

THIFF meeting minutes

Tuesday 8th November 2016, 6-8pm

Present: Jan McHarry, LBC; Leon Silver, ELCS; Sotez Chowdhury, Near Neighbours; Nathaniel Roos, Fieldgate Street Synagogue; Cameron Kirkwood, Methodist Church; Shams Muhammad, Ebbrahim College; Christine Hall, St John on Bethnal Green; Ingrid Cruickshank, Metropolitan Police; Ann Howell, Simple Gifts; Hasya Qureshi, SACRE/Malmesbury School; Sigrid Werner, Local resident/St. George's/Soanes Centre; Rowena Loverance, St George in the East CoE; Sirajul Choudhury, Mayflower Primary School; Julia Diamond-Conway, RE Today; Gulam Hussain, LBTH; Ram Chandra Saha, VHC; Philip Langworthy, Metropolitan Police; Gemma Cossins, THCVS; Iftahar Ahmed, FRF; Sonya Sier, Baha'is of Tower Hamlets; Dani Anderson, TCHVS.

Apologies: Alan Green, Roger Yelland, Rev John Hayes.

Ambassadors of Faith and Belief (AFaBs)

Six members of the Ambassadors of Faith and Belief project (RE Today) gave a presentation on their experience of taking part in the project. The AFaB project has been running for 2 years in Tower Hamlets, and has also been run in Redbridge; for more information contact Julia: Julia Diamond-Conway: julia@retoday.org.uk / <http://towerhamlets.afab.org.uk/>.

Update on hate crime reporting

DCI Ingrid Cruickshank gave an update on the latest hate crime reporting statistics from the Hate Crime Unit. She noted that the levels of reporting had dropped following the spike in June, restabilising at around the same level as before the Referendum vote. The handout provided covered the second half of the financial year. There isn't an analyst based in the borough, the unit only receive routine reports. It may be possible to look into faith-specific statistics in more detail, as the numbers of reports are low relative to others. Ingrid will try to gain a snapshot of demographics for faith hate crime reports and update at next meeting.

AGM

The current steering group (Jan McHarry, Leon Silver and Alan Green) were unanimously re-elected to the steering group. Some members highlighted the ongoing difficulties in ensuring a diverse steering group, in particular that there isn't a Muslim representative. THCVS, LBTH and the steering group continue to make efforts to proactively recruit new forum and steering group members, and new steering group members can be co-opted during the year.

Health & Wellbeing Strategy

A representative from LBTH Public Health was due to attend to update on the Health & Wellbeing Board Strategy consultation, but sent their apologies. This will be rearranged for the January meeting.

Update on THIFF events

Dani (THCVS) gave an update on the recent community cohesion event and encouraged forum members to attend the Faith and Health conference on 16th November.

Information share

Ram: Holi celebration will be held on 20th November in South Woodford, all welcome

Gemma: gave an update on THCVS work through the Premises Forum. Gemma will be attending THIFF meetings over the next 12 months while Kirsty Cornell is on maternity leave

Sirajul: Mayflower Primary School are holding an Inter Faith Week event on 17th November and are looking for volunteers to come in and speak to the children – encouraged forum members to get in touch if they are interested

Sigrid: St George's will be hosting a talk on Wednesday 9th on refugee correspondence from archives

Hasya: Working on Prevent with Tower Hamlets Prevent Education Officer, providing training with teachers. Recently attended a conference on anti-extremism in the Department for Education – encouraged forum members to get in touch if there's things they'd like to raise regarding Prevent in the borough

Ann: Has been involved with Tower Hamlets Stand Together – next community feast is January 21st from 1pm to 4pm at St Peter's Mission Hall in Bethnal Green. More information can be found on the TH Stand Together website: <http://www.stand-together.org.uk/>

Christine: Remembrance Day service will be held at 10.15am at Bethnal Green Library

Shams: Ebrahim College launched a programme for full-time students around leadership and community engagement, with a specific interfaith element. If any forum members have suggestions for local community projects students can get involved with please contact Shams: shams@ebrahimcollege.org.uk

Jan: LBC retreat centre in Suffolk is open and will be holding a festival on Sunday 13th

Gulam: LBTH will be holding co-production & community cohesion training, in light of decision to coproduce commissioning criteria. Will circulate details when they are available

Next meeting will be on Tuesday 17th January, 6-8pm at Account3 in Bethnal Green