



# **Tower Hamlets Inter Faith Forum Looking back and looking forward**

Annual Report 2020 to 2022



## Contents

1.	Foreword from the Chair .....	3
2.	About this report.....	4
3.	About THIFF .....	5
4.	Vision and manifesto.....	7
5.	Structure, governance, and management .....	9
6.	THIFF achievements and activities, 2020 to 2022.....	10
6.1.	Forum meetings.....	10
6.2.	Interfaith events.....	13
6.3.	Collaboration and partnership working.....	17
6.4.	COVID-19 related work.....	19
6.5.	Other outcomes.....	23
7.	Looking forward.....	25

To contact THIFF, please email [info@faithintowerhamlets.org](mailto:info@faithintowerhamlets.org)

## **1. Foreword from the Chair**

Greetings,

The Tower Hamlets Inter Faith Forum was launched in 2003 and, for sixteen years, has sought to ensure that faith and belief communities can play a full part in making this borough a great place to live and work. There have, though, been no two years like the last two and THIFF has worked hard throughout the COVID-19 pandemic across the borough with all faiths and communities. This has brought us into new areas of work, such as public health, and placed us on the frontline of providing up-to-date advice, guidance, and support in uncertain times.

As you can see too from the contents, the Forum continues to connect faith communities to one another, thus enabling positive exchanges of resources and information between faith and secular organisations and enabling faith communities to respond to the issues facing all of us in Tower Hamlets. Our ability to do these things is greatly enhanced by Coventry University and FaithAction being commissioned by Tower Hamlets Council to assist with the development of our strategy and structure and the implementation of our ideas.

The production of this report is an indication of that work and the contents make very clear the ways in which we have been able to make exciting progress: a clear and defined vision in our manifesto; a website to communicate our work and to provide easy access to the individual faith groups around the borough; theming our bi-monthly Forum meetings around issues that we have identified as those of most concern to local people; and a professional level of backroom support that enables us to get on with the important work of celebrating and defending the vibrant diversity of Tower Hamlets.

My thanks go to all those in the Council, Coventry University and FaithAction who have contributed to this and, of course, to my friends Leon, Jan and Sufia who make up the Forum's Steering Committee.

**–The Revd Preb. Alan Green, April 2022**

## **2. About this report**

This Annual Report covers activities and achievements of the Tower Hamlets Inter Faith Forum (THIFF) in the reporting period of April 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2022. This double reporting period is a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ever-changing nature and volume of work that THIFF has undertaken. As the focus in the UK moves towards a policy of *“living with COVID”*, it is now an appropriate time for the Forum to reflect on, and document, the activities and achievements of two unprecedented years of work in serving the communities of Tower Hamlets.

Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the report introduce THIFF, our vision, and our structure whilst Section 6 details the works, events, and meetings undertaken and hosted by THIFF over the last two years. Finally, Section 7 is an opportunity to look forward to activities and areas of work that will take place in the remainder of 2022. Throughout the document are links to the THIFF website and other resources that the Forum makes available.

### **3. About THIFF**

The Tower Hamlets Inter Faith Forum exists to celebrate the significant contribution that faith organisations play in the lives of Tower Hamlets residents, and to facilitate better communication and understanding between different faiths in the borough. The forum meets every two months and is led by a small steering group.

THIFF provides a great opportunity to celebrate the significant contribution that faith organisations have in the lives of people in the borough. It provides the space to identify how faith organisations can play an even bigger role in the future success of all communities who live and work here.

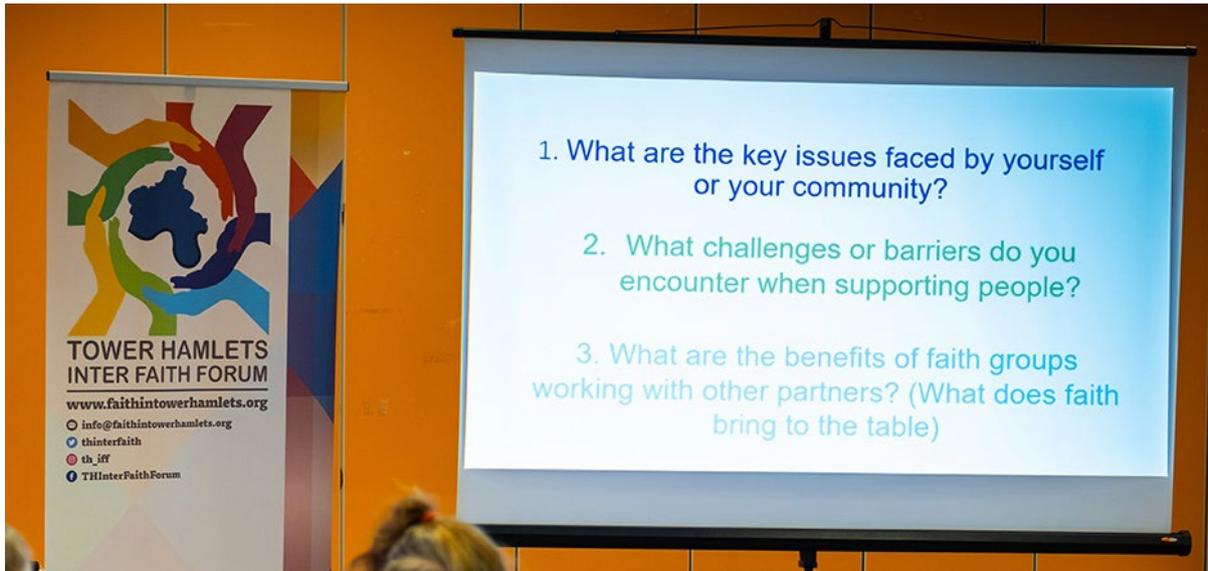
One of the most important roles of the Forum is to facilitate better communication and understanding between the different faiths in Tower Hamlets. In the current international climate, this role is a vital one.

The Forum has set itself an ambitious agenda and to achieve this is working closely with many faith leaders representing the broad range of faiths in the borough, as well as the Council, the Police and local umbrella and network bodies.

By drawing together all the faith organisations in Tower Hamlets, the Forum aims to:

- celebrate the important contribution that religious faith makes to the lives of local communities
- foster greater understanding and respect between our communities
- secure a more prominent role for faith organisations in regenerating their communities and delivering the borough's community plan
- provide a forum for sharing knowledge, resources and good practice
- speak with in harmony when faith organisations address important public issues
- break down prejudice and discrimination based on faith

THIFF aims to make getting involved in the Forum and associated activities a rich and rewarding experience for all. Individuals and organisations are welcome to join us at forums and events, our only criteria being that you are respectful of others' views. We also actively welcome content suggestions and contributions for forum meetings and recent forum meeting themes were set following consultation with local residents.



The aims and ambitions of THIFF are longstanding and run through the work and the ethos of the organisation. It must, however, also be recognised that THIFF, as with many of faith, community, and voluntary sector organisations, played a vital, yet unplanned, role in the COVID-19 pandemic. Here, THIFF became a genuine frontline organisation in the borough providing advice, information and, through packages of work discussed later in this report, personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 tests. THIFF also played an important role in the successful borough-wide rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine.

THIFF is a member of the Inter Faith Network for the UK (IFN). IFN works to build good relations between people of different faiths and beliefs, promoting mutual respect and understanding. Additionally, IFN also disseminates advice, support, information, and best practice to support interfaith relations across the country.

## 4. Vision and manifesto

THIFF aims to make Tower Hamlets a better place to be. This inclusive aim extends to all in the borough, whether they are residents, working in the borough, studying in the borough, or using amenities in the borough and whether they are of faith backgrounds or not.

This aspiration was articulated via a Theory of Change workshop with Coventry University in 2017 and has been updated and re-checked annually since. The Theory of Change document (Fig. 1) shows that the activities which THIFF undertakes lead up to logical outcomes which, combined, contribute towards the aim of making the borough a better place to be. These activities include:

- Interfaith advocacy and leadership
- Partnership support and collaborative action
- Running and attending events and promoting dialogue
- Awareness raising
- Internal development, communication, and promotion

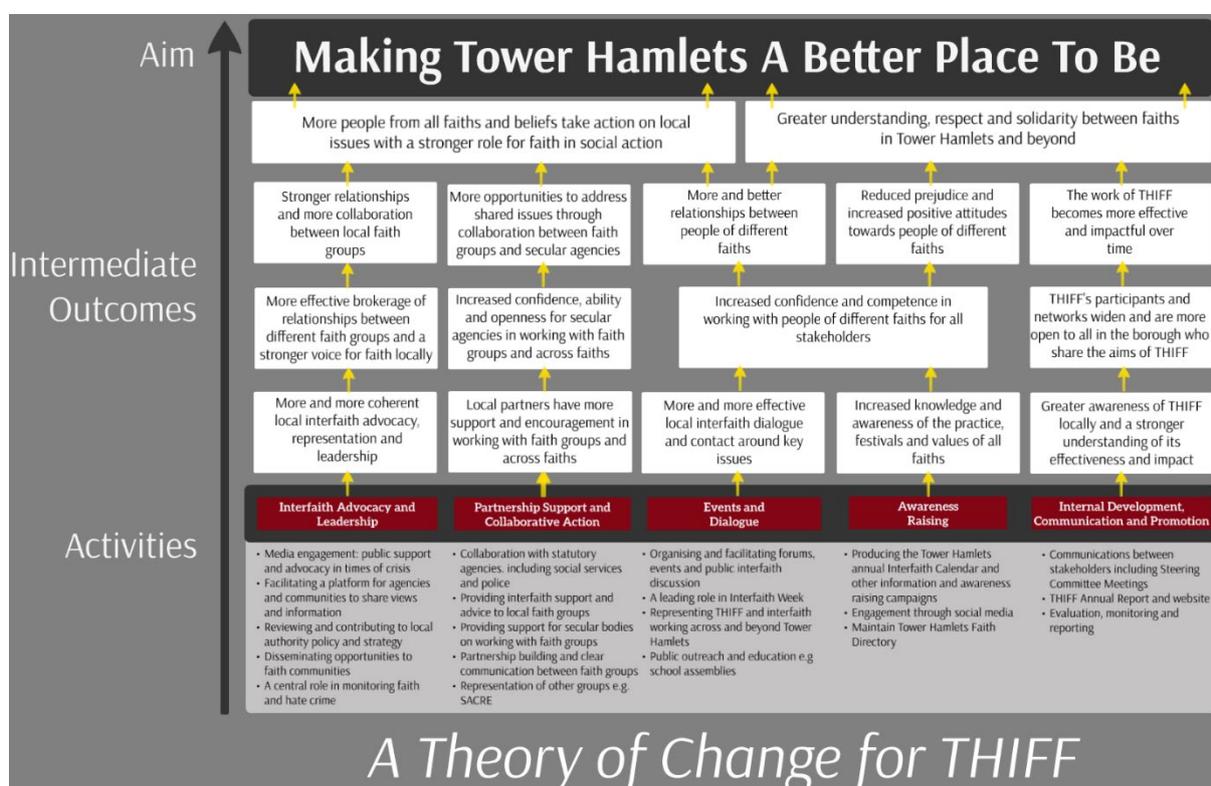


Figure 1: A Theory of Change for THIFF, 2022

In February 2018, THIFF issued a Manifesto as a call to action for those already working for and with THIFF, in whatever capacity, but also for those who share the aims and ambitions of ensuring that the religion and belief sector can play a full role in making Tower Hamlets a better place to be. This Manifesto was endorsed by the Bishop of Stepney, Rt Revd. Adrian Newman, who said:

*"I am delighted to endorse the intentions of the Tower Hamlets Inter Faith Forum outlined in this manifesto. At a time when our public life together is threatened by forces which too easily fragment civil society, it remains of crucial importance for faith and secular organisations to find creative ways of working together. We share common ground and we seek the common good. I hope that the continuing work of THIFF will bear fruit in strengthening the richness and resilience of our community in Tower Hamlets."*

The THIFF Manifesto can be found in full at:

<https://www.faihtowerhamlets.org/info/manifesto/>

## **5. Structure, governance, and management**

There is no formal membership of THIFF and meetings and events are open to all. The only criteria for attending and taking part is that you are respectful of others' views. THIFF is run by a small steering group. Elections to this steering group are held at the THIFF AGM.

Since 2017, with funding provided by Tower Hamlets Council, the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University, and FaithAction, a national network of faith-based and community organisations seeking to serve their communities through social action, have been working with THIFF to manage the forum and deliver local events.

THIFF is now also an active member of the TH Equalities Hub. This Hub is a central part of London Borough of Tower Hamlets new direction for equalities provision and provides a central strategic focus, responding to the community's needs and issues. The Hub is run and co-ordinated by Tower Hamlets CVS and is key to bringing about a more coordinated approach to equalities in the borough. The Hub website can be found here:

<http://thequalityshub.org.uk/>

## 6. THIFF achievements and activities, 2020 to 2022

This Annual Report covers activities and achievements of THIFF in the reporting period of April 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2022. This is an unusually long reporting period due to the disruptions and extra areas of work undertaken by THIFF and partners in the borough during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Activities and achievements are split thematically based on the work undertaken by the forum.

### 6.1. Forum meetings

THIFF aims to meet as a public forum every two to three months. In 2018, the decision was made to hold forum meetings all round Tower Hamlets borough rather than using the same venue for all meetings. This gave greater access to the forum for residents but most meetings which took place during the reporting period were conducted online during the COVID-19 pandemic. Attendance at Forum meetings remained stable throughout.



Minutes for all meetings dating back to May 2016 can be found here:

<https://www.faithtowerhamlets.org/info/meetings/>

Here, in chronological order, are the details of all THIFF forum meetings covered by this Annual Report reporting period:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Key speakers</b>	<b>Venue</b>
01/06/20	Faith, Communities and Coronavirus	Rev Alan Green, Chair of THIFF Mayor John Biggs, Tower Hamlets Council PC Rich Poolman, Metropolitan Police	Online
03/08/20	Financial Hardship	Ellie Kershaw, Tackling Poverty Programme Delivery Manager, Tower Hamlets Council Revd Erin Clark, Trustee, Bethnal Green Foodbank Matt Dronfield, Head of Debt Free London, a Toynbee Hall partnership PC Shihab Miah, Faith Community Liaison, Met Police	Online
08/03/21	Education during Covid-19	Alison Arnaud, Principal, Tower Hamlets New City College Julia Diamond- Conway, RE Today Rev Alan Green, Chair of THIFF	Online
22/03/21	Faith Groups and Mental Health	Najnin Islam, Project Manager, Community Mental Health Transformation Programme, East London NHS Foundation Trust Rev Alan Green, Chair of THIFF PC Rich Poolman, Metropolitan Police	Online

<b>Date</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Key speakers</b>	<b>Venue</b>
		Caro Smith, Development Manager, Breathing Space London	
10/05/21	Dying Matters Awareness Week 2021	Rev. April Keech, St Paul Old Ford Rev Alan Green, Chair of THIFF PC Rich Poolman, Metropolitan Police	Online
19/07/21	Social Prescribing	Sahdia Warraich, Social Prescribing Manager, Tower Hamlets GP Care Group CIC Rev Alan Green, Chair of THIFF PC Rich Poolman, Metropolitan Police	Online
27/9/21	Grief and Bereavement	Dr Nigel Copsey, Spiritual Care Co-ordinator & Team Leader, East London NHS Foundation Trust Rev Alan Green, Chair of THIFF PC Rich Poolman, Metropolitan Police	Online
17/1/22	Violence Against Women and Girls	Veronica Simpson, CEO of Back in Control Consultancy (BICC) - Faiths Against Domestic Abuse Dhriti Suresh-Eapen, Solace Women's Aid Rev Alan Green, Chair of THIFF PC Nazrul Hannan, Met Police	Online
14/3/22	Positive Activities for Young People	Emma Achurch, Centre Manager, Spear Programme from St Peter's Bethnal Green	Café Hall, St Hilda's East Community

<b>Date</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Key speakers</b>	<b>Venue</b>
		Rev Alan Green, Chair of THIFF	Centre, 18 Club Row, Shoreditch, London E2 7E

It is envisaged that all THIFF forum meetings going forward will be themed. This ensures that the work of the forum is of interest to residents of the borough and current events which impact upon the borough and those in it.

The planned Forum meeting in June 2022 will focus on supporting people from Ukraine and refugees in the borough. Following feedback around meetings being held in person or online, this will be a hybrid type meeting which makes use of both.

Planned Forum meetings for the remainder of 2022 are:

- Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 from 6:00-8:00pm
- Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 from 6:00-8:00pm

The themes and topics discussed at these meetings will be decided based on consultation with the public at the Tower Hamlets Festival of Communities in June 2022. Full details will be available on the events section of the THIFF website and can be found here:

<https://www.faihintowerhamlets.org/events/>

## 6.2. Interfaith events

THIFF organises and runs two large interfaith events in the borough per year. One of these is during the Tower Hamlets Interfaith Week and the other is, typically, run early in the calendar year. This typical programme was disrupted by COVID-19 related restrictions on social and public gatherings and, though some traditional in person events did take place, these were supplemented by online events and content which THIFF either hosted itself or took an active role in.

The two Inter Faith Week events run by THIFF in the reporting period were:

### **Inter Faith Week 2020**

Coming at a time of heightened concern over the COVID-19 pandemic and of restrictions on social contact, the 2020 Inter Faith Week event took place online. This was typical of all Inter Faith Week events across the UK in 2020. The event focused on the work that faith communities have done in the borough throughout 2020 and the ongoing support that is available to them to help tackle and mitigate COVID-19. Nearly 50 attendees joined online for the event.

The key speakers and their topics at the event were:

**Janet Daby MP, Shadow Minister for Faith, Women and Equalities.** Janet paid tribute to the hard work and dedication of faith leaders, volunteers, and congregations throughout the pandemic. She acknowledged that there has been much disruption for faith communities due to the closure of places of worship and confirmed that she works hard to represent the views of faith leaders to the government, stating that faith and places of worship should not be an afterthought.

**Sheikh Mohammed Mahmud, Senior Imam at East London Mosque.** The Imam spoke about the hard work that went into making the mosque COVID secure. This includes the calls to prayer being adapted to tell people to pray at home. The Imam spoke about the many ways that they supported the local community, for example by running a food bank and supplying PPE to other mosques and care homes.

**Acting Chief Inspector Pete Shaw, Met Police.** The presentation here explained that the police are focused on the 'three E' approach to the public and coronavirus law – engage, encourage, explain and also highlighted the importance of worshipping safely at a venue and underlined that wearing a mask is a requirement by law. An overview of current guidance and practical tips to support this were then given.

**Abigail Knight, Associate Director of LBTH Public Health and Polly Ashmore, Public Health Specialty Registrar.** Here further clarification and details on COVID-19 related guidance was given and the circumstances in which places of worship can open and operate was detailed. Polly went on to explain about a project starting soon that will involve engagement officers distributing PPE to places of worship in the borough, whilst Abigail highlighted the Community Champions Network, which meets online each week provides updates and answers questions around rules and guidance.

**Peter Okali, CEO of THCVS.** Here the work of the CVS in the borough was highlighted and an open offer was made to all interested parties to engage with the CVS. Peter also

made attendees aware of two main pots of funding available at the time. These were the LBTH Small Grants Fund and the National Lottery COVID-19 Response Fund.

### **Inter Faith Week 2021: Bridge Over Troubled Water**

THIFF celebrated Inter Faith Week last week with an event at St Margaret's House in Bethnal Green. The event showcased the work of local faith groups, worked to further resilience in faith communities and highlight the unique offer that faith provides society. An over-arching theme here was the role that faith communities had played in the borough during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 50 people attended the event.



The key speakers and their topics at the event were:

**Mayor John Biggs**, on the hard work that faith groups across the borough have done throughout the pandemic and the strong interfaith links in the borough.

**Sister Christine Frost of Neighbours in Poplar**, on the value of carers, helping people with internet skills by teaming up young with old as buddies.

**Peter Christmas of Quaker Social Action** on providing digital and financial skills, increasing resident's confidence in navigating the online world, as well as providing vital advice on funeral costs.

**Sufia Alam of East London Mosque**, on how Imams supported the community to be safe during the pandemic, adapting to running the mosque digitally, and the relationship with the public health team.

**Jeremy Simmons of FaithAction**, who spoke about how faith settings can be 'Friendly Places' – places of welcome for those with mental health issues.

**Somen Banerjee and Abigail Gilbert of Tower Hamlets Public Health**, who reflected upon a timeline of events during COVID-19 and how faith groups were involved.

Attendees were asked to share their opinions on concerns for communities, solutions to these concerns, barriers to working with statutory providers, and resources that faith can offer secular partners. The event also served as an important social event for many attendees with it being their first face-to-face meeting with one another in over a year.



Several local stakeholders also joined the event as stall holders. These included: The Feast, Met Police, Positive East, Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies, FaithAction and Tower Hamlets Neighbourhood Watch. All had relevant service information on hand to give out to attendees and were able to promote the work that they do which is in-line with the aims and ethos of THIFF.

In addition to these Inter Faith Week events, THIFF also hosted, or played a key role, in the following events during the reporting period:

Infection Prevention & Control and Outbreak Measures Workshops: Faith Settings	23/09/2020
Holocaust Memorial Day 2021: Inter Faith Event Film	27/01/2021
Tower Hamlets Virtual Iftar: Adhan at Tower Bridge	08/05/2021
Marking the Pandemic – Tower Hamlets Remembers	17-24/10/2021
THIFF, LBTH and Mosque Leaders event	02/02/2022
Food, Fuel & Faith Event	26/05/2022



### 6.3. Collaboration and partnership working

The work undertaken by THIFF is greatly strengthened by other individuals, organisations, and partners with which it works, collaborates and engages with. This collaboration is mutually beneficial as THIFF aims to bring value and profile to those with whom it works.

Below is a list of many of the organisations with which THIFF has worked with, formally and informally, in the reporting period of this Annual Report.

- |                                 |                                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Arch 79                         | East London NHS Foundation Trust  |
| Ashaadibi Centre                | elop LGBT Consortium              |
| Back in Control Consultancy     | FaithAction                       |
| Barts Health NHS Trust          | Felix Project                     |
| Bernie Cameron Community Centre | Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery |
| Bethnal Green Foodbank          | Gardens of Peace                  |
| Bow Foodbank                    | Globe Community Project           |
| Breathing Space London          | Healthwatch Tower Hamlets         |
| Canary Wharf Chaplaincy         | Jewish Care                       |
| Canary Wharf Group PLC          | Lifeline Projects                 |
| Christ Apostolic Church         | Limehouse Project                 |
| Coventry University             | Mayflower School                  |
| Cycle Sisters                   | Metropolitan Community Church     |
| Debt Free London                | Metropolitan Police               |
| Disabled People's Network       | Morgan Stanley (calendar)         |
| Dorset Community Association    | Mowlem School                     |
| E1 Networking                   | Mulberry School                   |
| East London Business Alliance   | Near Neighbours                   |
| East London Mosque              | Neighbours in Poplar              |

Newark Youth  
No Place for Hate  
Office of National Statistics  
Older People's Reference Group  
Poplar Harca  
Positive East  
Praxis  
Quaker Social Action  
Queen Mary University  
RE Today  
Real Tower Hamlets  
SACRE  
Shared Lives  
Shoreditch Tabernacle  
St Hilda's Community Centre  
St Margaret's House  
St Pauls School  
St Peter's Bethnal Green  
Strengthening Faith Institutions  
The Feast

Thomas Buxton School  
Faith and Belief Forum  
Tower Hamlets CCG  
Tower Hamlets Community Safety  
Partnership  
London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
Tower Hamlets CVS  
Tower Hamlets Ethnic Minority Network  
Tower Hamlets GP Care Group  
Tower Hamlets Homes  
Tower Hamlets LGBT Community Forum  
Tower Hamlets New City College  
Tower Hamlets Talking Therapies  
Tower Hamlets Tension Monitoring Group  
Tower Hamlets Women's Group  
Tower Hamlets Youth Council  
Trapped in Zone One  
Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets  
Wapping Noorani Masjid  
Zacchaeus Project

#### 6.4. COVID-19 related work

The COVID-19 pandemic, beginning towards the end of March 2020, marked an extremely active period for the THIFF as the organisation stepped up, and was looked as, being a convener and leader for the faith sector in the borough. Throughout the pandemic, THIFF was represented by both the Steering Group and representatives of FaithAction and Coventry University. Revd Alan Green took a lead role and was extremely actively in promoting awareness of COVID-19, regulations and rules, and public health, safety and cohesion messaging in Tower Hamlets.

Examples of this involvement and representation include:

Pandemic Committee (now Health Protection Board)	Mayor's CVS Conferences
Member-Led Engagement Board	London Borough Faith Network
Community Mobilisation Silver and Bronze groups	Partnership Executive Group
TH Communications group	Local Outbreak Control Plan Programme Group
Borough Resilience Forum	Bart's NHS Inter Faith Co-ordination Group
Mayor's Faith Conferences	Mayor's CVS Conferences

From late March 2020 to the end of the year, 18 THIFF newsletters and updates were sent out to the mailing list as well as other faith bodies and groups in the borough. A coronavirus information webpage was created and maintained, and this contained government advice and links to local advice and support. In doing this, THIFF took on a central role in the faith, community, and voluntary sector in the borough as a trusted and reliable source of advice and guidance in times of uncertainty.

More direct work and outreach by THIFF over this period includes:

Working on burial and Ramadan guidance with council and public health

Collating info on funeral/death rituals for different faiths

Liaising with mosques and ELBA regarding rent freezes for faith properties.

Reached out to African churches that are not engaged to forum via interview on Premier Christian radio regarding funeral guidance

Sharing and collating advice and guidance around Ramadan

Collaborating with London Borough of Tower Hamlets on public statements of reassurance

Working with Bart's NHS Trust around volunteer chaplains

Contacting faith groups in the borough to find out and share the support that they were offering to communities

Working with TH Volunteers to signpost potential volunteers

Involvement in Community Iftar with council and TH Homes

Liaising with faith and statutory groups on re-opening of faith buildings

Holding an extra THIFF meeting: Places of Worship & Ending of Lockdown

A COVID-19 themed online event for Inter Faith Week – Testing Times

Collaborating with London Borough of Tower Hamlets on public statements around the re-opening of faith buildings

Working with London Borough of Tower Hamlets to share knowledge around faith buildings in the borough re-opening

Worked with Public Health on their Track and Trace programme

Fed into the borough Suicide Prevention Plan

Shared and disseminated the Mayoral statement on the re-opening of faith buildings

Press and media interviews regarding COVID-19, public health and faith building re-openings

Distributing information and material for infection control

Organising an online session for faith leaders – hosted by public health team called COVID 19: Preventing infection in faith settings.

Work around the subject of COVID-19 was less reactive in 2021 than it was for the Forum than it was in 2020 but was no less intense. At this stage of the pandemic, THIFF was involved in several formalised COVID-19 related projects and programmes and was central to public health responses in the borough. Thus, while the total number of interventions listed here appears smaller than those in 2020, the workload was not.

In January 2021, and at the start of another national lockdown, a joint letter from Revd Alan Green, Chair of THIFF; Mayor of Tower Hamlets John Biggs; Somen Banerjee, Director of Public Health and Statutory Deputy Mayor; and Cabinet Member for Faith Communities, Cllr Sirajul Islam was written and released. A further three joint statements were produced throughout the year, acknowledging the good work of faith groups, and urging caution when worshipping.

Devised in late 2020, but launched in March 2021, **the Faith COVID Assistance Partnership (FCAP) project** ran until September 2021. Funded by Tower Hamlets Public Health, FCAP was run by FaithAction, who partnered with East London Mosque and THIFF. The project aimed to communicate essential messaging on COVID-19 and to supply all faith settings with infection prevention items, such as face coverings, hand sanitiser and disposable prayer mats. The project also aimed to map faith settings previously unknown to THIFF.

The project complemented work already being done by THIFF, continuing the messaging around safe re-opening, risk different concerns to churches during and post pandemic; for example, mosques leaders have more concerns about finances and funding assessments and vaccinations.

One of the most significant achievements of the project was the fact that faith settings have not been a source of COVID-19 transmission. Another significant achievement was relationships built with local mosques, that have been hard to engage through other means. 42 mosques received items to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The project highlighted that faith settings are keen to be involved with health prevention offers, many were open to distributing lateral flow kits and surge testing PCR kits. When contacted by FCAP, nine churches, the gurdwara and eight mosques came forward to volunteer as distribution points for lateral flow testing kits.

The **Faith Health Action Partnership (FHAP)** is an ongoing project in its second phase, that builds upon the work done by the FCAP project. FaithAction and THIFF are working with East London Mosque on a health project that focuses on COVID-19 recovery in the borough. The project is again funded by Tower Hamlets Public Health.

FHAP started in early 2022 and aimed to assess the health needs of different faiths, as well as ascertain what support faith groups were already providing, linked to the LBTH Safe Communities Co-Vax Strategy priority areas. Phase two of the project is now underway; FHAP is working with faith settings and faith-based organisations to fund health focussed projects with various settings:

- Four mosques
- One church
- One Buddhist-based group
- Two community groups whose projects aim to mainly cater to Muslim residents



The project is due to end in March 2023 but, throughout the project, FHAP will continue to send messaging about public health related news and make faith settings aware of offers such as trauma informed counselling training. Case studies and insight will be gathered throughout the project, of which THIFF will share locally and will be amplified nationally by FaithAction, highlighting the borough as an example of good practice, with statutory and faith groups working together to recover from COVID-19 and to narrow health inequalities.

## 6.5. Other outcomes

### **Inter-Faith Calendar**

THIFF works to research and collect information of all faith and non-faith celebrations to produce an annual inter-faith calendar. 1,000 calendars were printed and distributed for each of the years in the double reporting period. In both of those years, the calendars were distributed to at least:

- 60 schools primary secondary and special needs schools
- 30 community organisations
- 4 businesses
- 40 faith institutions and organisations
- 5 Idea Store libraries
- 3 council buildings

The 2022 Faith Calendar is available online here:

<https://www.faihntowerhamlets.org/resources/#faith-calendar>

Please contact THIFF via email if you would like to be sent a physical copy.

THIFF is also active on the main social media platforms of Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. At the time of writing, THIFF has 1,439 followers on Twitter, and this is ever, and steadily, increasing. THIFF primarily use this platform to promote meetings and events of THIFF and other community partners/projects. It also uses Twitter for sharing news and consultations from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, as well as promoting funding opportunities, and funding available from other organisations.

The THIFF mailing list currently has 302 members and has recovered from a post-GDPR legislation related slump. At least two updates are sent each month with update on events and work of THIFF, as well as relevant community updates, including London Borough of Tower Hamlets messaging.

### **Consultations and Wider Working**

THIFF contributed to the Borough's Poverty Review 2021 consultation and was pleased to see a comment from our submission quoted in the final report (published September 2021, page 23) See:

<https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s191230/6.2a%20Appendix.%201%20for%20LB%20Tower%20Hamlets%20Poverty%20Review.pdf>

THIFF was an invited participant in the Borough's 'Tackling the Climate Emergency Carbon and Climate Task Force' events throughout 2021 and was an active participant in the emerging Net Zero Carbon Partnership Action Plan.

Finally, in 2021 THIFF joined a partnership project between Tower Hamlets Council for Voluntary Service (THCVS) and 7 service user led equalities groups and organisations to develop a funding application to the National Lotteries Cornerstone 2 Programme. This project aims to influence more inclusive decision across Public Sector agencies in Tower Hamlets. (This 2 year project secured funding Autumn 2022 )

## **7. Looking forward**

THIFF aims to continue to be a leading presence in the borough and a key partner for faith and non-faith agencies. Through its own work and association with the TH Equalities Hub, it will continue to develop partnerships and engage in consultations across the borough. The experiences of working collaboratively with partners, old and new, across the borough has developed and strengthened bonds and shared interests, and THIFF will work over the coming year to consolidate these.

Already planned is a forum meeting on welcoming Ukrainians and refugees to the borough and two other forum meetings will take place later in 2022 on thematic areas chosen by public consultation. Information about upcoming Forum meetings, including dates, times and venues can be found here:

<https://www.faihintowerhamlets.org/info/meetings/>

The forum will also hold a major event to mark Inter Faith Week in Tower Hamlets. This will be held in November 2022 and hopes to partner with London Borough of Tower Hamlets to deliver a funder fair for the faith sector in the borough in autumn 2022.



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