

THIFF Minutes 20th September 2016

Account 3, Bethnal Green

Present: Alan Green (Church of England Borough Chaplain); Dani Anderson (THCVS); Christine Hall; Nathaniel Roos (Fieldgate Street Synagogue); Cameron Kirkwood (Methodist Church); John Hayes (Methodist Church); Sigrid Werner (Local resident/St George's); Rowena Loverance (St George in the East CoE); Ram Chandra Saha (Vivekananda Human Centre); Leon Silver (East London Central Mosque); Kirsty Cornell (THCVS).

Apologies: Jan McHarry; Fiona Stewart-Darling; Roger Yelland; Sonya Sier; Jagmohan Bhakar; Iftahar Ahmed; DI Cruickshank.

1. Minutes of last meeting:

No comments and amendments, any other amendments to be sent to Dani Anderson: dani.anderson@thcvs.org.uk.

It was noted that Michael Dunne sent an email to Alan Green with his best wishes for the forum.

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

2. Hate crime

The forum had a brief discussion on hate crime following the presentation from DCI Ingrid Cruickshank at the last meeting, who was not present at this meeting. Anecdotally people were aware of some increased antisemitism and islamophobia in other parts of London, there was not a sense that this was felt as much locally in the borough.

The forum discussed the relatively high level of reported hate crime in Tower Hamlets, which was also discussed at the last meeting, and the difficulty in unpicking if this came from a greater feeling of confidence in reporting incidences of hate crime as well as increased incidences occurring. The Police have begun to develop a tool for interrogating the data they receive in terms of what might be useful to report on at a borough-level (eg if an incident is categorised as two crimes if it falls under several categories).

Fiyaz Murghal, the Director of Faith Matters, local Councillor Rabina Khan and seven other Muslims attended the main Sunday service at St John on Bethnal Green on 21 August, to show solidarity between Christians and Muslims in the wake of the murder of Fr Jacques Hamel in France. The church was also featured on Songs of Praise on 11th September.

2. THIFF Constitution

Proposed and passed a change to the Constitution to remove the need for Steering Group members to take a break of at least one year every 3 years.

People eligible to vote (attended 3 meetings in the last year): Alan Green, Jan McHarry, Michael Dunne, Andrew Pantland, Nathaniel Roose, Ian Watkins, Leon Silver, Christine Hall (present at meeting: Alan Green, Nathaniel Roose, Leon Silver, Christine Hall).

The work “completing” will be removed from section 7 of the constitution.

Next meeting will be an AGM.

Action: will ask people to let us know if they want to stand for the Steering Group, via mailing list, after working out eligibility.

3. Update on new THIFF website

Dani gave an update on progress developing a new THIFF website and demonstrated the layout. When this is live it will be circulated to the mailing list (should be by mid-October) for comments and edits. Some sections will need content provided by members of the forum eg events can only be populated if people send them to us. Notes from the forum on the website:

- The forum liked the layout and content
- The interfaith calendar will have a link to the homepage
- Dani will contact Deborah Weston re: SACRE/religious education section.

The forum discussed the Twitter feed and noted that it will need careful managing to ensure it is not open to abuse.

4. Information share

Dani: THCVS are working with THIFF as part of the contract to put on two events this autumn, one for Hate Crime Awareness Week on 13th October, and one for Inter Faith Week on 16th November. This will be circulated to the mailing list soon

Leon: a preview of an exhibition for the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street will be held at Watney Street Ideas Store 6pm 27th October; Commemoration will be held Sunday 9th October from Altab Ali Park to Cable Street.

Kirsty: council has just completed a consultation on community buildings in the borough, to do with leases, levels of rent and a proposal to create community hubs. More info on the THCVS website: <https://thcvs.org.uk/voice/premises-forum>

Rowena: St George in the East organised an exhibition called ‘East End Women’ which was well received earlier in the summer, and is now available as a resource which can be installed at locations across the borough – something to bear in mind

Ram: 7th October – 12th October, Hindu celebration in Mile End Temple; Diwali is 20th October

Sigrid: looking for an organist for lunchtime recitals at local church, voluntary.

John: Whitechapel Mission always looking for support in the run up to Christmas, their website details what they’re looking for <https://whitechapel.org.uk/>

Cameron: all Methodist churches across London are collecting food to take to Calais to support the people living there, over next couple of weeks then will be delivered

Alan: Grand Union Orchestra are producing two performances based on the battle of Cable Street: choir will perform at St John on Bethnal Green Saturday 8th in the evening, and are seeking people to

join – Alan will circulate info/flyer. A first meeting to discuss this will be Friday 23rd September, following Friday a rehearsal. 2nd is an orchestra performance at Rich Mix, theme of both is present and future of events at Cable Street

Christabel is still seeking support for HIV prevention project linking with churches, also seeking host organisations (costs covered) for community events for National HIV testing week 19th - 25th November

Fiona Stewart-Darling passed on a message via email saying we don't need to send printed copies of the calendar to Canary Wharf, as people can print them themselves; seems we can prioritise the larger calendars over the A4.

Action: to contact the council to see if they're planning to support distributing to schools and on their website, then decide what our distribution strategy will be once it has been produced

Saturday 8th October is the beginning of Hate Crime Awareness Week – Faith Matters rally at St Paul's Cathedral Saturday 8th from 4pm, service from 6pm.

Dates of future THIFF meetings: 8th November 2016 (AGM) and 17th January 2017