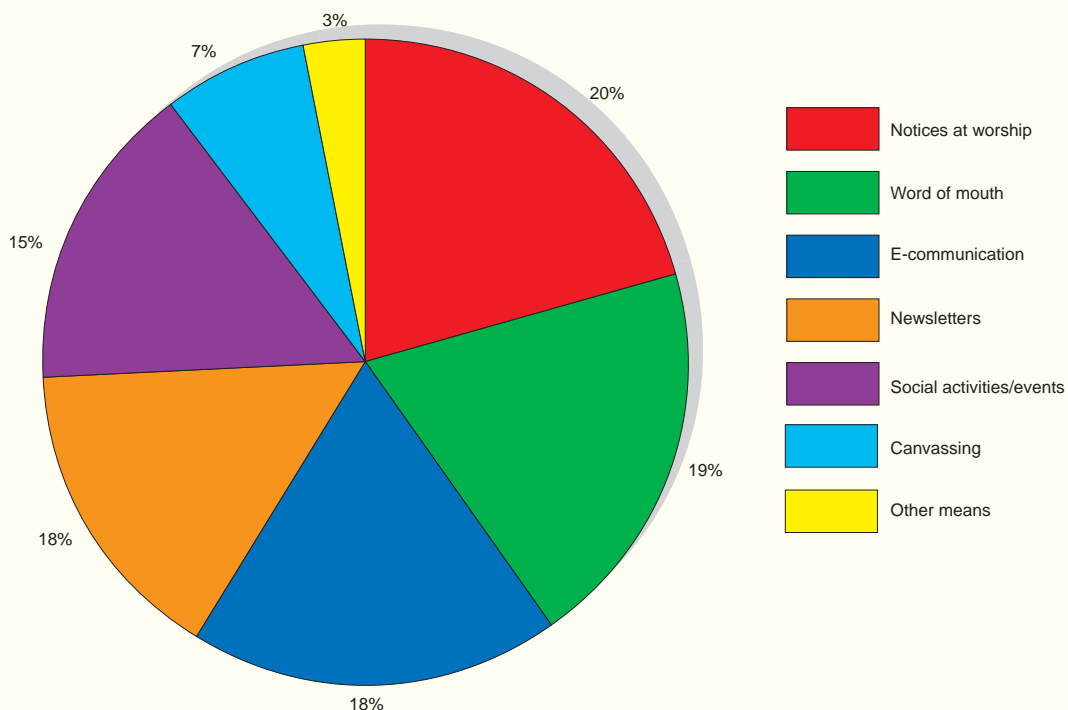
Because of the dynamics of the faith sector, it was difficult to ascertain exactly how many hours volunteers put into faith projects or even to put an exact value on their contribution. However, the 1997 National Survey of Volunteering in the UK <sup>24</sup> found that existing volunteers were putting in more time into volunteering, 4 hours a week (2.7 hours in 1991). If we use the average hourly wage for Leicester £10.01, <sup>25</sup> this amounts to nearly £2,082.08 per volunteer per year. If this is then applied to the number of volunteers

engaged per project (2401), the figure per year amounts to **nearly £5 million (£4,999,074) of unpaid voluntary staffing power**. The actual value is likely to be higher.

## 5.5 Communication

The means of communication used by faith groups shows that traditional means, such as notices at worship (20%), word of mouth (19%), newsletters (18%), social activities (15%) and canvassing (7%) are the most popular but newer forms such as electronic communication via the internet and e-mail is progressing quickly. E-communication is the third most popular means with 18%. English is still the most used written and spoken language (55% & 37% respectively) followed by Gujarati (14% & 11% respectively). The survey uncovered 14 different faiths in Leicester, speaking a rich and diverse range of languages such as Farsi, Shona, Yoruba and Lingola.

### Means of communication: All faiths

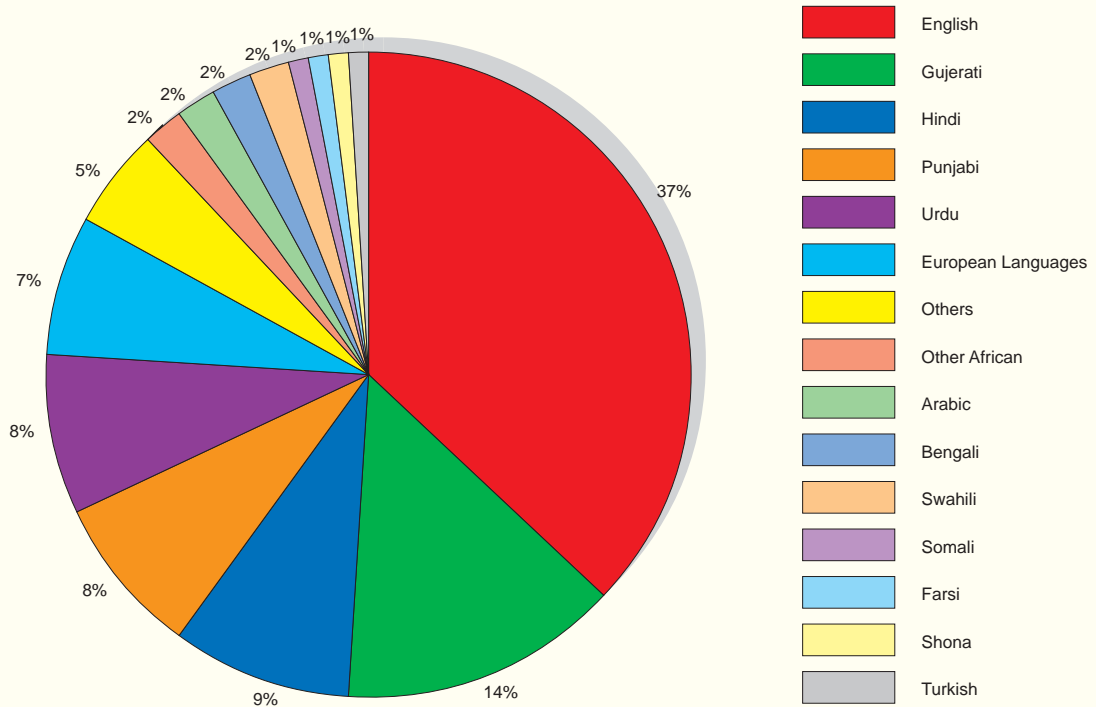


<sup>23</sup> p 37 'Faith and voluntary action: community, values and resources' (2003) Lukka P et al.

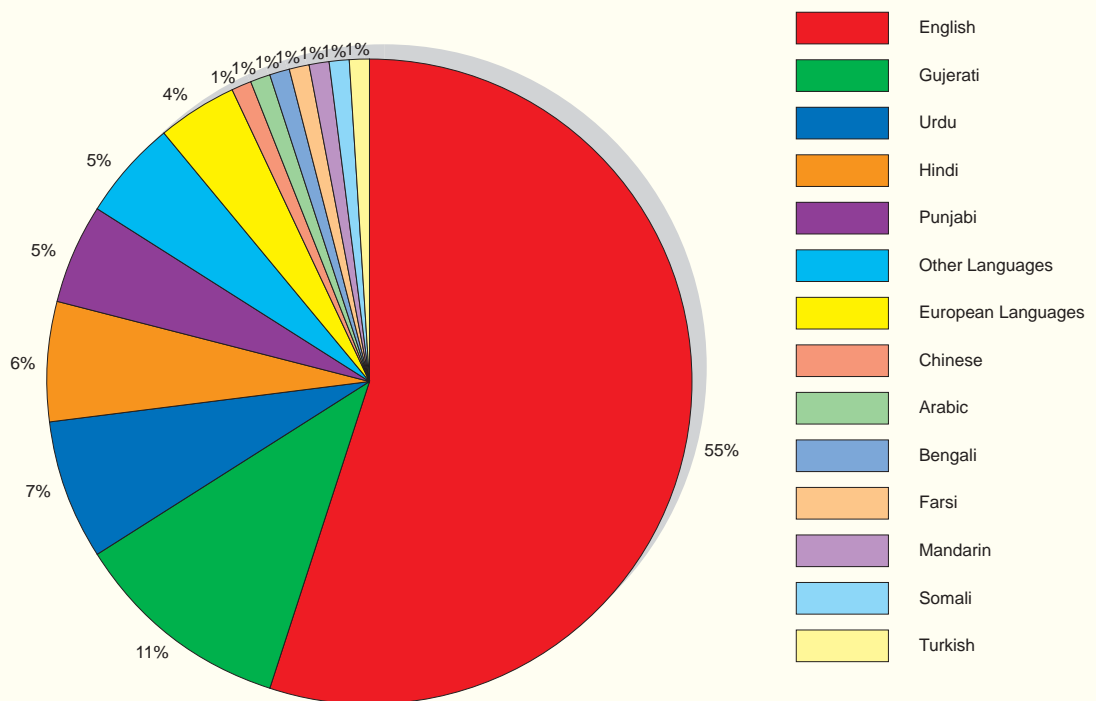
<sup>24</sup> The 1997 National Survey of Volunteering in the UK (1997) The National Centre for Volunteering, UK

<sup>25</sup> Figure obtained from the New Earnings Survey Tel: 01633 819 024

## Spoken languages: All faiths



## Written languages used: All faiths



# CASE STUDY: WESLEYAN HOLINESS CHURCH

## Luncheon club (now closed)

The Wesleyan Holiness Church <sup>26</sup>, in the Stoneygate Ward of Leicester, ran an elderly luncheon club for 10 years until it ended in 2003. The club was set up to give isolated elderly people a place to interact, share ideas and consume a cooked hot meal. Meals were served on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and nearly 25 people attended from 10.00 am – 3.30 pm.

Wesleyan Holiness Church was assisted by a number of organisations who helped launch the club through guidance, support and signposting elderly clients to the Church. The African Caribbean Court, Silver Strand Club (New Testament Church of God), Golden Fellowship and Age Concern were influential partners. Elderly citizens of African Caribbean origin who faced multiple problems such as isolation, deprivation and low incomes were particularly supported by Wesleyan Holiness Church's outreach.

Both Church worshippers and non-worshippers attended the luncheons. Pastor Melford Roberts stressed that **"our community is made up of people who we interact with. We don't specialise by ethnicity, faith or anything else"**. The project had a city-wide catchment as beneficiaries came from as far as New Parks. This wasn't a problem because the environment in which the club operated was safe, comfortable and reassuring to the service users. Voluntary donations, client charges and central Church funds sustained the service. One off grants had been secured from the Health Service to purchase equipment such as a microwave and the Church Urban Fund provided financial support to install a lift.

The collapse of the luncheon club can be attributed to a number of interlinked factors. The reduction of financial support with an ever-decreasing congregation over the last 10 years, together with a shortage of volunteers, impacted negatively upon the club. The cook and driver could no longer carry on due to financial constraints and the result was that towards the end of 2002 only 10 beneficiaries attended the luncheon.

Pastor Roberts has applied to a number of organisations for funding, including the local authority but to no avail. The Church would like to run additional activities but funding is the key barrier to this. Pastor Roberts added that "the current scaling down of financial support for the voluntary and community sector doesn't give community services much hope and we don't even get any support so our plight is much worse". The loss of the club has also resulted in the loss of community spirit, according to Pastor Roberts. "I rarely see them", he said when asked who now provides his former members with an alternative service.

*Wesleyan Holiness Church is located in Stoneygate, where the Christian population is only 23%. However, the Church has never had any problems being in a minority. In fact, Pastor Roberts calls for the creation of a local inter-faith network for the area which has other denominational Churches, Mosques and a Synagogue.*



<sup>26</sup> Wesleyan Holiness Church is of the Wesleyan Methodist tradition

## 6. The agenda for faith communities' involvement in regeneration

### Summary of key points

- ❖ "We are organisations informed by reliable values such as compassion, inclusivity, empathy and trust"...but the drawback is "suspicion from the 'secular' world that it represents evangelism by another route"
- ❖ Since the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001, there has been a sharp rise in the number of inter-faith groups and activities across the UK
- ❖ To many...their affinity to their faith is more crucial to their identity than culture or even race
- ❖ By bringing faith communities together to tackle the ills of social exclusion, doors will be opened to share resources, pool expertise and exchange good practice in the planning and delivery of services
- ❖ "We provide and deliver to the community, a good and comfortable service based on their needs. Our services are understood by our members because for example, we speak the same language. We try to deliver the best services based on their needs and satisfaction" (President, Hindu temple in Latimer).
- ❖ "Different faith groups have different needs and so faith organisations are better placed to deliver projects because they are more in tune with their local communities" (Imam in Belgrave).
- ❖ The key issue is that faith communities whether singularly or collectively, must be supported to enable them to deliver more for local communities and in becoming crucial actors in the field of social regeneration.

The year 2001 saw a number of national and international events which forced religious leaders and indeed religious communities to demonstrate that they are relevant and have a role to play in ensuring that society doesn't become dysfunctional.

The riots and disturbances in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham led to a number of governmental enquiries to investigate the causes of the tensions and to chart a route forward. The Community Cohesion Review Team from the Home Office led by Ted Cante, introduced the concept of "parallel lives" <sup>27</sup> whereby different faith or ethnic groups within the same town or city, often living in areas next door to each other, poorly interact and where there is resource competition from the same pot. The tensions are heightened when one group benefits and another is rejected because feelings of resentment and distrust surface. These conditions allow divisive groups to exploit tensions for their own ends.

This position is confirmed by a joint publication by the New Economics Foundation and the Church Urban Fund <sup>28</sup> which states that "different faith groups are most effective when they work together. The dangers of not collaborating are real: if different faiths compete with each other for resources, the renewal bandwagon can leave a community more divided than it was to start with...by working together, they can counter accusations that they are only trying to win converts"<sup>29</sup>. A vicar who is a member of the Leicester Council of Faiths commented that **"we are organisations informed by reliable values such as compassion, inclusivity, empathy and trust"...but the drawback is "suspicion from the 'secular' world that it represents evangelism by another route".**

<sup>27</sup> p10. Community Cohesion Review (2001) T. Cante. Community Cohesion Unit, Home Office

<sup>28</sup> Faiths, Hope and Participation (Sept. 2001) New Economics Foundation and Church Urban Fund

<sup>29</sup> Faiths, Hope and Participation (Sept. 2001) page 5 New Economics Foundation and Church Urban Fund

The aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the USA on the 9th September 2001 led to the questioning of not only Islam and its compatibility with Western liberal democracy but also the validity and relevance of organised religion in the 21st century. One of the effects of 9/11 has been the sharp rise in the number of inter-faith groups and activities across the UK. A report by the Inter-Faith Network for the UK identified nearly 140 multilateral local inter-faith groups including new set-ups in Exeter, Newcastle and Sheffield <sup>30</sup>.

There are criticisms that empowering faith communities in regeneration, may lead to separation or sectarianism and that religion should be kept "where it belongs – in the private sphere, leaving the public domain as a neutral territory where all can meet, without prejudice, as humans and equals" <sup>31</sup>. However, there are a number of shortfalls to this type of critique. Because ***by encouraging the development of inter-faith programmes, it allows for issues cutting across faiths to be identified and tackled collectively***. For example, the problems of unemployment or drugs cut across all faith groups and may require partnerships of different faith groups to tackle such problems. However, such options should be based on choice not coercion.

To many, particularly those from disadvantaged minority communities, their affinity to their faith is more crucial to their identity than culture or even race. It is therefore not plausible to separate the influence of faith from both the private and public spheres of life. Below are examples of the impact and influence of faith in aspects of public life <sup>32</sup>

- Birth
- Death and dying
- Diet
- Dress codes
- Financial/ economic choices
- Health issues
- Identity
- Political choices and participation
- Social welfare

By bringing faith communities together to tackle the ills of social exclusion, doors will be opened to share resources, pool expertise and exchange good practice in the planning and delivery of services.

Simultaneously, understanding and dialogue between people of different faiths would be strengthened. This would make a positive contribution to the wider community cohesion agenda. In addition, many of the faiths' values and roots emphasise the duty of helping the vulnerable in society and service to the community. So ***by engaging in the regeneration agenda, faith communities would be exercising their mandates more effectively***

The argument that single faith regeneration programmes should not be funded or recognised is very simplistic. The distribution of public funds must of course be subject to proper checks and balances but must be based on need. This report is not advocating that funding projects serving people of a single faith be rejected because faith groups should be given the opportunity to make an informed choice and single faith projects still make a positive contribution to community cohesion. Single faith provisions allow capacity to be built within communities.

If a single faith community demonstrated that it is adversely affected by a particular social problem or that there is a particular need, then the best means of delivering a service may well be through a single faith setting because it would provide an environment which is religiously and culturally sensitive to the needs of its beneficiaries. As a President of a mandir confirmed "we provide and deliver to the community, a good and comfortable service based on their needs. Our services are understood by our members because for example, we speak the same language. We try to deliver the best services based on their needs and satisfaction".

An Imam stressed that "different faith groups have different needs and so faith organisations are better placed to deliver projects because they are more in tune with their local communities". The Muslim Burial Council of Leicestershire (MBCOL) is a beacon example of a single faith service which addresses the religious needs of the Muslim community. Suleman Nagdi MBE, Trustee and Founder member of the Muslim Burial Council of Leicestershire (MBCOL) said "MBCOL deals with all issues relating to the interment of Muslims. It has been able to provide a unique community-based funeral service, the first of its kind in Europe.

30 pp11&12 Local Inter Faith Activity in the UK: A Survey. (2003) Inter Faith Network for the UK, London

31 Grayling, AC (2001). 'Keep God out of public affairs' The Observer 12th August

32 Taken from 'Religious Literacy' (March 2003) p6. Yorkshire & Humber Assembly and The Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber.

MBCOL also deals with related issues such as post-mortem, organ retention, coroners review and advises the Home Office on future policies that affect the community. It also provides advice on inheritance affecting the community and training of Chaplains for hospitals, prisons and educational establishments including nursing staff at hospitals and is also looking at the shortages of burial land that will face all faiths requiring burial in the future".

The service does not receive funding per se. However, it continues to provide an excellent service to the community and works in partnership with Leicester City Council, City Hospitals, Coroners Office, Registrars, Paramedics, Police, Mosques and families of the deceased.

The Saffron Hill cemetery houses a Jamazagh, in which funeral ceremonies take place. The model in Leicester has frequently been quoted as best practice for other local authorities not only nationally but internationally with the German Embassy keen to replicate the model. MBCOL's services are not only in accordance with the religious customs of the second largest practising faith in Europe but are also cost efficient because they relieve the local authority of the need to pay an officer to work out of hours to carry out the arrangements.

The success of the service has led to MBCOL members frequently taking part in governmental consultations at their own expense. Regular and secure funding would enable the service to accommodate a localised project consisting of a Mortuary, Ghusal rooms (for bathing and shrouding) and facilitate training courses. MBCOL has helped to ease the difficulties that Police Officers face when they are called to a house where a death has taken place in order to avoid confusion and resentment when the removing of the body, is approved by the Coroner.

There is a general acceptance that public funding should not be used to support the worship activities of faith groups or the propagation of a faith. However, since the 2001 disturbances there is now a much more sharper emphasis from central government on funding projects and activities which promote community cohesion by being open to all, regardless of in this context, faith.

Indeed some of the key recommendations made in a number of reports after the disturbances, included the need to have "regeneration initiatives [which] encourage cross-cultural engagement and thematic rather than area-based approaches to funding bids. This should encourage the integration of different

communities, instead of pitting them against each other<sup>33</sup>". In order to promote contact and interaction between members of different racial, cultural and faith communities, it would be good practice for faith organisations to develop pro-active recruitment policies to attract the participation of people from diverse backgrounds.

Research commissioned by SICUL (Society for Inter-Cultural Understanding Leicester) in 2003 <sup>34</sup>, reported that more steps need to be taken to ensure that Leicester is not just a multicultural city but an intercultural one as well. Asaf Hussein, one of the co-authors of the report defined interculturalism as "a concept which moves past the multicultural and looks at the extent to which people from different communities of faith, ethnicity, or class, wish to and do, share spaces, places, vision, values and views on diversity<sup>35</sup>". The faith arena is one area in which this diversity can be enhanced through the provision of faith-led services catering for people from a variety of faiths and backgrounds.

This is already happening with projects run by the Sikh and St. Alban's Community Centres. However, there is still much more that can be done to promote, enhance and launch projects of this kind and the creation of the Faiths Regeneration Network is a start because it will allow every faith group to have the opportunity to network, build working partnerships and have an impact on the future direction of the city.

The debate around faith communities and regeneration should not centre on prioritising between single-faith or inter-faith provisions. The key issue is that faith communities whether singularly or collectively, must be supported to enable them to deliver more for local communities and in becoming crucial actors in the field of social regeneration. The time has also come for the faith communities to broaden their scope of work and deal with the challenges of today.

Fifty years ago, the socio-economic characteristics of Leicester were different to what they are today in the 21st century. It may be easy to dismiss religion as being divisive and irrelevant but one cannot ignore the fact that if mandirs, mosques, gurdwaras and other places of worship did not exist in Leicester, the city would be the poorer. Leicester is a colourful, diverse and multi-faceted city because people of various faiths, nationalities, cultures and backgrounds have formed its backbone and the values it now stands for as a leading British and European city.

33 Overview Community Cohesion. [www.renewal.net](http://www.renewal.net)

34 Integrated Cities (2003) SICUL and the University of Leicester. Tel: 0116 223 1899

35 Press release for SICUL report Integrated Cities 'One city – different worlds'

The unique strengths and benefits of faith-led services were appropriately illustrated by the Manager of Anglican-based Community Centre in Rushey Mead and the Chair of a Mosque in Highfields:

- We are located at the heart of the community
- We reach 'hard to reach' groups
- Offer value for money
- Provide a non-threatening environment
- Have a higher level of acceptance
- The community trusts us
- There is no stigma attached
- Our services are appropriate within a faith context

The faith structures in the city allow representatives from the various faiths to promote greater understanding and to tackle issues likely to cause tensions. Indeed the role and contribution of Leicester's faith communities and leaders is recognised as a strength by the Community Cohesion report <sup>36</sup>. The Leicester Council of Faiths (est. 1986), represents eight of the mainstream religions in the city; Bahá'í, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. The current chair of the Council of Faiths is Resham Singh Sandhu MBE. The organisation contributes to the Education Committee of the Leicester City Council, the Leicester Faith & Health Forum and is regularly consulted by Leicestershire

Constabulary. The Council of Faiths is often visited by national and international partners to exchange good practice.

The Council of Faiths is supported by an informal Faith Leaders' Forum, which is convened and chaired by the Bishop of Leicester, The Rt. Revd Tim Stevens. The forum is an informal gathering of faith leaders set up in 2001, after the terrorist attacks of September 11th. Joint positions are taken on a host of local, national and international events such as the Gujarat dispute and the Iraq conflict. The Faith Leaders' Forum can be called to meet quickly at a time of crisis.



<sup>36</sup> p24 Taking Forward Community Cohesion in Leicester. Leicester City Council

# CASE STUDY: RAMGARHIA BOARD LEICESTER (RBL)

## Senior Citizen's activities

Fifteen years ago a group of elderly Sikhs met regularly for worship at the Ramgarhia Board Gurdwara where a volunteer would cook a meal and members would then relax and socialise. The popularity of this increased and the RBL approached Leicester City Council for support and a day centre and luncheon club was started. The Ramgarhia community are those Sikhs whose ancestors were trades people in India. The RBL Gurdwara was established in the late 1960s and many of its founders are now beneficiaries of the day centre.

The day centre operates on Mondays – Fridays from 9am-2:30pm. A RBL minibus collects members from across the city. The day begins at the RBL Gurdwara on Meynell Road with the Giani (reader of the Holy Granth) leading a short sermon about the sayings of the Gurus and reciting from the Holy Granth. After prayers, Karhah Prashad (sacred pudding) is served. The Langar (community kitchen) provides members with a meal. The Langar is open to the wider public every day. Part of the morning and the afternoon are dedicated to other activities such as physical exercise, shopping and trips.

On Tuesdays, the Social Sisters Group meets. It's a women's only group which was created 20 years ago. The reason for this group is to ensure that the role of women within the organisation is promoted. On Tuesdays the Social Sisters and Senior Citizens Club are combined with shared activities including trips to the cinema, health advice and exercise. The social activities take place at RBL's purpose built community centre on Ulverscroft Road which opened in 2000 having secured support from the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA). The centre is hired frequently by people of other faiths for weddings and parties.

The day centre receives funding from Leicester City Council. A part-time Development Worker Manjit Singh Panesar is employed. Manjit believes that the day centre facility is a "centre of excellence where ***we treat every individual respectfully and cater for their quality of life***". Jaswant Singh Riyaaaid who is 87 years old and lives in Braunstone, confirms Manjit's sentiments. "I enjoy coming to the temple then meeting my friends. We talk about our problems in very comfortable surroundings". Manjit feels that he has a wider duty to the elders because he acts as a counsellor when members approach him with their problems, be they financial or social.

The day centre doesn't face any major problems because it has established quality systems, is compliant with health and safety regulations and has strong complaints procedures. However, Manjit says that as the elderly population is increasing, so is the demand for using the club. External funding only pays for Manjit's salary and basic running costs. He is assisted by 4 volunteers and together with the generous contributions from the wider community, the club is able to broaden its range of services. Without this volunteer input, the club's activities would be very basic. More funding would enable the RBL to support more citizens and update infrastructure such as purchasing a minibus with disability access.

When asked how would she be affected if the club did not exist, Mrs. Amar Kaur Sondh replied "I would have no friends, no community spirit nor anything to do. This club improves my quality of life". Manjit describes the basic essentials of a Sikh as being "honest, hard working, sharing wealth, helping the community and becoming a good citizen. This project allows me to put that into practice



## 7. The government's commitment

### Summary of key points

- ❖ The Local Government Association publication "Faith & Community: a good practice guide for local authorities", stresses the benefits of engaging with faith communities such as their contribution to "good health, as providers of pastoral care, promoters of citizenship and community development, voices for social justice, and as the locus for gatherings of people in varying economic and social positions, of differing political views, from a range of ethnic backgrounds with shared concerns"<sup>37</sup> .
- ❖ "The government's recognition of the faith communities significant neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion role has yet to be reflected fully in local practice. The broad picture is still patchy, with enthusiasm in some areas matched by apparent reluctance to involve faith communities in others"<sup>38</sup> .
- ❖ Leicester is the most populous city in the East Midlands, with a successful commercial/manufacturing centre and plausible environmental record. However, household incomes, skills levels and rates of pay are still below the national average and unemployment is above the national average.
- ❖ Faith groups' engagement with social regeneration must not be seen as an 'easy out' for central or local government so that they can abdicate their responsibilities and let faith communities continue to work as a 'cheaper' option.
- ❖ Currently 11% (47/ 443) of faith-led projects and 18% (43/ 240) of faith groups receive funding from the local authority.
- ❖ Bringing about a good quality of life in Leicester depends upon many organisations and individuals working together to improve the social, economic and environmental needs of the city"<sup>39</sup>

At national level, there has been an increasing and committed interest by central government to include the opinions of the faith communities in policy consultations and indeed encouragement to include faith organisations in service delivery. The Inner Cities Religious Council in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Faith Practitioners' Group inside the Community Cohesion Unit and the Home Office's Faith Communities Unit are examples of national government seeking to work with the faith communities on neighbourhood renewal.

A report by the Social Exclusion Unit 'A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal'<sup>40</sup> identified two goals for the government and other partners:

- 1) "In all the poorest neighbourhoods, to have common goals of lower worklessness and crime, better health, skills, housing and physical environment
- 2) To narrow the gap on these measures between the most deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country"<sup>41</sup> .

The report later stresses that faith groups offer a gateway to some of the hardest-to-reach groups and therefore may be the most suitable organisations to deliver community objectives. Faith groups must determine what role they can play and what contributions they can make to renewing neighbourhoods. However, many organisations are not made aware about policies and their local impact. Therefore communicating with and establishing wider faith networks within Leicester will be crucial to ensuring that opportunities are opened up to all faith organisations across the city.

The Local Government Association publication "Faith & Community: a good practice guide for local authorities", stresses the benefits of engaging with faith communities such as their contribution to "good health, as providers of pastoral care, promoters of citizenship and community development, voices for social justice, and as the locus for gatherings of people in varying economic and social positions, of differing political views, from a range of ethnic backgrounds with shared concerns"<sup>42</sup> .

<sup>37</sup> p7 'Faith and Community: a good practice guide for local authorities' (2002). LGA Publications, London

<sup>38</sup> Involving faith communities. Office for Deputy Prime Minister downloaded 7/5/2003 [www.urban.odpm.gov.uk/community/faith/involve/index.htm](http://www.urban.odpm.gov.uk/community/faith/involve/index.htm)

<sup>39</sup> p10 Leicester's Community Plan 1998. Leicester Partnership

<sup>40</sup> A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal (Jan 2001). Social Exclusion Unit, Cabinet Office

<sup>41</sup> p8 A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal (Jan 2001). Social Exclusion Unit, Cabinet Office

<sup>42</sup> p7 'Faith and Community: a good practice guide for local authorities' (2002). LGA Publications, London

One must not underestimate the spiritual contribution which faith communities make to the development of social capital. For example, in the field of community safety, faith communities work with victims in a variety of ways such as providing skilled pastoral support for both them and their families. Ritual and community worship open up further opportunities for healing. Faith communities also have a role to play in helping offenders by providing services to address their practical, spiritual and moral needs<sup>43</sup>.

There does seem to be a gap between the government's commitment at national level to empower and engage with faith communities on regeneration initiatives and the lesser enthusiasm at local levels. A guide produced by the Office for Deputy Prime Minister titled 'Involving Faith Communities'<sup>44</sup>, confirms this by stating that "the government's recognition of the faith communities significant neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion role has yet to be reflected fully in local practice. The broad picture is still patchy, with enthusiasm in some areas matched by apparent reluctance to involve faith communities in others"<sup>45</sup>.

Leicester is the most populous city in the East Midlands, with a successful commercial/manufacturing centre and plausible environmental record. However, household incomes, skills levels and rates of pay are still below the national average and unemployment is above the national average. ***The faith communities' engagement with social regeneration must not be seen as an 'easy out' for central or local government so that they can abdicate their responsibilities and let faith communities continue to work as a 'cheaper' option.*** It is not beneficial for communities if faith groups are at the mercy of local government because they are subject to annual or bi-annual funding reviews which prevent long-term investment in communities and capacity building. Instead faith communities would be better served by becoming partners of mainstream agencies in service delivery. Partnership with mainstream agencies would ensure that service delivery is catered to the religious and cultural needs of local communities which could help shape future policy. The key to faith involvement in social regeneration is sustainability.

William Beveridge's 'five giants' of want, idleness, ignorance, disease and squalor are as relevant today as they were in 1942. This report has shown that the faith communities are taking on many of these 'giants' but that more could still be done. Inevitably this should be done with key agencies.

The recent decision by Leicester City Council to withdraw over £1 million of funding from the community and voluntary sector, highlights a number of issues. Leicester's community and voluntary sector has had a long history of local authority endorsement which has resulted in some of the key players in civil society, being able to build and sustain social capital through various social programmes. The direction of future policy places an onus on community and voluntary groups to become self-sufficient. At the moment only 11% (47/ 443) of faith-led projects and 18% (43/ 240) of faith groups receive funding from the local authority.

Central government has called for greater collaboration between local authorities and faith communities but the picture in many parts of the country and particularly Leicester, is more complex. The situation surrounding the budgetary proposals showed just how necessary it is for the faith communities to have their own support and advocacy unit to help find alternative sources of funding and to argue their case in the media and with local councillors.

The local authority has since moved in a positive direction as it is due to launch a Community Cohesion fund later in 2004. Up to £700,000 will be made available to support activities such as those which promote the integration of communities, work with young people and improving communication and information about different cultures. This is an encouraging step for the city and the underlying ethos of the fund will be to build links within and between communities.

43 Friends or strangers? Faith communities and community safety (July 2001). NACRO National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, London

44 Involving faith communities. Office for Deputy Prime Minister downloaded 7/5/2003 [www.urban.odpm.gov.uk/community/faith/involve/index.htm](http://www.urban.odpm.gov.uk/community/faith/involve/index.htm)

45 Involving faith communities. Office for Deputy Prime Minister downloaded 7/5/2003 [www.urban.odpm.gov.uk/community/faith/involve/index.htm](http://www.urban.odpm.gov.uk/community/faith/involve/index.htm)

Leicester's first Community Plan <sup>46</sup>, a document supported by the Leicester Partnership <sup>47</sup>, accepts that "these challenges cannot be dealt with by one organisation alone. Bringing about a good quality of life in Leicester depends upon many organisations and individuals working together to improve the social, economic and environmental needs of the city"<sup>48</sup>. In addition, the plan pledges to "develop the capacity of communities to engage in and deliver regeneration programmes"<sup>49</sup>. Since faith is an important element in the identity and make-up of Leicester, faith-based organisations should be empowered to not only to deliver programmes to tackle social exclusion but also to play a full role at strategic levels <sup>50</sup>.

One of central government's key drivers for encouraging public, private and voluntary bodies to engage with the faith communities has been Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). The LSP for Leicester is called the Leicester Partnership. LSPs were set up to give local communities a greater say in the running and delivery of public services by drawing key service providers into a single holistic partnership to draw up local plans to improve the quality of life for local people. As one of the 88 most deprived areas in England, Leicester was allocated nearly £18 million from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund to spend between 2004 and 2006 to address the disparities between disadvantaged and other areas of the city.

The Leicester Partnership has 50 members. The faith communities' input into the Leicester Partnership is via the Community Empowerment Network (CEN). The CEN is supported by the Community Empowerment Team (CET) and includes 10 neighbourhood and 10 communities of interest representatives, one of which is the faiths representative. The CEN offers an arena for the community, voluntary and faiths sectors to share good practice and to formulate plans to influence the workings of the LSP.

The CEN is supported by a variety of networks such as the Women's Network, ethnic minorities network (Leicester Ethnic Minority Partnership) and indeed the faiths regeneration network (FRN). The FRN is open to all faith organisations to participate in and adds value to the work of the Leicester Council of Faiths. The Council of Faiths continues working to promote inter-faith dialogue and responding to significant national and international events. The FRN was set up in December 2003 and will in 2004 elect a new faiths representative to sit on the LSP. Every faith group on this project's database will be allowed the opportunity to nominate and vote for a candidate. The FRN will allow for greater partnership working across the city and across faiths and act as a springboard for launching joint initiatives.



46 Leicester's Community Plan (1998). Chief Executive's Department, Leicester City Council

47 Leicester Partnership is the City of Leicester's Local Strategic Partnership. LSP's were set up throughout the country with the aim of bringing together key decision makers and community representatives to improve neighbourhoods, public services and the quality of life for local people.

48 p10 Leicester's Community Plan 1998. Leicester Partnership

49 p43 Leicester's Community Plan 1998. Leicester Partnership

50 In October 2002, a seminar held by the Inner Cities Religious Council titled 'Report of the ICRC Community Cohesion Seminar', addressed the lack of reference to faith communities in the official literature produced in response to the 2001 disturbances, stated that "religion was a very important identity factor [and that] younger people were increasingly identifying themselves by faith rather than race" and that many of these factors had national relevance

# CASE STUDY: CHRIST THE KING CE CHURCH

## Beaumont Leys Asylum Seekers and Refugees Agencies Forum (BLASRAF)

The Beaumont Leys Asylum Seekers and Refugees Agencies Forum (BLASRAF) was the brainchild of the Vicar of Christ the King CE Church, The Revd. Chris Oxley. The project was set up in March 2001 in advance of the Home Office's dispersal scheme. Father Chris invited specialists from Sure Start, Housing, Education, Health, Police and Social Services departments to meet informally to establish how they could collectively meet the needs of the new arrivals and make their transition as smooth as possible.

This proactive and informal partnership was designed to build trust between the agencies and to bring the multiple service providers under one roof. As Father Chris pointed out, "building partnerships is an integral part of pastoral care". Language, mental health, anti-social behaviour orders (ASBO's) and anti-racist measures were needed. This informal partnership needed structuring and funding for Development Workers. Sure Start and Refugee Housing provided support in writing a constitution and in obtaining funding. The forum didn't want the day-to-day responsibility of managing workers and so paid Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL) to manage Jim McCallum (Project Manager) and two Development Workers (Jean-Didier Mualaba and Nicole Taylor). Father Chris acts as a 'Project Director' who authorises the paperwork. The project is currently funded by the Metropolitan Housing Trust's Social Investment Fund and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF).

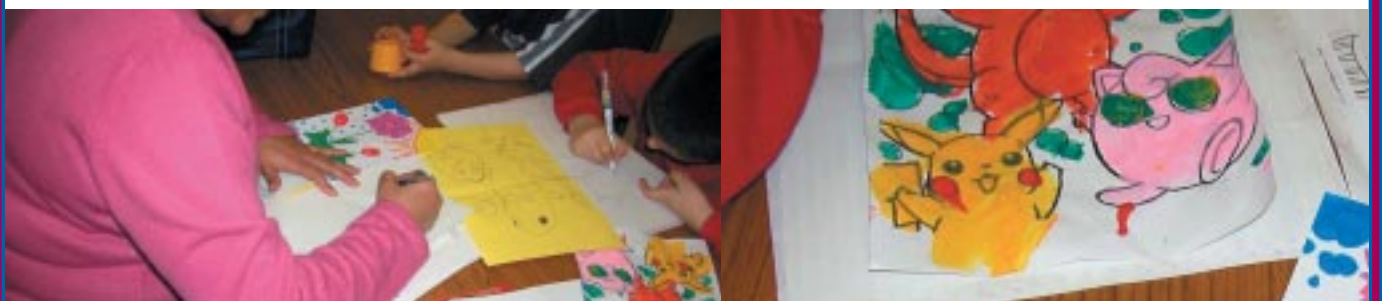
One of the activities is a crèche where a volunteer, Vijya Kotecha, commented that the children have made great progress. "They are becoming model citizens because of the etiquettes they have learnt and their understanding of literacy and numeracy is very sharp". The interaction and learning has been a two-way

process with Vijya and her fellow volunteers also learning about the cultures and lifestyles of the families which they support. The languages spoken by the families include Somali, Turkish, Kurdish and Shona. Apart from the crèche, other activities include sports and a drop-in social club.

The project was quoted as a best practice model in 2003 by inspectors from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Father Chris' commitment and effort to the project contributed a great deal to Leicester City Council achieving Beacon Status for community cohesion. The interaction between the newcomers and the host community in Beaumont Leys has been delicately handled. Father Chris has encouraged established residents of Beaumont Leys to take part in the planning and delivery of activities. Once again, this has been done to deflect prejudices and stereotypes and to build trust and friendships. A sign of this has been where members of the host community have invited the new settlers into their homes for meals. The BLASRAF's role in developing and sustaining community cohesion must not be underestimated. Beaumont Leys is one of the most deprived wards in the city with low educational attainment, high unemployment and a high turnover of council tenants.

The future of the BLASRAF is however, vulnerable. The NRF support runs out in 2004. Father Chris feels that because the "Church doesn't have a culture of obtaining funds", the continued support of the external agencies is very important. Another factor is ensuring that the project is adaptable and able enough to address new needs which arise such as support for post traumatic stress disorder.

*The leadership shown by a faith community through the Church has been crucial. "The Church of England doesn't just look after its own. Asylum seekers become our parishioners because my faith tells me to support people and to work in partnership to address problems" repeats Father Chris. The BLASRAF is not an add-on for the Church. It is part of the Church's duty to be involved in and leading such a project.*



## 8. Recommendations

### For the faith communities:

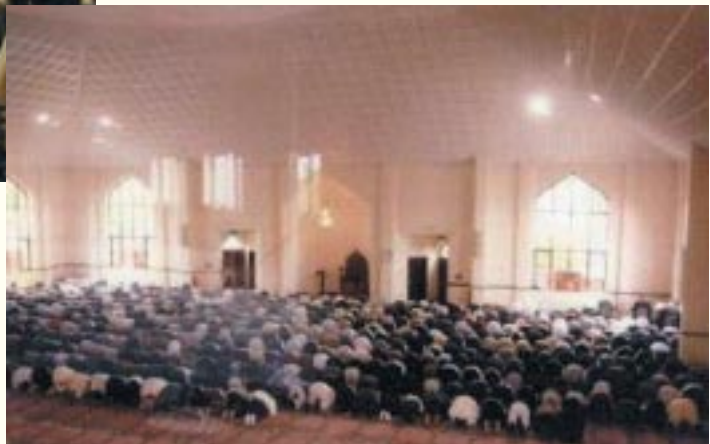
- ❖ **Local inter-faith networks to support the Leicester Council of Faiths.** This would allow members of the faith communities to have an understanding about different faiths within their neighbourhood and to influence the work of the Council of Faiths
- ❖ **More youth committees within individual faith organisations.** These will act as training grounds for young people to develop their leadership and networking skills.
- ❖ **Supporting more female participation.** Faith communities should adopt structures and working practices which encourage greater female involvement particularly at organisation/committee level.
- ❖ **Partnerships on projects.** This report has shown that there is a paucity of genuine and regular working partnerships between two or more different faith groups to run activities. Community cohesion can be real and sustained if such partnerships can be created and maintained.
- ❖ **Wider membership of faith umbrella bodies.** Some of the smaller and lesser known faith groups expressed to the survey that they were marginalised and left out by such bodies. This has led to the belief about how peace and harmony can be established across faiths when there are often inequalities and injustices within faiths.
- ❖ **Inter-faith dialogue groups to be strengthened.** This report highlighted the important work being done in this area by Canon Dr. Andrew Wingate. Faith groups should encourage members to take part in the various inter-faith dialogue groups and to create new partnerships where necessary.
- ❖ **A further faiths report in 5 years.** This would show how much faith communities have engaged with social regeneration compared to now. It would also highlight good practice and project areas where there is little or no progress. This would allow for an examination of the reasons why this is the case. This report creates a benchmark from which future reports can be assessed against.
- ❖ **Faith communities should devise action plans.** This survey will allow individual faith groups to develop strategies to increase their share of activities for those social groups or project areas where there is very little or no provisions being offered.
- ❖ **Faith organisations should monitor and evaluate their projects.** This is a good practice measure which isn't widespread within the faith communities. A faiths support unit could help to facilitate this task which may seem cumbersome because it is an additional and sometimes demanding exercise.
- ❖ **Updating the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project database.** A holistic bank of information about the faith communities and social regeneration must be collected. A bi-annual mini-survey should be carried out to enhance the existing database.
- ❖ **Further research about the faith communities.** On-going and more specific research into the faith communities and particular project areas or social groups must be carried out. This report paints an overall picture but it would be necessary to follow up some of the findings in more detail. For example, the report shows that the least supported project areas overall include domestic violence and the environment. Therefore research into the reasons for this and a detailed assessment of existing mainstream and voluntary provisions in these areas would allow for greater focus and efforts to be made in addressing such issues.

## For other social partners:

- ❖ **Recognition of faith organisations.** Too often faith organisations are made to feel that they have to repackage themselves by watering down their faith element in order to secure funding. This is not to say that proselytising activities should be funded but a faith-led application should be judged on need and quality of application and not be rejected at the outset purely because the lead applicant happens to be a faith organisation.
- ❖ **Increased funding for faith-led projects.** This survey revealed that only 22% (99/ 443) of projects are externally funded.
- ❖ **A 'one-stop faiths' support unit for the faith communities should be created at city level.** This structure would assist with a variety of social regeneration matters such as assisting funding applications, developing project ideas and needs, recruiting volunteers/ support staff, working in partnership with other faith groups, highlighting and promoting good practice models and establishing partnerships with mainstream agencies.
- ❖ **City-wide inter-faith leadership programmes and a youth inter-faith council be set up.** A young people's inter-faith council for the city supported by the faith communities and statutory bodies is paramount but this would only be an effective body if young people have a voice in the management committees of individual faith organisations so that the work of a young inter-faith council can be fed back to grassroots communities.
- ❖ **Mentoring within the faith communities.** Funders could help to build partnerships and capacity within the faith communities by requiring successful recipients of funding to support faith groups less able to engage in social regeneration.
- ❖ **Identifying the gaps.** The survey has shown that there are some deprived areas of the city where the share of faith-led activities is low in comparison to other parts of Leicester. Social partners should work with faith groups to increase the numbers and types of provisions being offered in these wards.
- ❖ **Recognition of religious/ faith identity.** This should be included in enrolment and monitoring programmes for both statutory and non-statutory organisations.
- ❖ **Faith awareness programmes to be included in equal opportunities training.** The Leicester Council of Faiths offers a basic 4 hour introductory course about the major faiths of the city. It would be good practice for the faith communities and social partners including employers to include this as part of induction programmes.
- ❖ **Research about the social contribution made by the wider community and voluntary sector.** This would provide a comprehensive audit across the city and allow for greater partnership working to address need, avoid duplication and plan future action plans.
- ❖ **Volunteer training programmes and agencies to support faith initiatives.** Faith sensitive training as part of the induction process. This would allow volunteers to be signposted to faith organisations to support the delivery of faith-led activities.
- ❖ **The faiths regeneration project and network to be developed and resourced.** It is the only open and inclusive inter-faith structure which is rooted within the faith communities and brings together faiths across the city to work in partnership to tackle social exclusion and to have a voice on the Leicester Partnership.

## For national government:

- ❖ **A national faiths information helpline to promote the faith communities.** The helpline could deal with telephone and internet queries about individual faiths' teachings, identify places of worship and religious courses around the UK and support employers in developing faith sensitive working practices.
- ❖ **Sustained support for community cohesion.** Local authorities around the UK should introduce community cohesion funds like that being proposed by Leicester City Council to demonstrate their commitment to all communities of the city and their embracing of equality and diversity.
- ❖ **Local and regional faith policy forums to support the work of central government.** This would allow the faith communities to have greater involvement in policy-making and delivery across Whitehall.



# 9. Appendices

## 9.1 Faith Group's Questionnaire

Please telephone (0116) 248 7424 and ask for Riaz Ravat if you would like assistance when completing this form or e-mail: Riaz.Ravat@LeCCofE.org

This questionnaire should be completed by the organisation secretary or a committee member.

1. Name: .....  
Position within organisation: .....  
Organisation name & description: .....  
.....  
Address: .....  
.....  
.....Post Code:.....  
Telephone number(s): .....  
E-mail address: .....

2. In which council ward of Leicester is your organisation based?  
.....

3. Are you a faith-based organisation?  
Yes .....No .....

4. Which faith/ religion do you represent?  
.....  
Denomination/ tradition (if applicable):  
.....

5. Does your organisation work across Leicester in partnership with other organisations? If so please provide details about your activities.  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

6. Do you have a building that is used by the local community for purposes other than worship?  
(Please tick those applicable)

- We have a building that is a community centre
- We have rooms that are used/ rented by community groups
- We have a building which is used by our worshipping congregation
- We do not have a building of our own
- We have rooms which we would be willing to make available for other faith organisations

7. Please indicate if YOUR organisation organises, runs or manages any of the following projects or activities. (Please do not include religious activities such as prayer groups or religious education, or any totally independent organisations operating from your premises because the focus of the work is on providing services to the wider community).

Activities/Projects	Yes	No
Arts and music Care for the elderly Childcare (pre-school) Children's activities (school age) Counselling/ advice/ helplines Crime prevention Domestic violence Drugs/ substance/ alcohol abuse Education and training Employability and training Environmental projects Family issues Health and social care Housing and homelessness Legal advice Luncheon clubs/ meals Parenting Racism or other discrimination Social enterprises or community businesses Social facilities e.g. weddings, parties Sports and recreation Youth work Our members act as volunteers in many areas in an individual capacity Other (please specify)		

*Please note that more specific information about your activities will be requested in part 10 of this questionnaire.*

8. Please indicate if YOUR organisation organises, runs or manages any activities for these social groups (please do not include religious activities such as prayer groups or religious education):

Social Group	Yes	No
Asylum seekers and refugee groups		
Children/ infants		
Disabled people (to include physical/ sensory and learning disabilities)		
Drugs/ substance/ alcohol misusers		
Economically disadvantaged/ low income households		
Elderly people		
Ethnic minority groups		
Families under stress		
Travellers		
Homeless		
Lone parents		
People from other faith groups		
People with HIV / Aids		
Prisoners and/ or ex-offenders		
Students		
Teenagers		
Unemployed		
Women		
All of the above have used our services/ projects		
Others (please specify)		

9. Please describe the ethnic background of the groups which use your activities (please tick all that apply):

- |  |  |                                       |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| White- British <input type="checkbox"/>                      | White- Irish <input type="checkbox"/>                      | White- Other <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed- White & Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>      | Mixed- White & Black African <input type="checkbox"/>      |                                       |
| Mixed- White & Asian <input type="checkbox"/>                | Mixed- Other <input type="checkbox"/>                      |                                       |
| Asian or Asian British- Indian <input type="checkbox"/>      | Asian or Asian British- Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> |                                       |
| Asian or Asian British- Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> | Asian or Asian British- Other <input type="checkbox"/>     |                                       |
| Black or Black British- Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>   | Black or Black British- African <input type="checkbox"/>   |                                       |
| Black or Black British- Other <input type="checkbox"/>       |  |                                       |
| Chinese <input type="checkbox"/>                             | Other (please state) ..... <input type="checkbox"/>        |                                       |

10. As part of our research we are keen to develop a resource of significant faith-based projects throughout Leicester. Please could you provide a list of the projects you organise for the community? (This would include projects aimed at the local community e.g. lunch clubs, playgroups but NOT congregational activities such as prayer meetings or prayer classes).

Name of project or activity	Issue(s) tackled	Who is activity aimed at?	Contact details of person in charge of activity	Number of paid staff Full-time    Part-time	Number of Volunteers	Are you receiving funding? If so from which organisation?	Number of users per week/month/year (delete as appropriate)

11. What are the problems you face in ensuring that these community services are effectively delivered? (Please rank in order of importance, for example 1=most important barrier 10=least important).

- |   |                          |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Lack of staff   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of volunteers  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lack of funding   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of time  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Management issues   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Funding rules too complicated   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Staff require specialist training<br>e.g. how to write bids | <input type="checkbox"/> | Inadequate infrastructure<br>(e.g. equipment, buildings in<br>need of repair) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ineligible for funding                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Unaware of funding opportunities  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please specify)                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | No problems to report   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

.....

11a. You may use the space below to explain more about the problems which your organisation faces?

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

12. Please indicate the ways in which your faith group communicates with its members and local residents. Please rank in order of importance. For example, 1=most popular way of communicating with members 7= least popular way of communicating):

- |                           |                          |                            |                          |               |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Newsletters               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Internet- website          | <input type="checkbox"/> | E-mail        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social activities/ events | <input type="checkbox"/> | Canvassing (door-knocking) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Word of mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Notices at worship        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify)     | <input type="checkbox"/> | .....         |                          |

13. What language(s) do your beneficiaries speak? (please tick all that apply)

- English     Gujerati     Hindi     Punjabi     Urdu     Bengali
- Others (please specify) .....

13a. What written languages do you use to communicate with your beneficiaries? (tick all that apply)

- English     Gujerati     Hindi     Punjabi     Urdu
- Others (please specify).....

14. What do you feel are the unique strengths and benefits of faith groups delivering social activities/ projects for local communities?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

15. Does your faith group currently have any concerns about the well being of your local communities? Please explain

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return the form in the pre-paid envelope as soon as possible.

Please note that the information you provide will be used by the Diocese of Leicester, VAL and the Leicester Council of Faiths to co-ordinate our work with faith groups within the city and to provide background research information to promote the contribution of the faith communities to the well being of the city. Any group can request a copy of this information in total but otherwise we will only make available basic information about individual groups i.e. name, location, means of contact and/ or activities.

We will rigorously respect requests for information either in part or in full to be kept confidential.

## 9.2 Detailed methodology

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Initial difficulties surrounded the question of which organisations should be contacted, as there was no conclusive faith directory in existence apart from the places of worship guide produced by the Leicester Council of Faiths. It was therefore decided that a specific register of faith-based organisations for the city should be created because although most faith organisations are places of worship, there are also organisations who describe themselves as 'faith organisations' but provide community services and are not places of worship.

A register of faith-based organisations was created by using data from the Leicester Council of Faiths' 'Places of Worship in the city of Leicester' directory, VAL's (Voluntary Action Leicester) 'Directory of Voluntary Groups in Leicester', 'Directory of BME Groups in Leicester' and 'Directory of Black Religious Groups in Leicester'. In addition, the Phone Book, Yellow Pages, Leicester City Council's 'Leicester Directory of Ethnic Minority Organisations' and directories from faith umbrella organisations such as the Federation of Muslim Organisations were used to ensure that the register was as comprehensive as possible. Community members of the Council of Faiths were presented with a draft list to check if the list was accurate. The register is not exhaustive but since the various sources of data were wide-ranging, there is no reason to believe that there are serious gaps in the list. The research includes six organisations that are not based in the city of Leicester for two main reasons. Firstly, their existing working relationship with the Leicester Council of Faiths and secondly, the focus of their work being city focused.

A faith-based organisation is taken to include places of worship and organisations/ projects that have a faith ethos to their work. The register was approved by the Faiths Advisory & Support Group which has representatives drawn from the Diocese of Leicester, Leicester Council of Faiths and VAL. A total of 240 faith-based organisations were identified for the city. The questionnaires were posted on the 18th and 19th of June and an initial deadline of July 7th was given.

### FOLLOW UP

A strategy was followed in order to increase the questionnaire response rate, which at 7th July had only just reached double figures. Some questionnaires were returned empty due to the faith group/ organisation no longer existing. The strategy consisted of:

- Prior to the launch of the questionnaire, just under a third of the organisations on the register were contacted either by telephone or in person to be introduced to the faith regeneration project.
- Providing stamped addressed envelopes to minimise participants' costs, time and to encourage the return of the forms.
- The covering letter gave a contact telephone number and e-mail address for assistance and further discussion of project.
- Organisations that had not responded were either contacted via telephone, e-mail or were visited after the 7th July in order to boost the response rate. Visits were made at times convenient to the organisation secretary/ president so that there was no clash with prayer times or religious festivals.
- Meetings of the Leicester Council of Faiths, Faith Leaders' Forum and CROPOF (Committee for Relations with People of Other Faiths) were used to publicise the work and to encourage replies. Members attending these meetings were asked to encourage responses from their own communities.

The deadline for responses was extended to 31st August and although a handful of replies were received after this date, the follow-up strategy was very successful. Faith communities whose response rates hadn't increased considerably and who were not members of any inter-faith bodies were particularly targeted for their replies.

### POSSIBLE REASONS FOR NO RESPONSE

#### Contact details

A number of organisations were not contactable because there was no telephone or e-mail address available. Some attempts were made to visit such organisations during times of worship but many of these organisations did not have any prayer time notice boards.

#### Religious beliefs

A small number of faith-based organisations informed the project that they did not wish to complete the questionnaire because their religious beliefs prohibited inter-faith working. Although the organisations were reminded that the primary purpose of the report was to promote the work of faith communities, there was unease expressed over the concept of inter-faith work.

#### Questionnaire design

The project attempted to make the questionnaire as 'light' as possible but one which asked enough key questions to make the eventual report credible and worthy. Tick-box options were used as much as possible and text boxes were used to support and

elaborate on key questions such as 'what are the main problems faced by your organisation.

However, as with previous exercises of this type, questionnaires are often deemed to be too complicated and cumbersome and since the questionnaire was spread over six pages, the length may have put some off.

### **Holiday period**

The questionnaires were sent out in June and the chasing up of them ran into July and August. So the summer holiday season increased the delay time in responding as many are away on holiday.

### **No activities to report**

A number of faith organisations who were chased for their responses, informed the project that they had decided not to return their questionnaires because there were no activities to report. However, they were informed that it was still crucial that they responded in order to establish the reasons why they were unable to deliver activities.

### **Time and priority constraints**

The majority of committee members of faith organisations are volunteers who often work elsewhere during the day. It was mentioned on many visits that letters and other paperwork sent to the organisation have to be prioritised in order of importance and so utility bills and other expense forms were dealt with first before any other communications. This meant that the questionnaires could not always be dealt with quickly if at all.

### **Not received**

About 50 questionnaires had to be re-sent due to them not being received by the person(s) listed on the register.

## **CONTACTS MADE**

Representatives from the following organisations completed the questionnaires:

Abbots Road United Reformed Church  
Agape Church  
Ahmadiyya Muslim Association  
All Saints Church Scraptoft  
Apostolic Faith Mission International (UK)  
Aylestone & Eyres Monsell, Kingdom Hall  
Aylestone Baptist Church  
Beaumont Christian Fellowship  
Belgrave & Rushey Mead Congregation, Kingdom Hall  
Belgrave Union Church  
Bethel United Church of Jesus Christ  
Bishop Street Methodist Church  
Brahma Kumaris World Spiritualist University  
Braunstone United Reformed Church

Brice Memorial Hall  
Carey Hall Baptist Church  
Carley Evangelical Baptist Church  
Catholic Church of St. Peter  
Central Baptist Church  
Christ Church Thurnby Lodge  
Christ Church United Reform Church  
Christchurch  
Christian Science First Church  
Church of Christ The King  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints GR  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints WR  
Church of the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ  
Church of the Martyrs  
Claremont Street Methodist Church  
Community Helpline  
Darul Uloom Leicester  
Dar-us-Salam Mosque  
East Midlands Buddhist Association  
Edgehill Road Methodist Church  
Epworth Hall Methodist Church  
Evington Road United Reformed Church  
Faith in People with HIV Project  
Federation of Hindu Priests UK  
Federation of Muslim Organisations  
Friar Lane & Braunstone Baptist Church  
Glenfield & Anstey Heights Congregation, Kingdom Hall  
Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel  
Greek Community of Leicestershire  
Gulzar-E-Medina  
Guru Amardas Gurdwara  
Guru Nanak Gurdwara  
Harrison Road Methodist Church  
Hindu Religious & Cultural Society Shree Geeta Bhavan  
Holy Cross Catholic Church  
Holy Trinity Church  
Islamic Education Centre  
Islamic Foundation  
Jain Centre Europe  
Jame Mosque  
Jesus Fellowship Church  
Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Leicester Cathedral  
Leicester Central Seventh Day Adventist Church  
Leicester Chinese Christian Church  
Leicester Christian Fellowship, Hessed House  
Leicester Estonian House  
Leicester Hebrew Congregation  
Leicester Progressive Jewish Congregation  
Leicester Quaker Meeting Society of Friends  
Leicestershire Brahma Samaj & Community Centre  
Leuva Patidar Samaj  
Living God's Temple  
Mandir Baba Balak Nath  
Markaz-E-Badri Dawoodi Bohra Mosque  
Masjid Al Falah Islamic Education Trust  
Masjid An Noor  
Masjid Ul-Imam-II-Bukhari  
Masjid Umar  
Masjid-At-Taqwa

Mayflower Methodist Church  
 Memon Association (Leicester) UK  
 MKA (Muslim Khatri Association) Community Centre  
 MKSIA Community Leicester Masjid-E-Hussein  
 Mother of God Catholic Church  
 Muslim Burial Council of Leicestershire (MBCOL)  
 Narborough Road Christian Fellowship  
 Narborough Road Islamic Centre: Masjid-E-Abu-Bakar  
 New Life Centre  
 North Evington Deeni Cultural Centre  
 Our Lady of Good Counsel Church  
 Our Lady of the Rosary Church  
 Polish Community Centre  
 Radha Krishna Temple Shyama Ashram  
 Rahat Day Centre  
 Ramgarhia Board Gurdwara  
 Robert Hall Memorial Baptist Church  
 Sacred Heart Church  
 Saffron Lane URC  
 Serbian Orthodox Church  
 Shree Gurjar Kshatriya Mandal  
 Shree Hindu Temple  
 Shree Jalaram Prathna Mandal  
 Shree Jansari Gnati Mandal  
 Shree Prajapati Association  
 Shree Sanatan Mandir  
 Shree Satsang Mandal  
 Shree Swaminarayan Temple  
 Shri Guru Ravidass Gurdwara  
 Sikh Community Centre c/o Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara  
 Silver Strand Club  
 Spinney Hill & Humberstone Congregation, Kingdom Hall  
 Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'í's of Leicester  
 St. Aidan's Parish Church  
 St. Alban's Church & Community Centre  
 St. Andrew's Church Aylestone  
 St. Anne's Church  
 St. Barnabas' Church  
 St. Chad's Church  
 St. Christopher's Church  
 St. Deny's Church  
 St. Edward the Confessor Church  
 St. Gabriel's Church & Community Centre  
 St. Guthlac Church  
 St. Hugh's Church, Eyres Monsell  
 St. James the Greater Church  
 St. John the Baptist Church  
 St. Joseph's Church  
 St. Luke's Stocking Farm Church  
 St. Margaret's Church  
 St. Mary de Castro Church  
 St. Mary's Church Humberstone  
 St. Mary's Magdalen  
 St. Matthews House  
 St. Nicholas' Church  
 St. Patrick's Church  
 St. Paul's Church  
 St. Peter's Church  
 St. Peter's Church & Community Centre (Highfields)

St. Peter's Church Belgrave  
 St. Philip's Church  
 St. Saviour's Church  
 St. Stephen's United Reformed Church  
 St. Theodore of Canterbury Church  
 Stoneygate Baptist Church  
 Surati Muslim Khalifa Society  
 Swaminarayan Hindu Mission  
 The Buddhist House  
 The Good Shepherd Church  
 The Islamic Society of Britain  
 The Mothers' Union  
 The Salvation Army: Leicester Castle  
 The Salvation Army: Leicester Central  
 The Salvation Army: Leicester New Parks  
 The Sikh Welfare & Cultural Society  
 The UK Islamic Mission  
 Thurnby United Reformed Church  
 Trinity Methodist Church  
 UK Turkish Islamic Cultural Centre Trust  
 Uppingham Road Baptist Church  
 Uppingham Road Methodist Church  
 Wesley Hall Methodist Church  
 Wesleyan Holiness Church  
 West Humberstone Gospel Mission  
 Westcotes United Reformed Church  
 Wycliffe United Reformed Church  
 Zion Chapel (Particular Baptist)

Follow-up telephone interviews were conducted with some community representatives who had responded to the survey to strengthen the details. The project held consultation workshops at the launch of the faiths regeneration network to strengthen the research by allowing participants to discuss faith and regeneration issues from an inter-faith perspective. A database was set up to collect the information and to identify patterns and trends.

### 9.3 Census 2001: Breakdown of Leicester's wards and faiths (Office for National Statistics)

Area / Faith	Population	% Christian	% Buddhist	% Hindu	% Jewish	% Muslim	% Sikh	% Other religions	% No religion	% Religion not stated
Abbey	12713	56.51	0.21	9.22	0.05	2.16	2.65	0.41	20.99	7.8
Aylestone	10801	65.28	0.19	2.04	0.05	1.27	0.6	0.25	21.91	8.42
Beaumont Leys	13838	54.42	0.35	7.71	0.06	4.03	1.39	0.32	24.11	7.61
Belgrave	10297	19.47	0.12	51.92	0.06	9.75	5.46	0.78	7.1	5.35
Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields	16614	53.67	0.13	4.34	0.05	1.84	3.48	0.4	26.89	9.21
Castle	13465	47.49	1.1	4.41	0.48	6.91	2.55	0.65	26.13	10.27
Charnwood	10664	38.84	0.16	11.9	0.06	21.46	3.75	0.45	15.79	7.6
Coleman	12100	30.32	0.12	21.3	0.02	23.88	8.94	0.17	9.85	5.4
Evington	9788	50.25	0.08	16.67	0.13	8.93	9.61	0.36	8.96	5.01
Eyres Monsell	11228	63.05	0.1	0.82	0	1.01	0.31	0.2	26.26	8.26
Fosse	10735	58.07	0.15	5.92	0.08	2.51	1.82	0.33	22.94	8.19
Freemen	9983	56.07	0.41	1.9	0.14	1.9	1.23	0.45	27.92	9.98
Humberstone and Hamilton	11893	56.91	0.05	13.49	0.05	2.97	3.65	0.34	15.72	6.82
Knighton	16265	55.87	0.36	7.67	0.99	3.86	6.78	0.47	17.34	6.66
Latimer	11583	13.18	0.13	65.98	0.03	7.24	3.73	0.42	4.61	4.67
New Parks	16022	61.93	0.11	2.68	0.04	0.66	0.54	0.28	25.5	8.27
Rushey Mead	15134	30.16	0.05	40.99	0.03	5.54	9.92	0.74	8.06	4.53
Spinney Hills	21249	14.51	0.14	14.72	0.08	55.94	4.16	0.27	4.92	5.27
Stoneygate	17068	22.67	0.28	18.97	0.24	31.52	9.36	0.56	11.44	4.97
Thurncourt	9936	63.45	0.12	6.77	0.11	3.27	2.68	0.3	16.4	6.89
Westcotes	8653	42.63	0.44	8.47	0.14	5.7	3.89	0.82	28.29	9.62
Western Park	9892	57.17	0.22	8.46	0.12	2.07	3.03	0.39	21.64	6.88
<b>City of Leicester (Total)</b>	<b>279921</b>	<b>44.72</b>	<b>0.23</b>	<b>14.74</b>	<b>0.15</b>	<b>11.03</b>	<b>4.21</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>17.43</b>	<b>7.07</b>

## 9.4 Faith groups and projects by ward

Ward(s)	No. of faith organisations	No. of projects in operation
Castle	42	84
Spinney Hills	34	46
Stoneygate	20	26
Belgrave	17	34
Charnwood	13	11
Coleman	12	19
Latimer	12	44
Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	10	9
Westcotes	10	16
Evington	9	17
Abbey	8	29
Knighton	7	11
New Parks	6	10
Fosse	5	10
Aylestone	5	6
Freemen	4	4
Humberstone & Hamilton	4	5
Rushey Mead	4	10
Thurncourt	4	10
Beaumont Leys	2	7
Eyres Monsell	2	3
Western Park	2	16
City-linked <sup>51</sup>	6	16

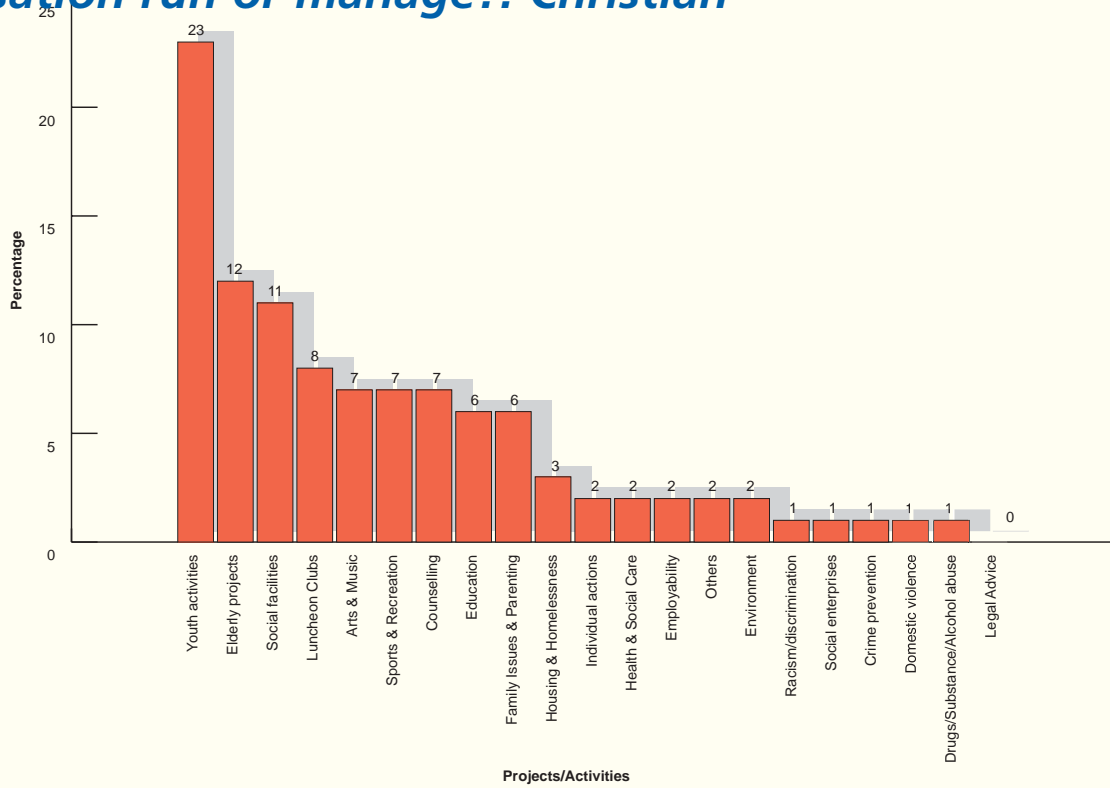
<sup>51</sup>These organisations are not based in the city of Leicester but have been included in the survey because of their existing working relationship with the Leicester Council of Faiths and secondly, the focus of their work is primarily city-focused.

## 9.5 External funding breakdown of faith-led social action

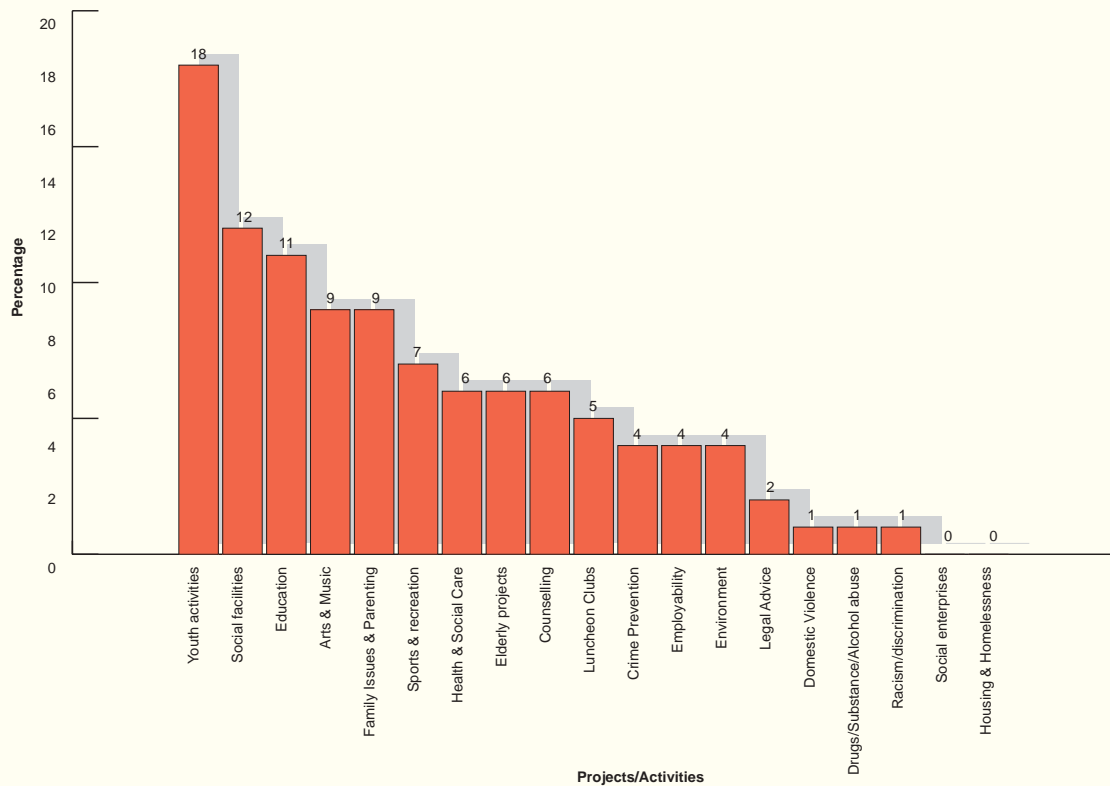
Funding organisation	No. of projects assisted
Leicester City Council	47
Schools (3)/ Colleges (4)/ Universities (8)	15
Community Champions	9
Millennium Awards	9
Children In Need	7
Church Urban Fund	6
Single Regeneration Budget	4
Leicestershire County Council	3
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	3
Braunstone Community Association	2
Childrens Fund	2
Connexions	2
Martin de Porres Charity	2
Neighbourhood Support Fund	2
Age Concern	1
Alderman Newton Foundation	1
Awards for All	1
Childrens Network	1
Chinese Association	1
Communities Against Drugs	1
Dept. of Health	1
Dept. of Work & Pensions	1
East Midlands URC Synod	1
Florence Turner Trust	1
Heritage Fund	1
Home Office	1
JR Corah Foundation	1
Lankelly Foundation	1
Leicester Charity Link	1
Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service	1
Lord Mayor's Sport Appeal	1
Maud Elkington Foundation	1
Metropolitan Housing Trust: Social Investment Fund	1
National Lottery	1
New Opportunities Fund	1
Private grant	1
The Canon Caus Fund	1
The Player Trust	1
The Tudor Trust	1

## 9.6 Faiths' Social Action (breakdown)

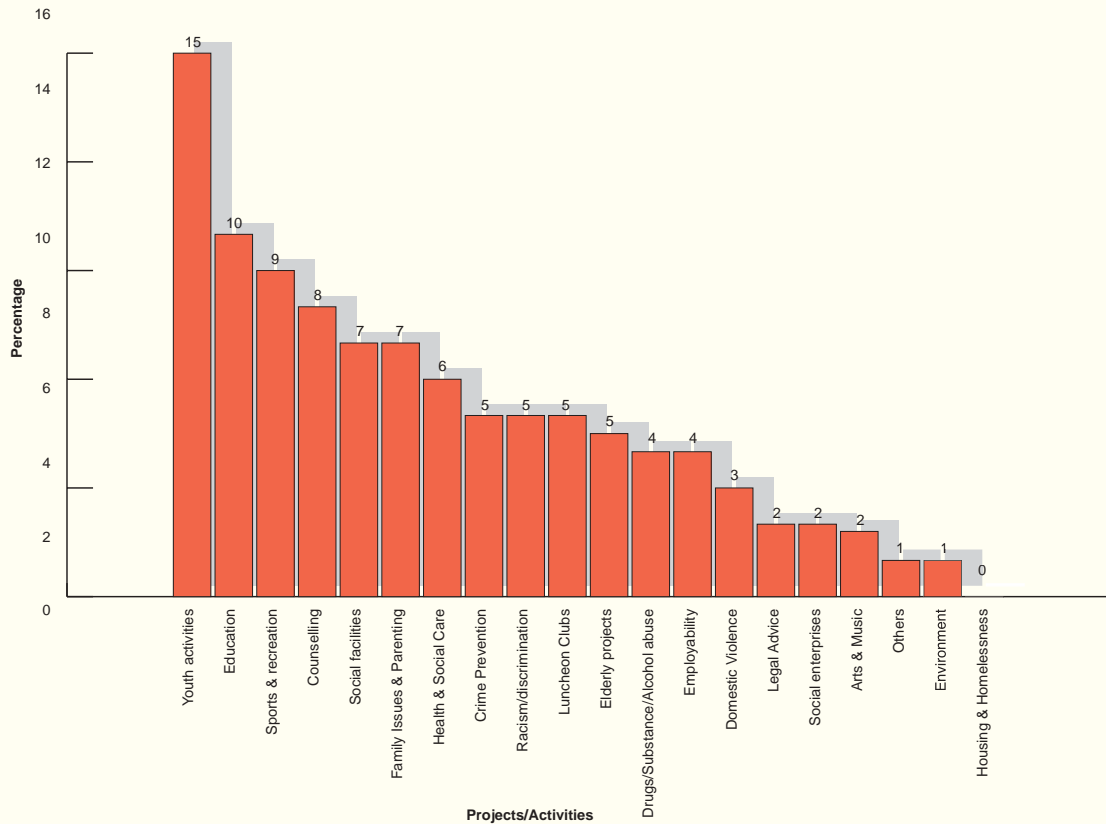
*Which of the following projects or activities does your organisation run or manage?: Christian*



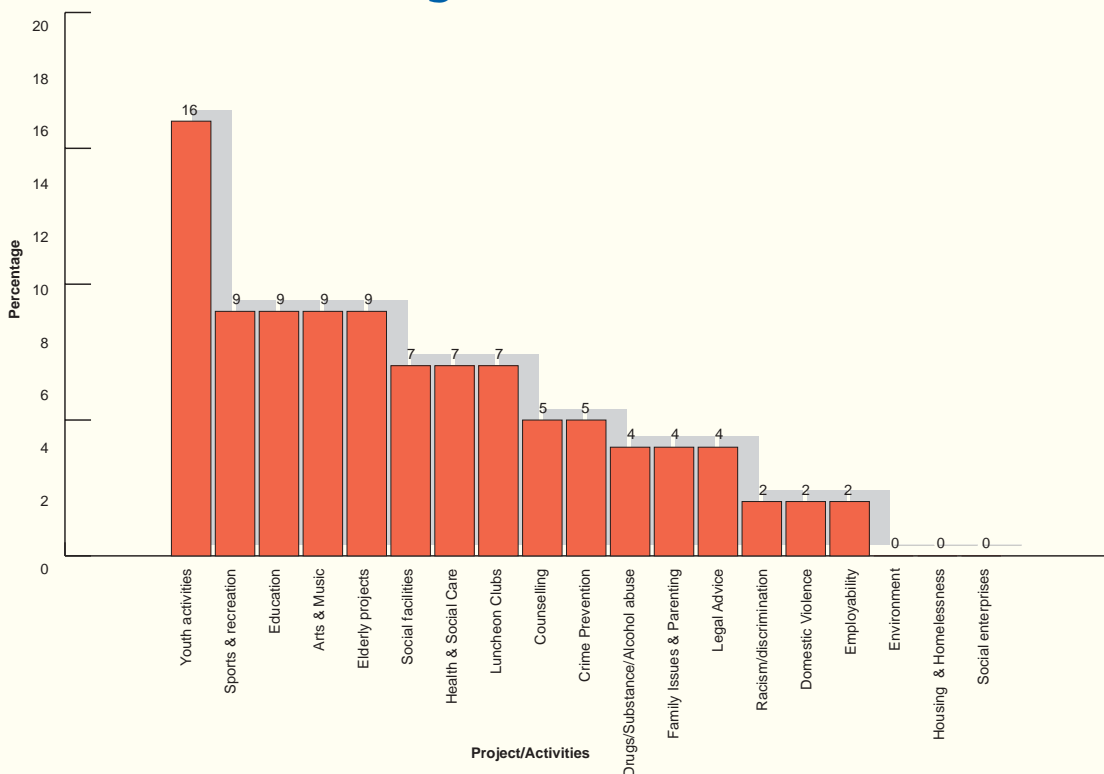
*Which of the following projects or activities does your organisation run or manage?: Hindu*



## Which of the following projects or activities does your organisation run or manage?: Muslim



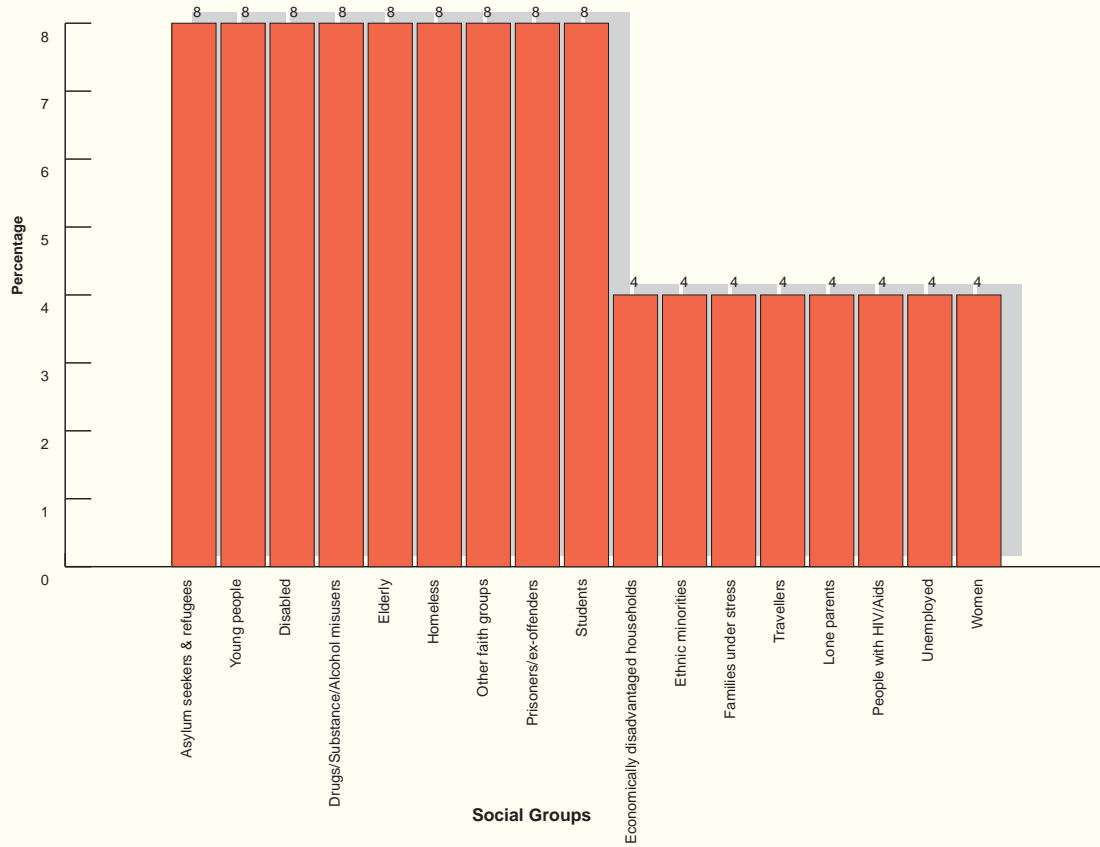
## Which of the following projects or activities does your organisation run or manage?: Sikh



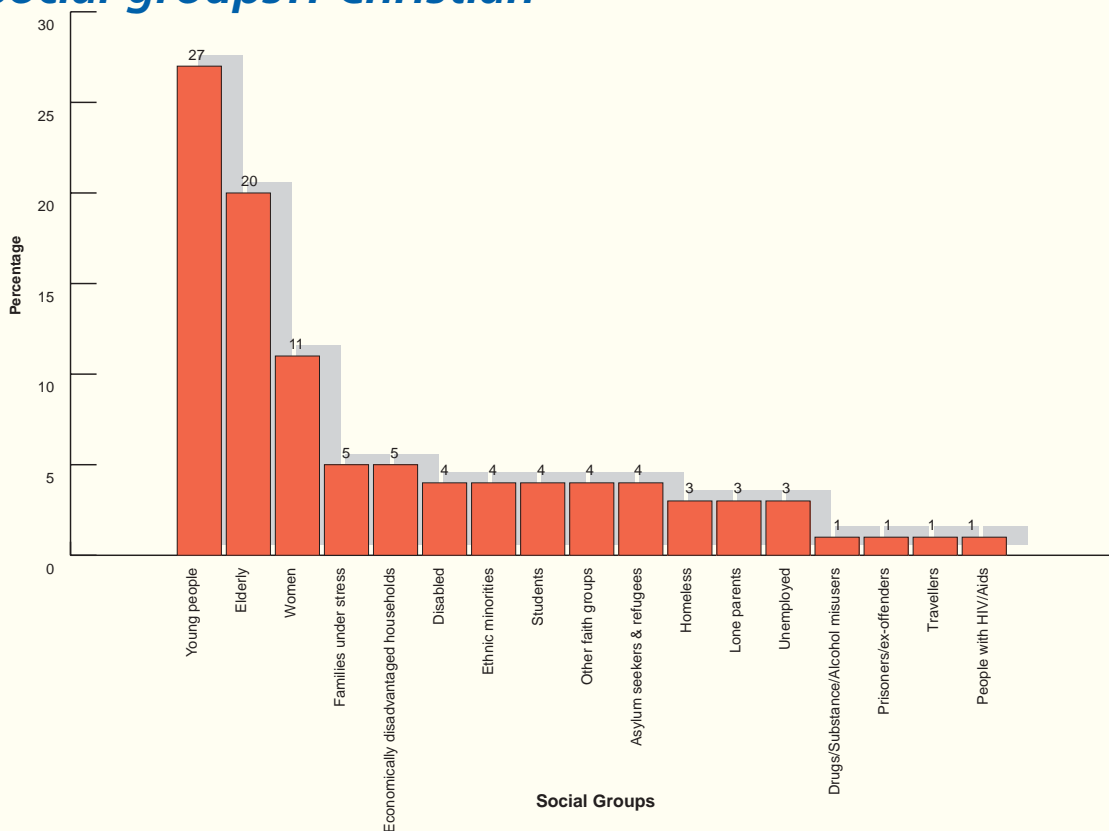
## Projects run by Faith Traditions

	FAITH TRADITIONS				
	Brahma Kumaris	Buddhist	Jain	Jewish	Quaker
PROJECT AREAS					
Arts & Music			■		
Counselling		■			
Education	■	■			
Elderly Projects				■	
Family Issues & Parenting	■				
Health & Social Care	■				
Housing & Homelessness					■
Luncheon Clubs				■	
Social Enterprises				■	
Social Facilities		■		■	
Sports & Recreation			■		

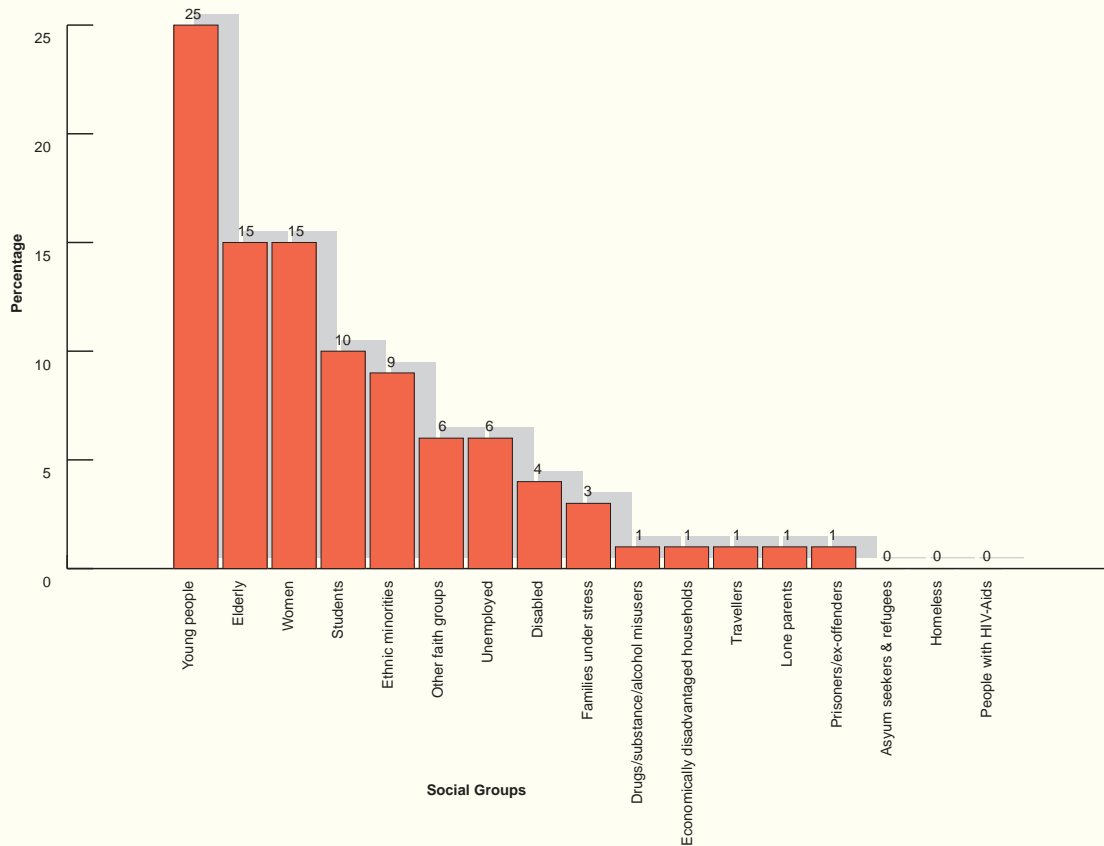
## Does your organisation run or manage any activities for these social groups? Buddhist



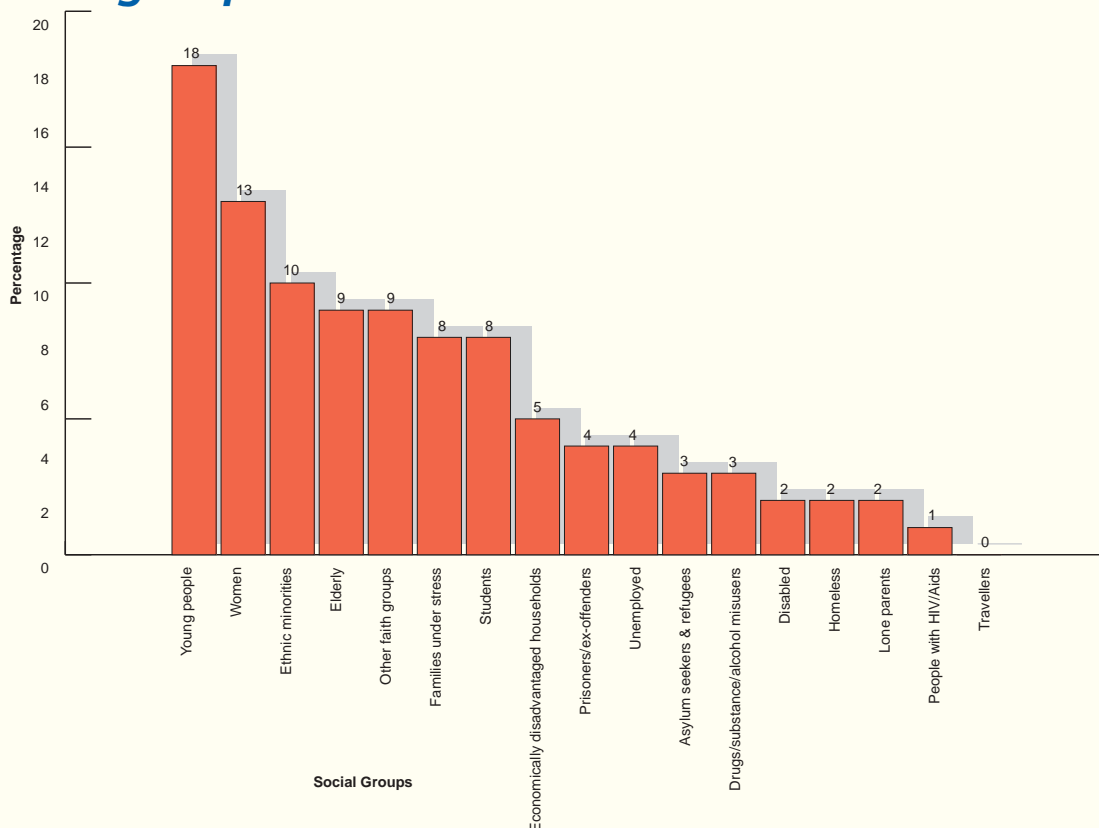
## Does your organisation run or manage any activities for these social groups?: Christian



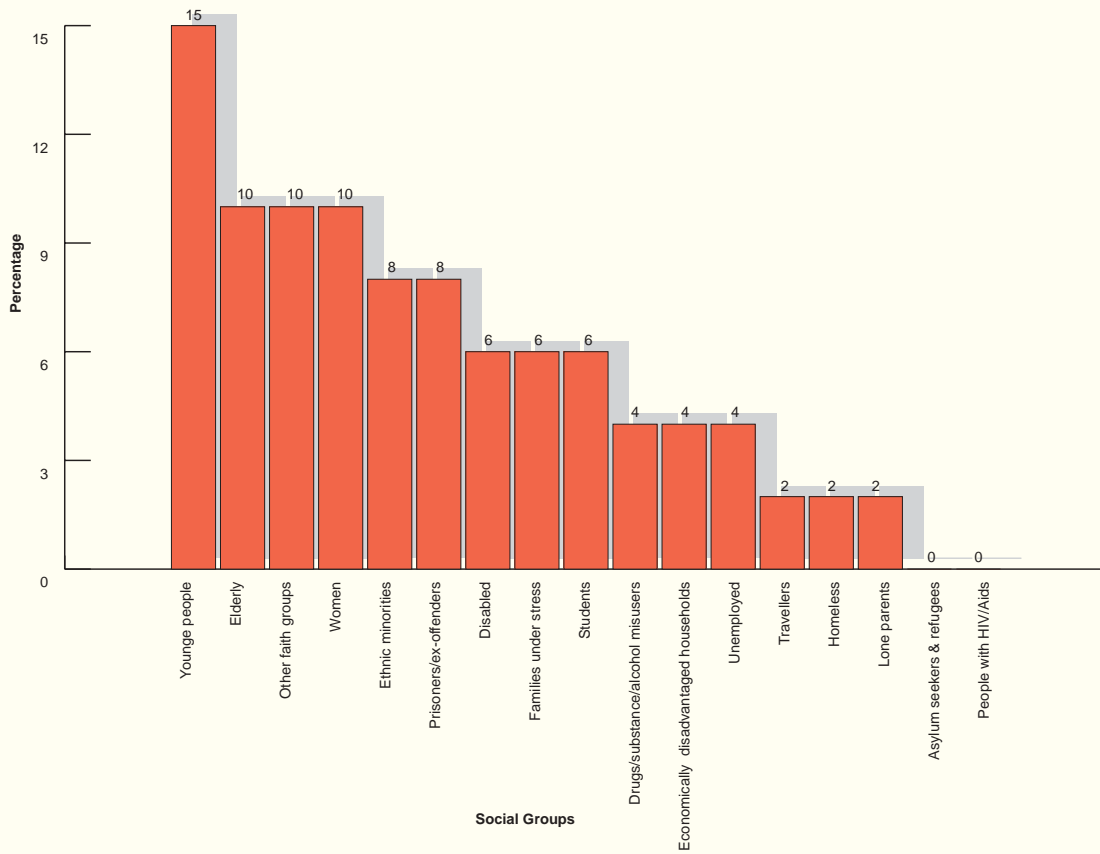
## Does your organisation run or manage any activities for these social groups?: Hindu



## Does your organisation run or manage any activities for these social groups?: Muslim



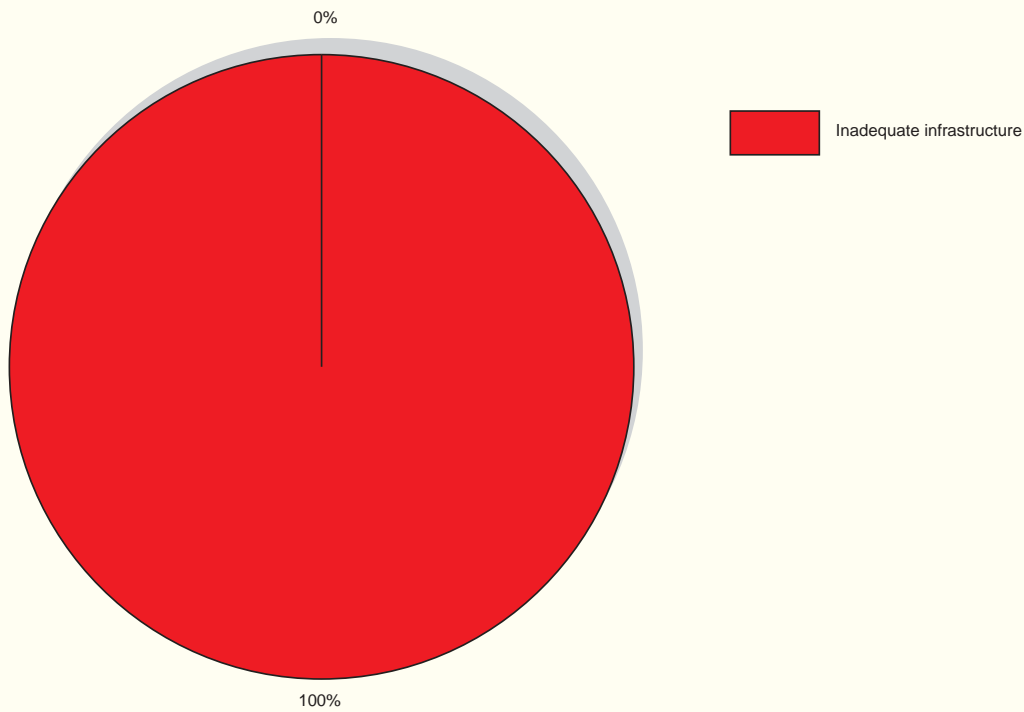
# Does your organisation run or manage any activities for these social groups?:Sikh



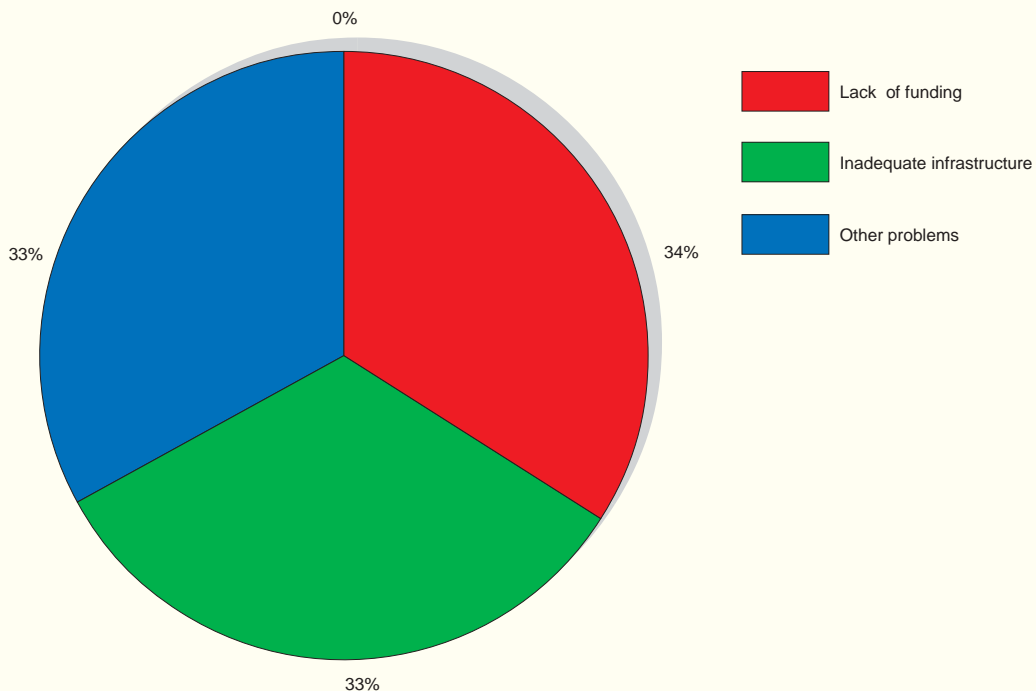
## Social groups supported by faith-led activities

	FAITH TRADITIONS			
	Brahma Kumaris	Jain	Jewish	Quaker
SOCIAL GROUPS				
Elderly				
Ethnic Minorities				
Disabled	■		■	
Families under stress	■			
Homeless				■
Other faith groups	■			
Students	■			
Women	■	■	■	
Young People	■	■	■	

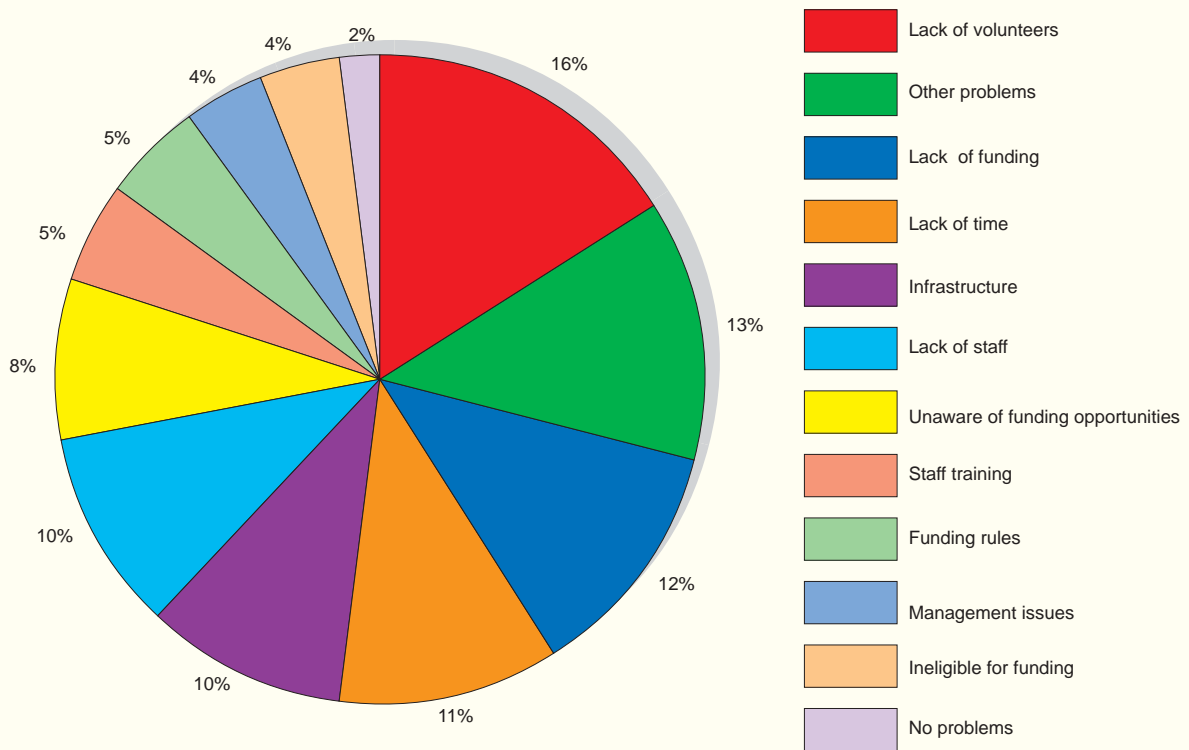
## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: Brahma Kumaris



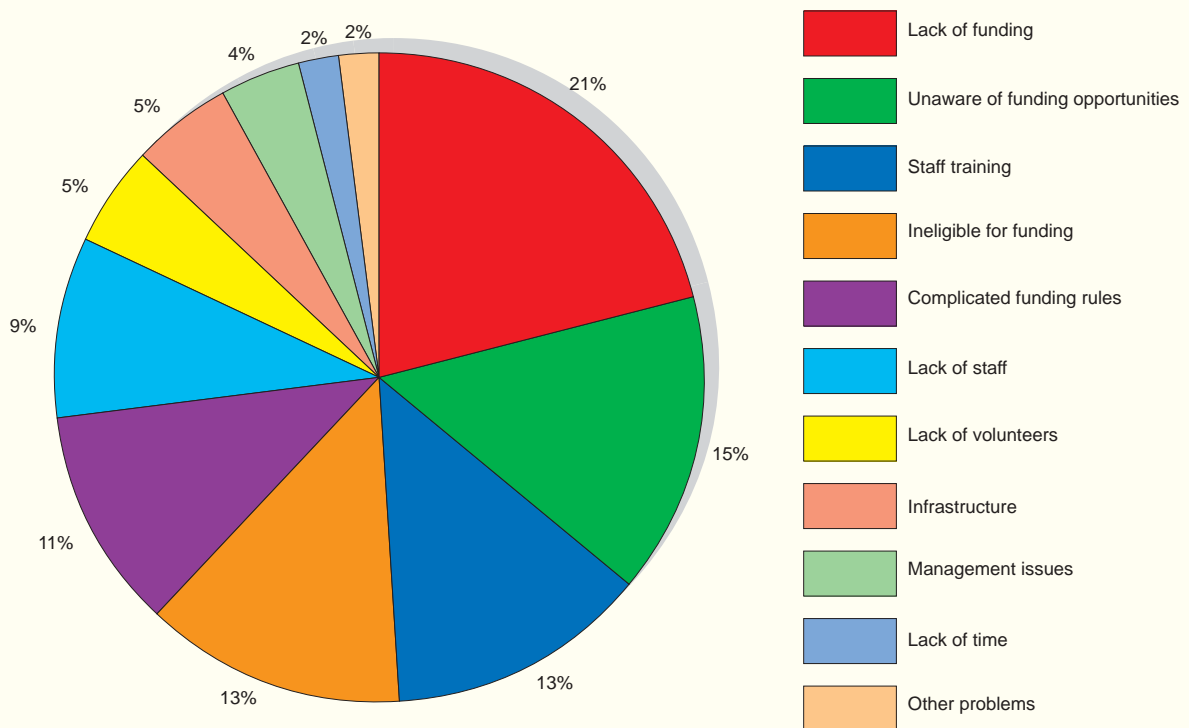
## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: Buddhist



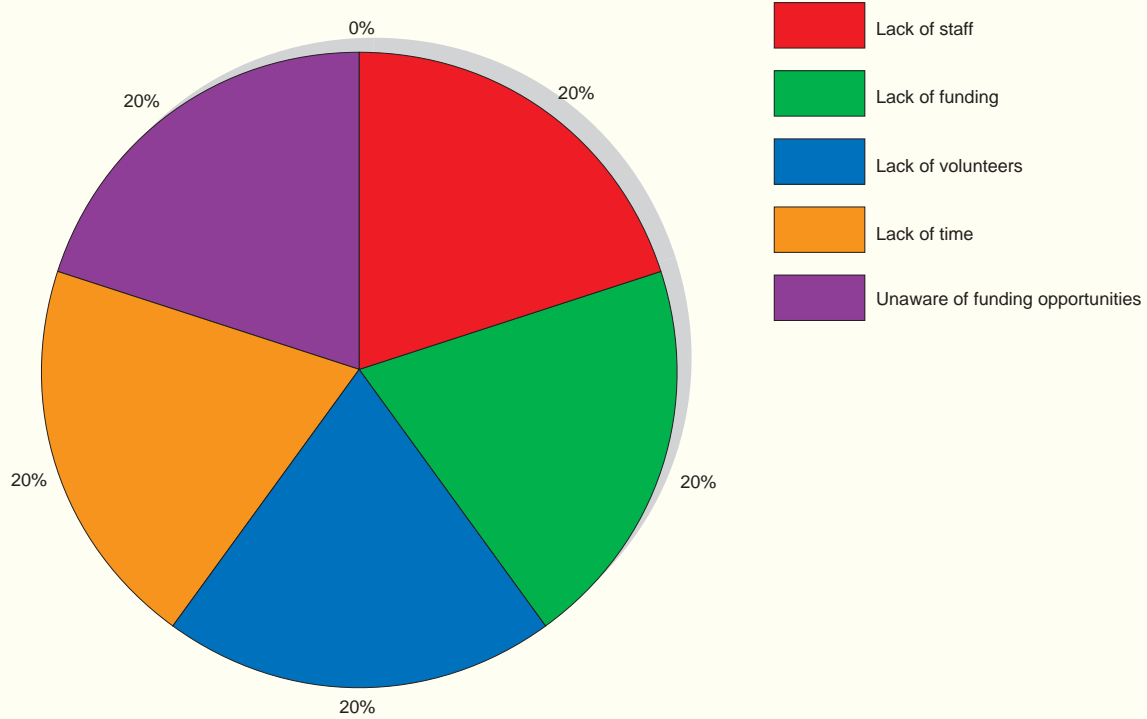
## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: Christian



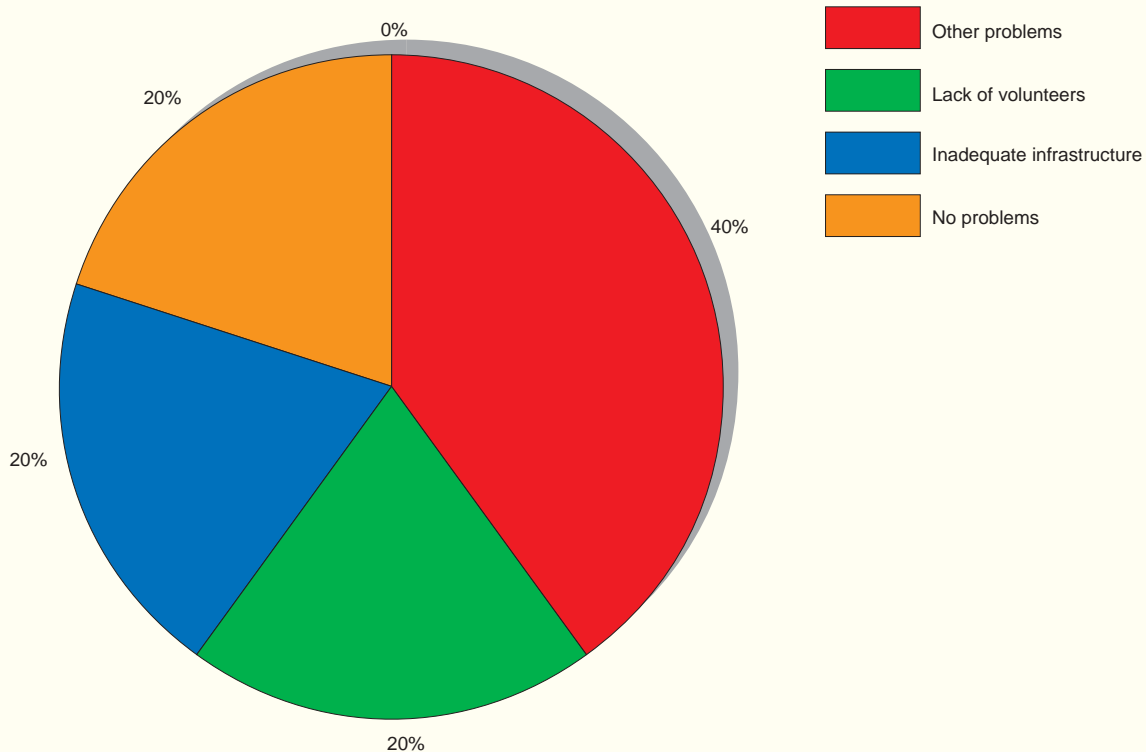
## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: Hindu



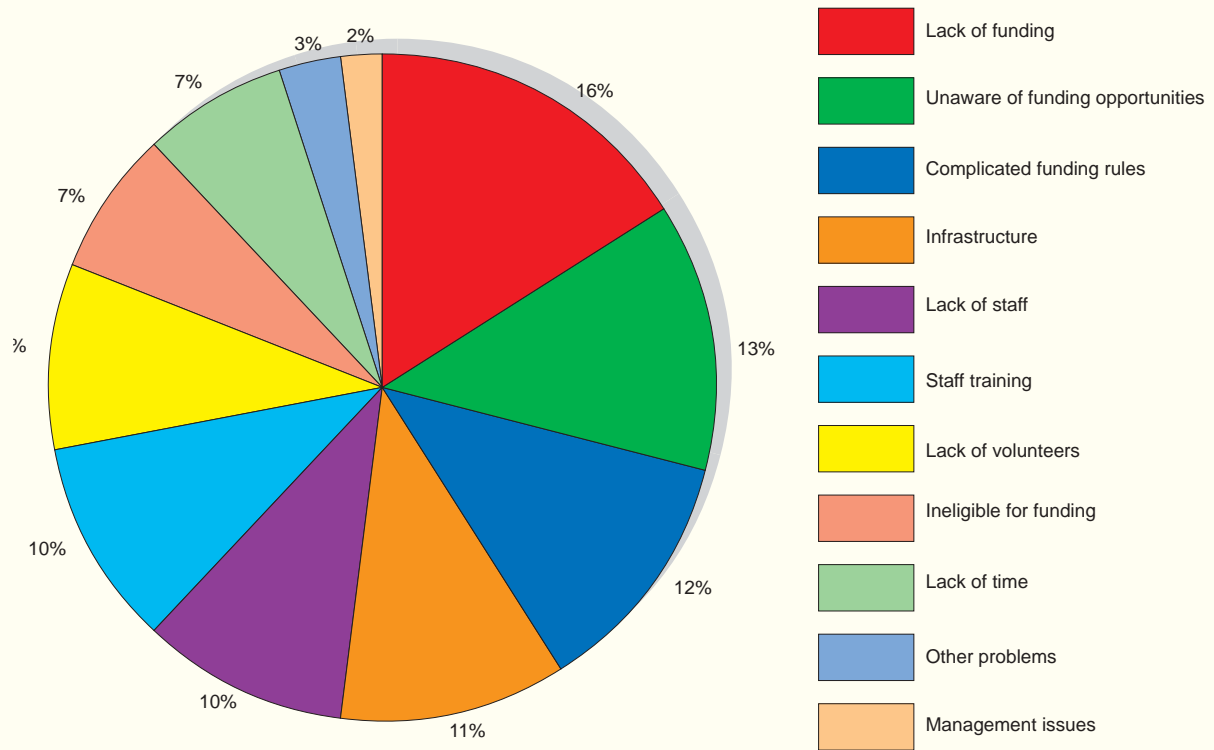
## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: Jain



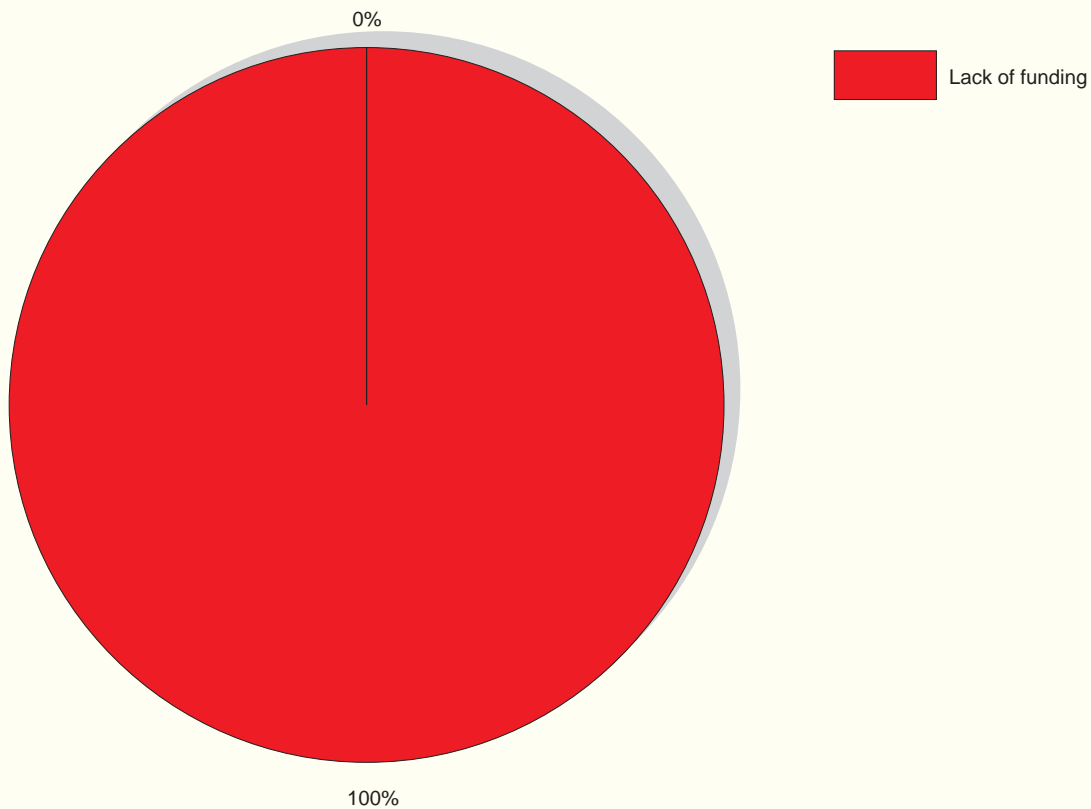
## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: Jewish



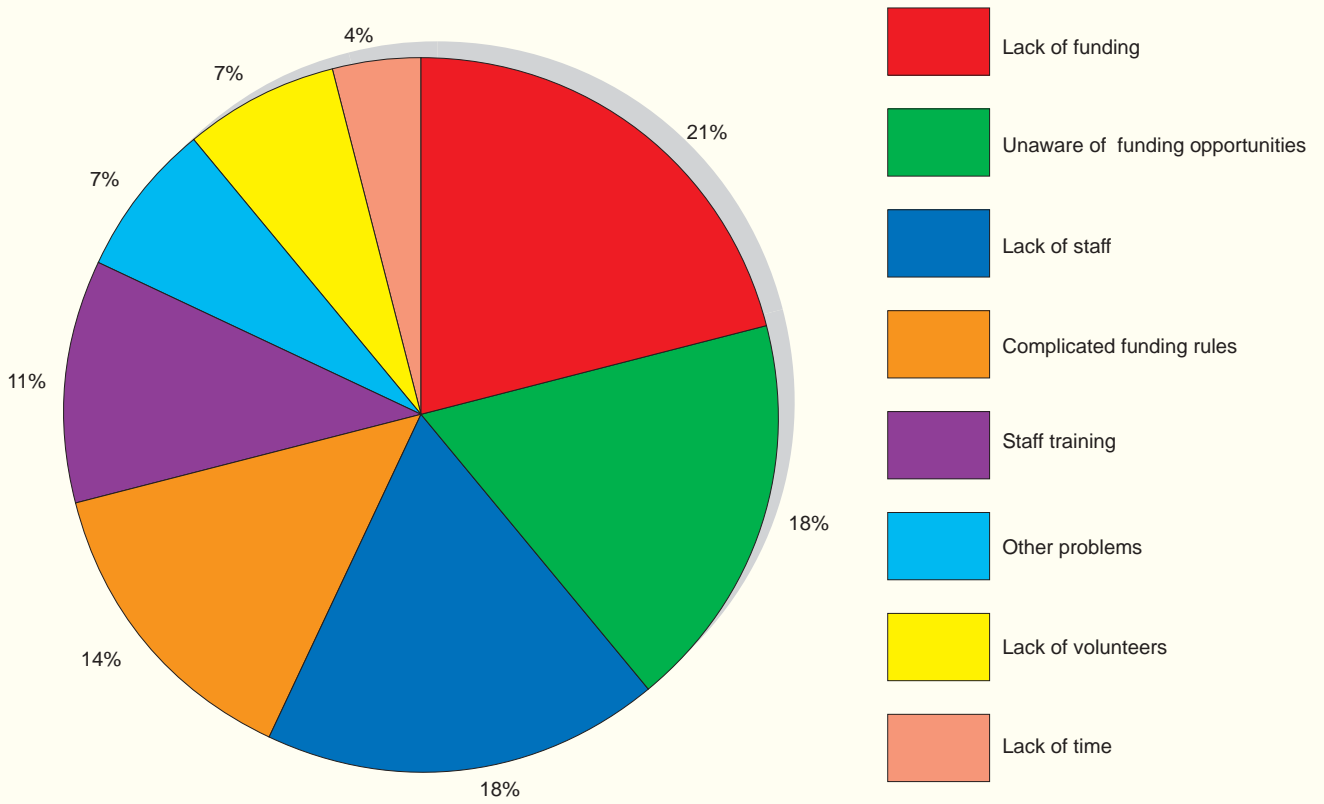
## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: Muslim



## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: Quaker



## Problems preventing delivery of services/projects: Sikh



## 9.7 Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project

The Diocese of Leicester, Leicester Council of Faiths and VAL set up the Leicester Faiths Regeneration Project in 2001. The project currently employs Riaz Ravat as Regeneration Development Officer for the faith communities and is chaired by The. Ven. Richard Atkinson OBE, the Archdeacon of Leicester. The key aims of the project are: to encourage the faith communities to contribute to the work of the Leicester Partnership; engage in the regeneration of their areas; to identify training and development opportunities; strengthen and build networks. The project worker liaises regularly with the Leicester Council of Faiths and the Faith Leaders' Forum.

The project has so far:

- ❖ Produced this report which provides a detailed account about the contribution of the faith communities to social regeneration in the city.
- ❖ Set up the faiths regeneration network in December 2003 to support the faiths representative on the Leicester Partnership. This inclusive network is open to every faith community in the city. The network allows faith communities to network and build partnerships, put forward concerns to the faiths representative and to find out about regeneration opportunities.
- ❖ Facilitated training workshops for faith groups on funding.
- ❖ Issued the quarterly project newsletter 'Faiths Together' in October 2003. It is sent to every faith group on the database and other key players in the city.
- ❖ Arranged advice and recruitment days in faith-buildings in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and Parkhouse Recruitment.
- ❖ Ensured that the needs of the faith communities were included in Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service's Integrated Risk Management Plan.
- ❖ Organised the 'Discover Leicester Faiths Bus Tour' in conjunction with Leicester Shire Promotions Ltd.
- ❖ Delivered presentations to members of the faith communities including Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, Masjid-E-Hussein, Churches Together in South West Leicester and the Lent talk for Churches Together in Highfields.
- ❖ Held a young people and faiths event at the Leicester Council of Faiths offices.
- ❖ Developed plans to set up an inter-cultural leadership school for young people.
- ❖ Promoted the faith agenda with other bodies such as Leicester City Council, the Leicester Equality & Diversity Partnership, the Leicester Partnership Communications Group and the Community Empowerment Network.
- ❖ Contributed to the work of the Inter-Faith Network for the UK and the Faith-Based Regeneration Network for the UK.



# 10. Useful contacts

## *Local*

Faiths Regeneration Project, Diocese of Leicester,  
Church House, St. Martin's East Leicester LE1 5FX Tel:  
0116 248 7424

Leicester Council of Faiths, Pilgrim House, 10 Bishop  
Street, Leicester LE1 6AF Tel: 0116 254 6868

Community Empowerment Team, VAL (Voluntary  
Action Leicester), Active Community Centre, 9 Newarke  
Street, Leicester LE1 5SN Tel: 0116 258 0666

## *National*

Faith Communities Unit, Home Office, 4th Floor  
Allington Towers, 19 Allington Street, London SW1E  
5EB Tel: 0870 000 1585 (Public enquiries)

Inner Cities Religious Council, Office of the Deputy  
Prime Minister, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London  
SW1P 3NZ Tel: 0207 890 3701

Inter-Faith Network for the UK, 8a Lower Grosvenor  
Place, London SW1W 0EN Tel: 0207 931 7766

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