



EAST OF ENGLAND FAITHS COUNCIL

SURVEY OF NEEDS AND ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL INTER FAITH ORGANISATIONS IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND

Research by: Sierra Fleenor and Anne Littlefair
Additional material: Jenny Kartupelis
East of England Faiths Council
September 2011

I. FOREWORD

The East of England has an increasingly rich tapestry of faith communities. They have a significant role to play in a diverse society, where tensions can arise but where diversity can build into unity and cohesion.

Local Inter Faith Organisations play a vital part in enabling this positive process to happen.

This report reveals the valued role of the East of England Faiths Council in supporting such groups and so prompts thanks to those whose interest and funding enables it to do its work. This report is presented with gratitude to them and thanks to the hard-working staff who actually make the EEFC work!



Revd. Paul Hills
Regional Minister, Eastern Baptist Association
Chair of EEFC Board

II. TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Foreword from Board Member
- II. Table of Contents
- III. Introduction from Director of the EEFC
- IV. Greeting and acknowledgements from the researchers
- V. Findings
 - i. Methodology
 - ii. Demographics of respondents
 - iii. Local Inter Faith Organisations' activities
 - iv. Local Inter Faith Organisations' funding
 - v. Local Inter Faith Organisations' involvement with East of England Faiths Council
 - vi. A note regarding other questions asked and responses
- VI. Recommendations and commendations

Appendix A LIFO General Summary breakdown of questions and responses

III. INTRODUCTION

Local Inter Faith Organisations are the lifeblood of vital faith interaction across the country: they foster good understanding between people from all areas of life, culture and belief; contribute enormously to their locality by making input to plans and policy, providing information, and creating opportunities to learn; and provide individuals of faith with the rewards of sharing their time and knowledge with one another.

When it became clear that the East of England Faiths Council would need to scale back its work programme substantially, given the loss of significant funding from central government, we determined that an area of activity which should not suffer, would be that of supporting such local organisations wherever and whenever we could. The intention of this survey was to ensure that our resources would be applied where they were most wanted and effective. We believe that its findings will not only assist us in realising this intention, but will also be of wider interest, and are very pleased to present them here.



Jenny Kartupelis MBE,
Director, East of England Faiths Council



IV. GREETINGS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Welcome to this report on the needs and activities of Local Inter Faith Organisations in the East of England. We hope that you find this information useful and interesting. We greatly enjoyed learning about the joys and challenges of inter faith work from the leaders of Local Inter Faith Organisations. We are humbled and grateful for their willingness to share their stories and their time with us. We hope that this document will be useful as you evaluate your own involvement with inter faith work and the work of the East of England Faiths Council.

Whether you are a member of an Inter Faith Organisation looking for ideas on how to improve your own group, a Local Authority hoping to understand how these organisations work, or a person of faith seeking information about the benefits and challenges of inter faith work, we believe this report can be of use.

We would like to acknowledge the great debt of gratitude we owe to Lesley Turney, Jenny Kartupelis, and the Board of Directors of the East of England Faiths Council for their continual support for this and many other research projects. Above all, we would like to thank each and every participant who took the time to speak with us. We know that you are exceedingly busy and we appreciate your willingness to share your wisdom with us.



Anne Littlefair
Faith Development Officer
East of England Faiths Council



Sierra E. Fleenor
Master of Theological Studies Candidate
Harvard Divinity School

V. FINDINGS

A note on the figures and graphs

In these findings, percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number, and represent the ratio of respondents who mentioned that answer against the total number of respondents to the whole survey (instead of a ratio determined by number of respondents to a particular question). Many questions allowed respondents to select more than one option, so percentages of a given question may not equal 100%.

However, the graphs and pie charts show the proportionate allocation of answers between the number of people answering that particular question, not the overall number of respondents to the survey. All questions were optional.

All responses have been arranged thematically in descending order from the most often selected option to the least. For most questions, answers mentioned once are not included in this analysis. If you would like to see all findings (including answers mentioned once), please view the LIFO General Summary at Appendix A.

i. Methodology

Interviews were conducted with leaders of Local Inter Faith Organisations (LIFOs) between 11 July and 2 August 2011. Twelve interviews (63% of the total number of respondents) were conducted in person with researchers from the East of England Faiths Council. The remaining seven interviews (37% of the total number of respondents) were conducted over the phone. Two researchers, (one independent research assistant and one representative of the EEFC) carried out the research. The use of two researchers from different organisations might have had an unintended influence on the research, though there is no way to know at this point what the effect might have been. We have assumed for these purposes that it was not significant.

ii. Demographics of respondents

Nineteen out of twenty-three (83%) Local Inter Faith Organisations (LIFOs) in the East of England Faiths Council responded to this survey. Their interaction with the EEFC varies in regularity and character. While nineteen individuals may seem like a relatively small number, those reading this report must keep in mind that the respondents were leaders of Inter Faith Organisations and each represents between eight and twenty committee members, as well as a wider constituency of general membership. It should be clear that the opinions expressed throughout this survey are indicative of the situations and experiences of more people than just the respondents themselves.

Demographics concerning membership, representation, and environment were collected on the questionnaire. The answers to those questions are reported in this section.

When asked which faiths their membership represents, all (19) respondents mentioned Christian and Muslim membership (100% of respondents). Jewish membership was mentioned 15 times (79%). Hindu membership was mentioned 14 times (74%). Buddhist and Bahai'i membership each received 12 mentions (63% each). Sikh membership was mentioned 11 times (58%). Still significant, yet mentioned fewer than 10 times were: Quaker (six mentions or 32%), Pagan (three mentions; 15.8%), Jain (three mentions; 16%), Zoroastrian (two mentions; 10%) and Mormon (two mentions; 10%). Five other faiths were mentioned once each.

Respondents were asked if there were any faiths in their area, which were not members of their organisation. Nine respondents chose to answer the question. It is the

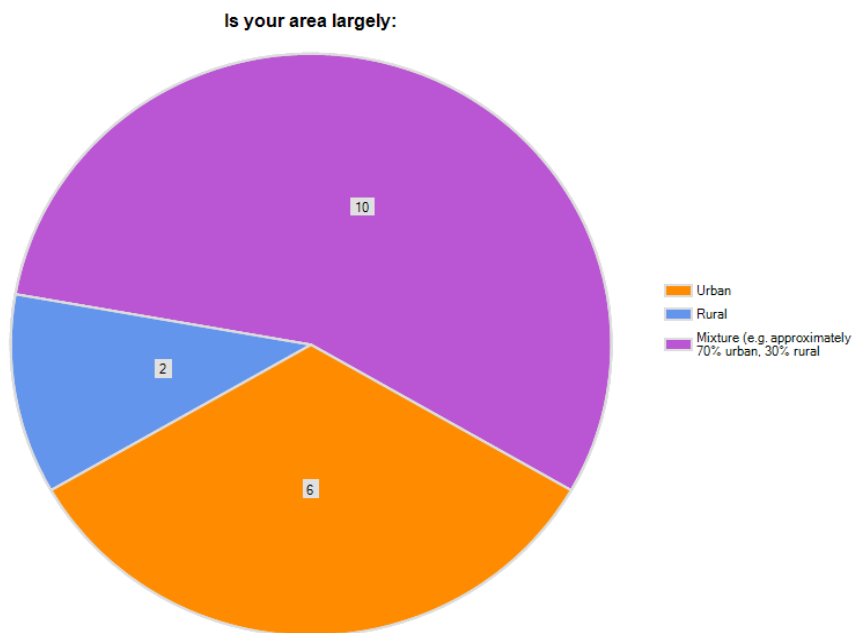
researchers' impression that the other ten respondents did not feel that there were any major faiths in their area not represented in their organisation. Four respondents (21%) mentioned the Sikh faith as not being represented. Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, and Jehovah's Witness faiths were each mentioned twice (10% each). Fifteen other faiths were mentioned only once.

When asked which faiths they believed would have the most followers in the area, seventeen of the nineteen respondents (89%) mentioned the Christian faith. The Muslim faith was mentioned 11 times (58%). The Jewish faith was mentioned four times (21%). The Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist faiths were each mentioned twice (10%).

All (19) respondents answered a question regarding which faith worship centres were in their area. It is important to remember that respondents could mention as many faith worship centres as they liked. While the numbers may indicate that there are more Muslim worship centres than any other group, it is important to note that not all respondents mentioned Christian churches specifically, despite the fact that we know all of these groups have Christian churches. Perhaps they chose not to mention Christian churches because they believed it to be an obvious fact.

Muslim centres of worship of various types were mentioned 17 times (89%). Specifically, mosques were mentioned 14 times. All other types were mentioned once. Hindu centres of worship of various types were mentioned 12 times (63%). Specifically, temples were mentioned four times and worship in homes was mentioned three times. Christian churches including many denominations were mentioned 11 times (58%). Jewish centres of worship were mentioned nine times (47%). Specifically, synagogues were mentioned eight times and worship in a rented building was mentioned once. Sikh centres of worship (using this general terminology) were mentioned six times (32%): Gudwaras specifically were mentioned five times, and worship at a community centre was mentioned once. Buddhist centres of worship were mentioned four times (21%). Buddhist Centres were mentioned three times and worship in another faith group's hall was mentioned once.

Asked if their area was urban, rural, or a mixture, eighteen respondents answered. A mixture of urban and rural received 10 mentions (53%). Urban was mentioned six times (32%). Rural was mentioned twice (10%).



From the demographics, we can ascertain that most LIFOs have membership that includes representatives from the Christian, Muslim, and Jewish faiths (79%). Over 57% have at least one member of the Hindu, Baha'i, Buddhist, or Sikh faiths. Fewer than half (47%) of respondents felt that there were faiths in their area not represented within the LIFO. Of those who did feel that this was the case, the Sikh faith was the most likely to be mentioned as not represented (44%). Muslim centres of worship were reported to exist in their area by nearly 90% of respondents. Hindu centres of worship were mentioned by over 60% of respondents. Fewer than half of respondents mentioned Jewish (47%), Sikh (32%), or Buddhist (21%) centres of worship. Christian churches were mentioned by over half the respondents, though empirical fact leads the researchers to believe that Christian churches are very active in all parts of the region. Almost 90% of respondents live in an urban or a mixture of urban and rural area.

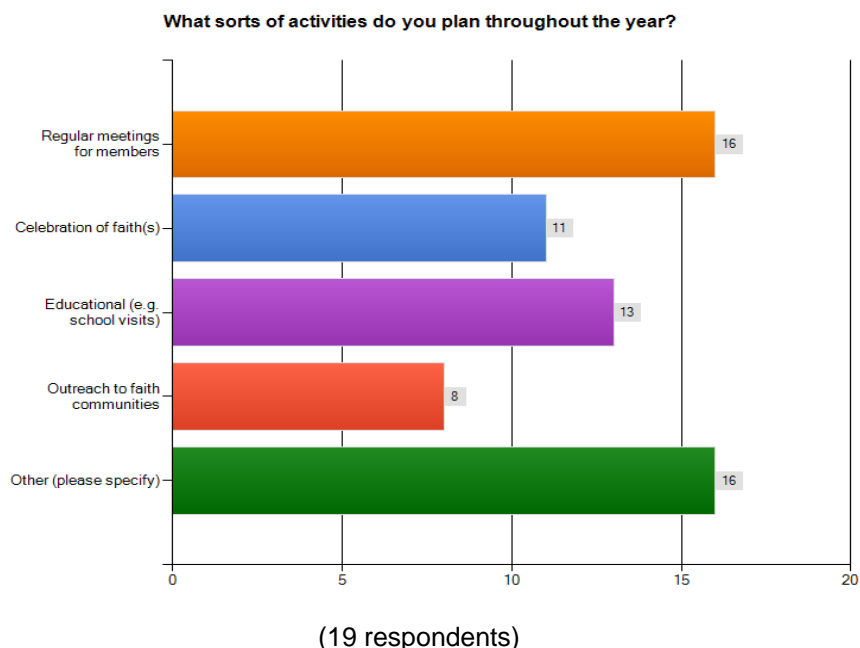
iii. Local Inter Faith Organisations' activities

LIFOs were asked about the sort of activities they plan throughout the year, how these are decided, which have been the best and the worst they have undertaken, whether these events are focused on Inter Faith Week, and what sort of help, if any, EEFC could provide for activities and events.

All respondents answered the question on the sorts of activities which they planned throughout the year, and regular meetings for members were mentioned 16 times (84%), educational activities (eg school visits) were mentioned 13 times (68%) and celebrations of faith(s) were mentioned 11 times (57.9%). Outreach to faith communities received eight mentions (42%), Inter Faith Week events received seven mentions (37%), community events/forums of faith received four mentions (21%) and work with the Local Authority received three mentions (16%). Two mentions were made of both house / discussion groups and conferences (10% each). A wide range of other events received one mention each, and can be found in Appendix A of this report (LIFO General Summary).

“Over 200 people attended our public meeting on faith and government”

“FaithFest reaches 600 kids and they meet people of different faiths”



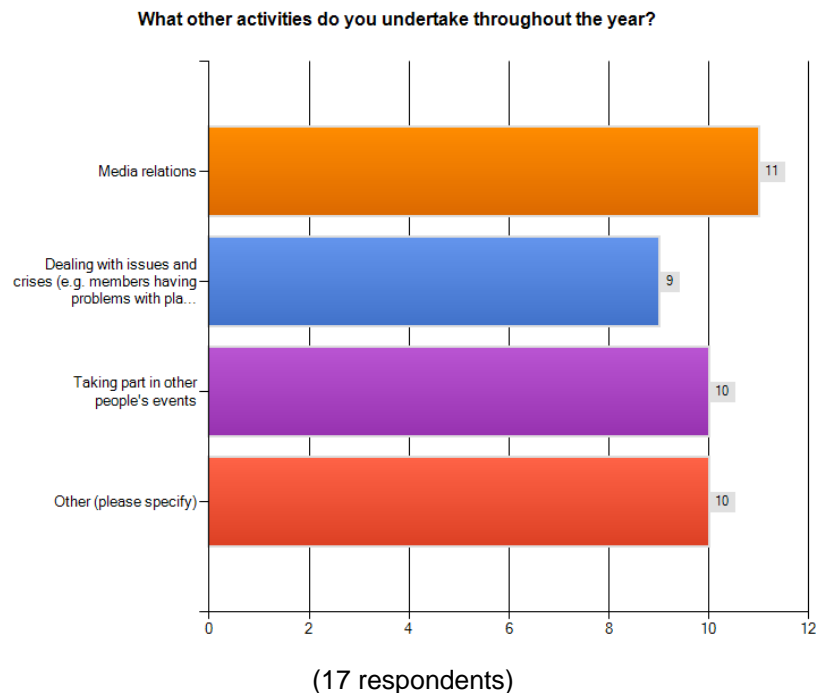
In addition to those planned activities, respondents were asked about other activities, which they undertook but which had not been planned into their programme.

“Members are interested in meetings about places of worship”

Seventeen respondents answered this question. Media relations were mentioned 11 times (58%), as was dealing with issues and crises (e.g. members have problem with planning commission; EDL demonstrations) (58%). Taking part in other people’s events got 10 mentions (53%), and response to instances of violence had four mentions (20%).

Specifically mentioned were:

- Helped local hospice make contacts visit to Coptic church during Christmas violence overseas
- Put on an IF event after Polish air disaster - which was much appreciated.
- Celebrations of faiths in response to 9/11
- Peace vigils



Asked how LIFOs decided which events and activities to offer, 14 of 16 respondents said this happened through a management committee (74%).

Successful events

There were 14 respondents to the question concerning which LIFO events had been the most successful, and there was a wide variety mentioned, but the main themes were conferences or topic-specific events with five mentions (26%); youth or children’s events with four mentions (21%), and three mentions each (16%) for walks between different places of worship, celebrations, and community fairs/faith festivals.

“Using art to approach and understand faith integration” (cited as a successful event)

Learning from events

There were eight respondents to the question on which of their events had been the least successful, and why this had been the case.

These were each unique and showed no overall

themes. These can be viewed in Appendix A of this report (LIFO General Summary).

“Putting on events that meet the Local Authority’s agenda rather than the inter faith agenda” (cited as unsuccessful)

Inter Faith Week events

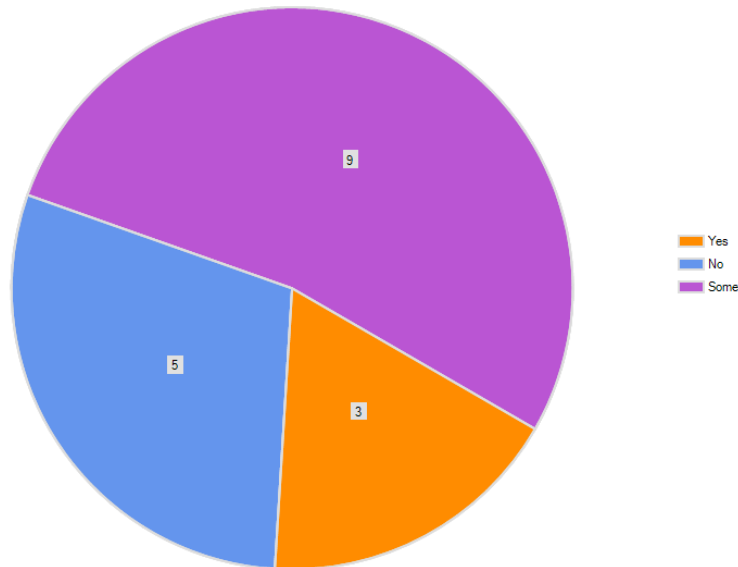
The question on whether a LIFO’s events focused on Inter Faith Week received 17

“During Inter Faith Week we worked successfully with a lot of faith schools”

respondents, with three mentions that this was the case (16%), nine mentions of this being so to some extent (47%), and five mentions that this was not the case (26%). The first Inter Faith Week was held in 2009, so it would appear that LIFOs have been

relatively quick to become involved in this initiative to raise the public profile of inter faith contributions towards community cohesion.

Do your events focus on Inter Faith Week?



(17 respondents)

Assistance from the East of England Faiths Council

All respondents answered the question regarding the sort of help, if any, which EEFC could provide for their activities and events. Mentoring was mentioned nine times (47%), help with accessing funding and help with finding speakers were both mentioned five times (26% each). There were three mentions each (16%) for helping choose which activities to plan, advertising and helping to get people interested, and ‘unsure’. Eight other suggestions were each mentioned once; these are listed in Appendix A.

“We need to know EEFC is there”

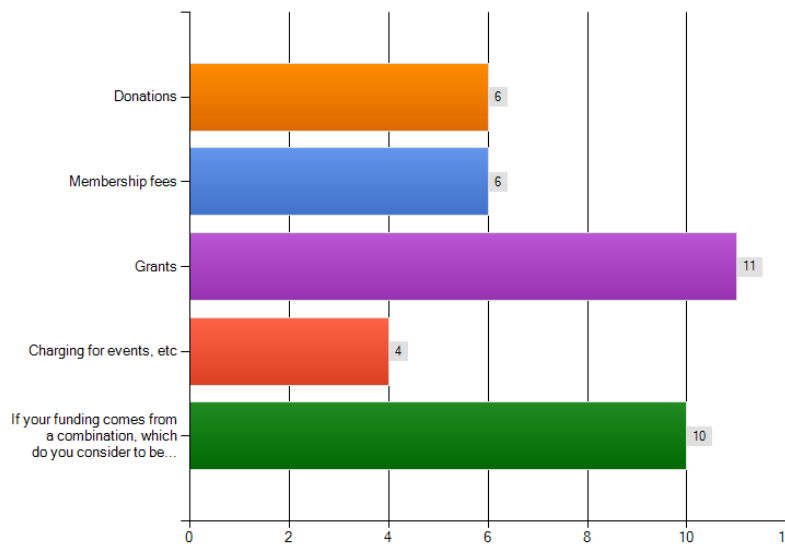
iv. Local Inter Faith Organisations' funding

LIFOs were asked to say more, if they were willing, about their funding and where this came from, to which respondents could give more than one answer. They were also asked whether they had concerns about their financial sustainability, and if so, what most concerned them and how were they trying to address those concerns.

"This is the first time that we have had no grant money"

On the question of whence LIFOs' funding comes, all 19 respondents answered, and grants were mentioned 11 times (58%). Where Local Authorities were concerned, grant funding from some had reduced. Donations and membership fees were both mentioned six times (32%). Charging for events was mentioned four times (21%). Where LIFOs received funding from a combination of sources, they were asked to identify the largest source, and there were two mentions each for grants from the Local Authority and for donations. Some had had a Faith in Action grant in the past, but these have now been discontinued.

If you are willing to share information regarding your finances, does your funding come from:



(19 respondents)

One respondent chose not to answer the question on their LIFO's financial sustainability, and the remaining 18 were divided equally between nine who were concerned and nine who were not (48% each). All nine who had expressed concerns about their financial sustainability, answered the question on their specific concerns, with five mentioning the lack of a long term funding plan (26%). All nine responded to the question on how they were addressing those concerns, stating that they had not had to make any changes yet, but were now looking to the future. There were two mentions each for reducing activities, introducing membership fees or charges for events, applying for funding, just beginning to have these conversations and 'unsure what to do'.

"We will have to withdraw a bit"

"We might have to cut back on events or find sponsors for them"

Respondents were not asked about their budgets, but several offered this information anyway. This varied from £2,000 a year for a very active LIFO covering a large area, to a more common £1,000 a year and even a few hundred pounds in several cases. The numbers were not specifically recorded, as they did not form part of the questionnaire. However, they do indicate clearly that LIFOs are not seeking large sums of money for their funding. Small sums of money provide LIFOs with the vital funding they need to carry out their range of activities, and to support the cross-community networking that they achieve. The reverse is also true, of course, in that the withdrawal or loss of quite small amounts of funding has a big impact upon LIFOs, and threatens their continuation.

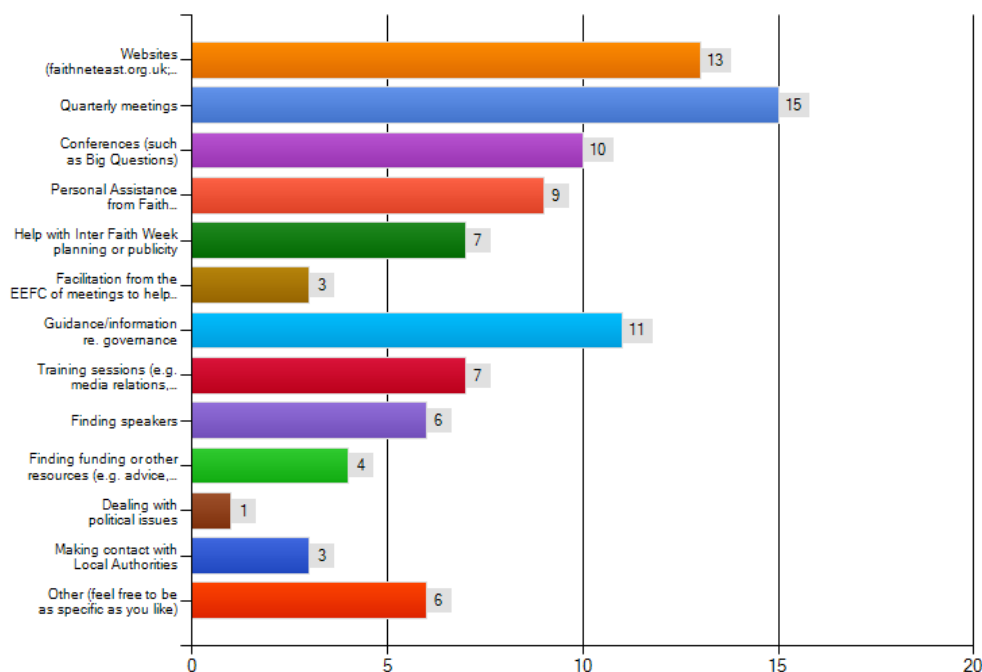
v. Local Inter Faith Organisations' involvement with the East of England Faiths Council

LIFOs were asked about their involvement with the EEFC, how they were involved, what they liked, and what they thought could be improved. Respondents were allowed to select more than one answer for most questions.

Current use of EEFC resources

Asked what resources provided by the EEFC they had utilized in the last year, of the 18 respondents, attendance at its quarterly meetings was mentioned 15 times (79%). Accessing the websites was mentioned 13 times (68%). Guidance and information regarding governance was mentioned 11 times (58%). Attending conferences was mentioned 10 times (53%). Receiving personal assistance from the Faith Development Officer was mentioned nine times (47%). Training sessions for managing a LIFO and help with Inter Faith Week planning or publicity were mentioned seven times each (37%). Assistance finding speakers was mentioned six times (32%). Finding funding or other resources, making contact with Local Authorities, facilitation from the EEFC of meetings to help with future planning and providing a speaker were all mentioned between two and five times.

In the last year, which of the following resources provided by the EEFC have you utilized (or attended):



(18 respondents)

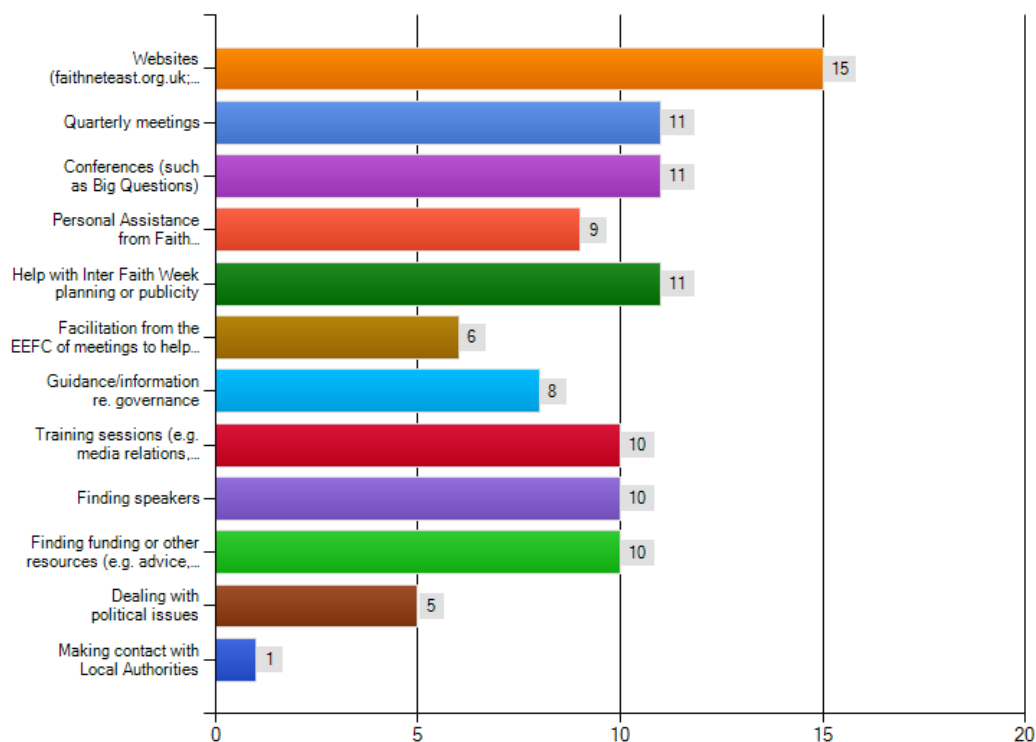
Future use of EEFC resources

"If the Faith Development Officer had more time available, we would be able to utilise it"

All respondents answered the question regarding which resources they would be likely to use in the future. Accessing the websites was mentioned 15 times (79%). Attending quarterly meetings, attending conferences,

help with Inter Faith Week planning or publicity, and finding funding or other resources were mentioned 11 times each (58%). Training sessions for managing a LIFO and finding speakers were mentioned 10 times each (53%). Personal assistance from Faith Development Officer was mentioned nine times (47%). Guidance and information regarding governance was mentioned eight times (42%). Facilitation from the EEFC of meetings to help with future planning was mentioned six times (32%). Dealing with political issues was mentioned five times (26%).

Of the same selection, which would you be likely to use in the future?



(19 respondents)

Accessing EEFC web sites

"We use the EEFC web sites for inspiration: to help us realize we are not alone"

Asked specifically about why they access the websites, finding out about events was mentioned nine times (47%). General information was mentioned five times (26%). Resources were mentioned three times (16%). Information on services, ideas and inspiration, and guidance were each mentioned twice (10%).

Attendance at EEFC quarterly meetings

“The quarterly meetings give us a sense of belonging, sharing and fellowship; they help empower us to make links between the national and the local”

Asked about the perceived value of attending quarterly meetings, networking was mentioned nine times (47%) as the most useful aspect. Guest speakers were mentioned six times (32%). Getting ideas from others and a sense of belonging or encouragement were each mentioned twice (10%).

On the converse side, a more convenient location was mentioned three times (16%) as most needing improvement. Better timing, more flexibility within the meeting, more time for discussion to develop, more networking, and better hospitality were mentioned twice each (10%). Notably, two respondents said that no improvements were needed (10%).

“[The EEFC meetings] need more networking time”

“[The EEFC meetings] should be somewhere available by public transport”

“[There should be] more focused, lengthy talks”

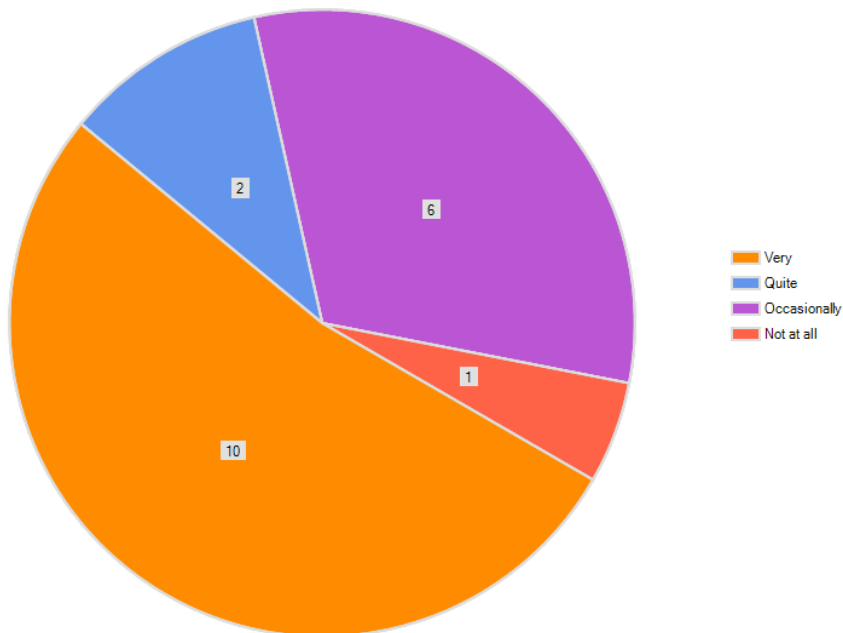
Attendance at other EEFC events

Concerning conferences, networking with other interfaith councils was mentioned six times (32%) as the most valuable aspect. Networking with Local Authorities was mentioned four times (21%). Learning practical skills for work with faith communities and the topics of the conference were mentioned twice each (10%).

Perceived value of EEFC

Asked how useful the EEFC is to their group, of all 19 respondents, 53% (10 mentions) selected ‘very’. Two respondents (10%) selected ‘quite’. ‘Occasionally’ was selected by six respondents (32%). ‘Not at all’ was selected only once.

How useful is the EEFC for your group?



(19 respondents)

All respondents answered this question and when asked what they would most miss if the EEFC no longer existed, networking and fellowship with other inter faith councils and mentoring, support, and guidance were each mentioned seven times (37%). 'Just knowing it is there' was mentioned five times (26%). Information and regional affiliation were also each mentioned five times (26%). Wider structures and framework were mentioned three times. Access to a range of support services and literature and reports were each mentioned twice (10%). Also of note, 'nothing' was mentioned twice (10%).

"We'd miss [EEFC] being there as a huge resource"

Asked what the EEFC could do that would be more useful to their group 'nothing further' was mentioned five times (26%). Help finding speakers was mentioned four times (21%). Information on the challenges of interfaith work and help dealing with funding were each mentioned three times (16%). More local interaction between LIFOs, IT help, and general advice were each mentioned twice (10%).

"We need skills for fundraising, [and wish] EEFC could provide these. It is too hard for a local group to do it all on its own"

Based on the survey, we can say that those respondents who utilised any resources from the EEFC were likely to use more than one (16 respondents or 89%). Most respondents attend quarterly meetings (79%) and/or access the websites (68%). Respondents who either accessed the websites or received personal assistance from the Faith Development Officer also utilised at least three other resources from EEFC.

Summary

Websites were most often accessed to find out information about events (47%).

A little fewer than half the respondents selected networking as the most useful aspect of **quarterly meetings** (47%). Specific improvements to the quarterly meetings were mentioned by 68% of respondents, though those improvements did not concentrate heavily around a single issue.

Networking of some kind was mentioned as the most valuable aspect of **conferences** by 52% of respondents. Over half of the respondents reported that they would be likely to use the following in the future: accessing the websites (79%), attending quarterly meetings (58%), attending conferences (58%), help with Inter Faith Week planning or publicity (58%), finding funding or other resources (58%), training sessions for managing a LIFO (53%) and finding speakers (53%). The response to this question indicates that respondents feel they will likely continue or increase their involvement with the EEFC in the future.

Over half of respondents felt that the EEFC was very useful to their organization. Only one organization felt it was not useful at all. To be more useful to LIFOs, respondents felt that the EEFC could provide assistance of various kinds (47%), as well as advice and information (26%). Of note, over a quarter of respondents felt that EEFC did not need to do anything differently. Respondents cited various aspects of involvement they would miss if the EEFC no longer existed; many surrounded the concept of support (mentoring, support, and guidance; information; wider structures and framework; access to a range of support services) and a feeling of inclusion (networking and fellowship with other inter faith councils; just knowing it is there; regional affiliation). Two respondents stated that they would not miss anything if the EEFC no longer existed, one cited a question of the efficacy of the EEFC in the wake of de-regionalisation.

From the data, we can say that the EEFC's presence and active support are highly valued by Local Inter Faith Organisations.

vi. A note regarding other questions asked and responses

As part of the questionnaire guiding the interviews conducted in this survey, questions were asked regarding specific topics, including: new faith groups, security concerns, premises concerns, and interfaith services.

The six questions regarding **new faith groups** did not provide conclusive data given that an average only five respondents answered each question with any relative data. However, the lack of information should not imply a lack of interest, but instead a need to seek out information on faith groups new to East of England in a different format.

"We are aware that new groups are constantly developing, but we don't know where they are"

The questions relating to **security** asked whether any LIFO members (faith groups or individuals) had experienced **hate crimes** in the last year, and 15 respondents made seven mentions (37% each) of each Jewish and Muslim incidents and concerns, and five said that there had been none. To the question of whether these had been reported to the police, there were five mentions, with two mentions in the affirmative and three of being unsure. In response to the further question of whether there was confidence that the police would deal with the matter, there were four responses, all positive.

"We worked together with the Local Authority on the EDL demo"

It is important that hate crimes are reported to the police, as they may be under-reported at present and consequently not given the priority they merit.

The question on provision of **community services in an inter faith context** received only three responses. None reported any ongoing partnerships, such as Service Level Agreements with the local authority, but one mention was made of a joint Jewish, Hindu and Christian 'clean up day'.

"There are no established partnerships, but working together sometimes pops up"

Finally, although the question was not asked, spontaneous discussion indicated that members of specific faith groups or denominations who engage in inter faith work can feel quite isolated from other adherents of their faith who are doing the same work in different localities.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENDATIONS

Several recommendations and commendations arose through analysis of the survey. Recommendations relate to needs of Local Inter Faith Organisations that became clear and ways in which the East of England Faiths Council can improve its support activities. Commendations are those aspects of the East of England Faiths Council that were mentioned or highlighted through the responses and merit special mention.

Recommendations

1. If Local Inter Faith Organisations are to sustain or increase their range of activities and their involvement in civic life, they will need:

- Access and/or guidance to find relatively small pools of funding

Small amounts of money are crucial to effective activity and survival

- Facilitation of access to regular information relevant to their work

The Inter Faith Network UK, EEFC and web sites are critical to this

- Personalised mentoring

LIFOs have a wide range of needs and are at different stages of development, so support to them needs to be tailored

2. For the above to happen, efficient interaction and communication with the EEFC will be instrumental, including:

- Consistent and regular updates on new information, guidance and forthcoming events, using the widest range of media
- Proactive and reactive contact from the Faith Development Officer and (when appropriate) the Director and Board

3. Networking with other inter faith groups and other sectors was frequently cited as valuable, and opportunities for networking must be increased. Specifically:

- EEFC quarterly meetings need more time for 'meet your neighbour' and/or discussion sessions; also for newcomers to be introduced to some 'regulars'
- EEFC quarterly meetings should retain Cambridge as a venue, as this is central and provides a consistent base, but EEFC must seek ways of making it more accessible e.g. public transport information, car sharing
- Conferences provide a highly valued opportunity for networking in a broader sense; EEFC's capacity to organize and fund these is much diminished and it must seek partnerships to be able to continue this provision
- Networking opportunities such as conferences and seminars should continue to be taken to the different counties of the region. In some cases, they could be specific to a county, helping the LIFOs in that county to link together

4. Assistance in finding speakers must be formalised. The EEFC should update and publicise its speakers list and provide guidance on how to select a speaker.

5. There was an expressed need for IT support. The EEFC is unique in being able to offer free IT help tailored to faith groups through its partner iTrust, and the Faiths IT Helpdesk must be re-publicised. This unique resource can help Local Inter Faith Organisations immensely as they navigate the technological world.

6. There was also an expressed need for help in finding grants, fundraising, applications etc. EEFC does not have the capacity to undertake this work, but could seek information and sources of assistance that LIFOs could use.

“We need help finding grants and making applications”

“[Help find] access to small amounts of funding”

7. There may be scope for national faith groups, working through and with EEFC, to link their members who are engaged in inter faith work in the region.

Commendations

The persistent work of the East of England Faiths Council must be recognised and celebrated. The EEFC is highly valued by the majority of its constituents and a critical force in the continuation of many. The hard work and commitment of all the Board Members and the past and current team members (including Lesley Turney, Kate Phizacklea, Sarah Geary, Gwen Andrews, and consultant Priscilla Barlow) should be recognized in this context.

The Faith Development Officer was mentioned as highly useful to many organisations and those that interacted with the Faith Development Officer were more likely to be involved in other aspects of the EEFC. This is a tribute to the recent post holder (Stephen Harmer) and the current post holder (Anne Littlefair).

Jenny Kartupelis was mentioned several times as a mentor, speaker, and friend. Her work is valued in the region.

Appendix A

LIFO Questionnaire – Summer 2011 General Summary 11 August 2011

*Submitted by
Sierra E. Fleenor
Research Assistant
East of England Faiths Council*

A total of 19 Local Inter Faith Organisations (LIFOs) responded to the survey. This represents 82.6% (19 of 23) of the total number of interfaith organisations with which the East of England Faiths Council works in the region. 63.2% (12 respondents) participated via in person interviews with researchers from the East of England Faiths Council and 36.8% (7 respondents) replied over the phone.

For this general summary, percentages will represent the ratio of respondents who mentioned an answer against the total number of respondents to the survey (instead of a ratio determined by number of respondents per question). This allows for easier extraction of information. For most questions, all answers mentioned once will be placed under the 'Other' category. Many questions allowed respondents to select more than one option. Please keep this in mind while reviewing the results.

Section 1: Demographics

Q1 Which faiths do your members represent? (eg Sikh, Muslim, etc)

All (19) respondents answered this question.

Christian *19 mentions-100%*

 Roman Catholic (specifically noted) 3 mentions

 Church of England (specifically noted) 1 mention

Muslim *19 mentions-100%*

Jewish *15 mentions-78.9%*

Hindu *14 mentions-73.9%*

Buddhist *12 mentions-63.2%*

Bahai'i *12 mentions-63.2%*

Sikh *11 mentions-57.9%*

Quaker *6 mentions-31.6%*

Pagan *3 mentions-15.8%*

Jain *3 mentions-15.8%*

Zoroastrian *2 mentions-10.5%*

Mormon *2 mentions-10.5%*

Other *5 mentions*

 Unificationist

 Spiritualist

 Rastafarian

 Humanists

 Christian Scientist

Q2 Are there any faiths in your area which are not members of your organisation?
9 respondents answered this question. The other 10 respondents did not feel that there were any major faiths in their area, which were not members of their organisation.

Sikh *4 mentions-21.1%*
Jewish *2 mentions-10.5%*
Hindu *2 mentions-10.5%*
Buddhist *2 mentions-10.5%*
Jain *2 mentions-10.5%*
Jehovah's Witness *2 mentions-10.5%*

Other *15 mentions*
Muslim
Bahai'i
Hasidic Jews
Other Christians (Meth/Bap)
Sufis
Evangelical Christians
Black Christians
Christian Scientist
Spiritual Churches
Many indigenous Chinese (community very self-contained)-*2 mentions*
Mormons
Brahma Kumaris

Q3 Which faiths would you say have the most followers in your area?

All (19) respondents answered this question.

Christian *17 mentions-89.5%*
 Roman Catholic (specifically noted) *2 mentions*
 Church of England (specifically noted) *2 mention*
Muslim *11 mentions-57.9%*
Jewish *4 mentions-21.1%*
Hindu *2 mentions-10.5%*
Sikh *2 mentions-10.5%*
Buddhist *2 mentions-10.5%*

Q4 What faith worship centres are there in your area? (eg Hindus meeting in a private house, Sikhs meeting in a hall rented from the local Council)

All (19) respondents answered this question. Respondents could mention as many faith worship centres as they liked. While the numbers may indicate that there are more Muslim worship centres than any other group, it is important to note that not all respondents mentioned Christian churches specifically, despite the fact that we know all of these groups have Christian churches. Perhaps they chose not to mention Christian churches because they believed it was obvious.

Muslim Centres *17 mentions-89.5%*
 Mosque or mosques *14 mentions*
 Meet in church hall/hospital *1 mention*
 Meet in hall hired from the council *1 mention*
 Islamic center at University *1 mention*
Hindu Centres *12 mentions-63.2%*
 Temple *4 mentions*
 At home *3 mentions*
 Pilgrimage site *1 mention*
 Valmiki Temple *1 mention*

Mandir *1 mention*
 At hired halls *1 mention*
 Bharat Bavan *1 mention*
 Christian Centres *11 mentions-57.9%*
 Various denominations' churches *9 mention*
 Roman Catholic church *1 mention*
 Free Black-led churches *1 mention*
 Jewish Centres *9 mentions-47.36%*
 Synagogue *8 mentions*
 Reform Jewish group in rented building *1 mention*
 Sikh Centres *6 mentions-31.6%*
 Gudwaras *5 mentions*
 At community center *1 mention*
 Buddhist Centres *4 mentions-21.1%*
 Centre *3 mentions*
 At another faith groups hall *1 mention*
 Other *4 mentions*
 None. Muslims worship in other locations
 Jews & Quakers share premises.
 Budwa
 Jain Temple
 Bahai'i in home

Q5 Is your area largely urban, or rural, or a mixture? (eg approx. 70% urban, 30% rural)

18 respondents answered this question.

Mixture of urban and rural *10 mentions-52.6%*
 Urban *6 mentions-31.6%*
 Rural *2 mentions-10.5%*

Section 2: Involvement with the EEFC

Q6 In the last year, which of the following resources provided by the EEFC have you utilized or attended:

18 respondents answered this question. Respondents could select as many answers as they liked.

Quarterly meetings *15 mentions-78.9%*
 Websites *13 mentions-68.4%*
 Guidance/information re. governance *11 mentions-57.9%*
 Conferences (such as the Big Questions, held in Chelmsford) *10 mentions-52.6%*
 Personal Assistance from Faith Development Officer *9 mentions-47.4%*
 Training sessions (e.g. media relations, volunteer management etc.) *7 mentions-36.8%*
 Help with Inter Faith Week planning or publicity *7 mentions-36.8%*
 Finding speakers *6 mentions-31.6%*
 Finding funding or other resources (e.g. advice, partnership with other groups) *4 mentions-21.1%*
 Making contact with Local Authorities *4 mentions-21.1%*
 Facilitation from the EEFC of meetings to help with future planning *3 mentions-15.8%*
 Provided Speaker (Jenny Kartupelis) *2 mentions-10.5%*

Other *5 mentions*

- Dealing with political issues
- Contact with i-Trust
- Contact with Government Minister
- Day meeting with Harriet Crabtree
- Workshops

Q7 Of the same selection which would you be likely to use in the future?

19 respondents answered this question. Respondents could select as many answers as they liked.

Websites *15 mentions-78.9%*

Quarterly meetings *11 mentions-57.9%*

Conferences (such as the Big Questions, held in Chelmsford) *11 mentions-57.9%*

Help with Inter Faith Week planning or publicity *11 mentions-57.9%*

Finding funding or other resources (e.g. advice, partnership with other groups) *11 mentions-57.9%*

Training sessions (e.g. media relations, volunteer management etc.) *10 mentions-52.6%*

Finding speakers *10 mentions-52.6%*

Personal Assistance from Faith Development Officer *9 mentions-47.4%*

Guidance/information re. governance *8 mentions-42.1%*

Facilitation from the EEFC of meetings to help with future planning *6 mentions-31.6%*

Dealing with political issues *5 mentions-26.3%*

Other *7 mentions*

- Making contact with Local Authorities
- As many resources as are offered.
- Display materials for eg local library
- Protection and direction in regards to legal issues
- Information on how other IFCs are operating
- Providing speaker (Jenny Kartupelis) on publicity
- Finding out about EEFC meetings

Q8 If you use the websites, for what purpose do you primarily access them (please specify which website in your comments)?

14 respondents answered this question.

Finding out about events *9 mentions-47.4%*

General information *5 mentions-26.3%*

Resources *3 mentions-15.8%*

Information on services *2 mentions-10.5%*

Ideas/inspiration *2 mentions-10.5%*

Guidance *2 mentions-10.5%*

Other *6 mentions*

- Publicising our own events.
- News
- Funding
- Faiths calendar
- 'To realize we're not alone.'
- Dates

Q9 If you attend the quarterly meetings, what would you say is most useful from these meetings?

15 respondents answered this question.

Networking *9 mentions-47.4%*

'especially the Anglican bishops' *1 mention*

Guest speakers *6 mentions-31.6%*

Getting ideas from others *2 mentions-10.5%*

Sense of belonging/encouragement *2 mentions-10.5%*

Other *6 mentions*

The principle items (those that are longest) are most valuable

Meetings that are a specific (ie Muslim) view on interfaith

Conversation on things that exist outside faiths (ie digital television switch over)

Being kept up to date

Support on issues/challenges

General content

Q10 How could the quarterly meetings be improved?

15 respondents answered this question.

More convenient location *3 mentions-15.8%*

Better timing *2 mentions-10.5%*

More flexibility within meeting *2 mentions-10.5%*

More time for discussion to develop *2 mentions-10.5%*

Networking *2 mentions-10.5%*

Meet Your Neighbour section - extend, to enable more networking, and perhaps facilitate somewhat?

Hospitality *2 mentions-10.5%*

Lack of courtesy from some other members (eg Church of England)

Dog collars can be a barrier--could ministers dress in 'lay' clothing?

Identify first timers and ensure they are included, looked after, introduced,

etc

No improvements needed *2 mentions-10.5%*

Other *4 mentions*

More focused on a few large things

More information on the specifically interfaith

Bigger representation of faith communities

Something special on another part of region

Q11 If you have attended the conferences, what would you say you valued most?

12 respondents answered this question, presumably others did not respond because they had not attended the conferences. Most respondents chose one answer. One respondent chose four.

Networking with other IFCs *6 mentions-31.6%*

Networking with LAs *4 mentions-21.1%*

Learning practical skills for work with Faith Communities *2 mention -10.5%*

Topics *2 mentions -10.5%*

Learning about LAs (civic literacy) *1 mention*

Q12 How useful is the EEFC for your group?

19 respondents answered this question.

Very *10 mentions-52.6%*

Quite *2 mentions-10.5%*

Occasionally *6 mentions-31.6%*
Not at all *1 mention*

Q13 What would your group most miss if the EEFC did not exist?

19 respondents answered this question.

Networking and Fellowship with other IFCs *7 mentions-36.8%*

Mentoring, Support, Guidance *7 mentions-36.8%*

Just knowing it is there *5 mentions-26.3%*

Information *5 mentions-26.3%*

Regional affiliation *5 mentions-26.3%*

'the connection to the bigger picture'

Wider structures/framework *3 mentions-15.8%*

Access to a range of support services *2 mentions-10.5%*

Literature and reports *2 mentions-10.5%*

Nothing *2 mentions-10.5%*

'When regionalization was happening, the EEFC was relevant. Now not so useful'

Other 6 mentions

Unsure

Opportunity to explore possible activities

Possible help with fund raising

You always need someone leading the initiative-EEFC plays this role

Faith development officer

Breakfast meetings with Jenny

Q14 What could the EEFC do that would be more useful to your group? What, if anything, is missing entirely?

18 respondents answered this question.

Nothing 5 mentions-26.3%

Finding speakers *4 mentions-21.1%*

For Inter Faith Week specifically

Information on the challenges of interfaith work *3 mentions-15.8%*

'Information on the impacts of immigrant populations from Eastern Europe, and issues arising from them.'

Issues with funding *3 mentions-15.8%*

Access to small amounts of funding.

Skills for fundraising (how to apply, etc)

Funding opportunities

More local grouping of LIFOs to share skills, experience, and resources *2 mentions-10.5%*

IT help *2 mentions-10.5%*

Advice *2 mentions-10.5%*

Advice from a specific person

Be available to answer questions as they arise

Other *7 mentions*

Location of Quarterly Meeting: "I wonder if holding the QM in Cambridge is always right to do."

EEFC could act as a consortium (a la Big Society) of professional skills

Key contacts for how to interact with LA on the website

Newsletter or short update (something more simplified) with highlights, even monthly

If EEFC had more resources, we would utilize more

Ideas for activities

Help getting people committed at the committee level

Section 3: New faith groups

Q15 Are you aware of any new faith groups that have started in your area in the last two years?

16 respondents answered this question.

No *12 mentions-63.2%*

Free (Black/Protestant) churches *2 mentions-10.5%*

Kurdish Muslims *1 mention*

Buddhist centre starts new sitting groups around the county *1 mention*

Sikh community now much more evident, some permanent Gurdwara *1 mention*

Liberal Jewish community has grown significantly *1 mention*

Q16 Are you aware of any faith communities from elsewhere that worship in your area (e.g. Communities bordering London)?

17 respondents answered this question. Some mentioned more than one community.

No *9 mentions-47.4%*

Muslims *2 mentions-10.5%*

Hindus *2 mentions-10.5%*

Unsure *2 mentions-10.5%*

Sikhs *1 mention*

Seventh Day Adventist *1 mention*

Mormon *1 mention*

Jewish sect *1 mention*

Coptic Church *1 mention*

Q17 If you answered 'yes' to either Q13 or Q14, how have you become aware of them?

4 respondents answered this question. Given how few respondents answered this question, percentages are not applicable. The four answers were:

- Network of contacts
- They seek the IFC out for help
- Were looking for premises and needed help
- Clergy asking about them

Q18 How do you feel these new faith communities interact with older, established faith communities in your area?

5 respondents answered this question. Given how few respondents answered this question, percentages are not applicable.

- Keep separate (hold own services, maintain own premises apart from those of same faith) *2 mentions*
- Do well through the IFC, not much otherwise
- Culture shock
- Largely peaceful
- Not with a great deal of interest or urgency

Q19 Are you aware of any particular concerns these groups have? Please specify.

4 respondents answered this question. Given how few respondents answered this question, percentages are not applicable.

- No *3 mentions*
- Premises *1 mention*
- Security *1 mention*

Q20 Can you please provide us with contact information for these groups?

2 respondents answered this question. Both asked that the EEFC contact the IFC for more information. One indicated it might be useful to create a survey for distribution to faith communities.

Section 4: Your activities

Q21 What sorts of activities do you plan throughout the year?

19 respondents answered this question.

Regular meetings for members *16 mentions-84.2%*

Celebrations of faith(s) *11 mentions-57.9%*

Educational (e.g. school visits) *13 mentions-68.4%*

Outreach to faith communities *8 mentions-42.1%*

Inter Faith Week events *7 mentions-36.8%*

Community event/forums of faith *4 mentions-21.1%*

Work with LA *3 mentions-15.8%*

'a seat on the emergency planning committee'

House/discussion group *2 mentions-10.5%*

Conferences *2 mentions-10.5%*

Other *14 mentions*

Research

Social events

Women's interfaith group meeting

Prayer walk

Cricket games across faith background

Annual peace walk

Music concerts (band of J,M,Ch)

Involvement with town fairtrade movement

Muslims use the Church of England hall for night prayers during Ramadan

UN Peace One day in Sept and Peace Camp in June

Considering event for Diamond Jubilee

Want to do school visits soon

Interfaith lecturer

Faith specific lecturer

One particularly active IFC mentioned:

- Library and info service
- Membership of board (eg hospitals, prisons, police)
- Chaplaincy
- Hospices
- Consultations
- IF choir
- Holocaust Memorial Day
- Relationship with Holland joint events
- Gypsy and traveler specific events
- BME specific events

Q22 What other activities do you undertake throughout the year?

17 respondents answered this question.

Media Relations *11 mentions-57.9%*

Dealing with issues and crises (e.g. members have problem with planning commission; EDL demonstration) *11 mentions-57.9%*

Taking part in other people's events *10 mentions-52.6%*

Response to instances of violence *4 mentions-21.1%*

helped local hospice make contacts visit to coptic church during Christmas violence
Put on an IF event after Polish air disaster - which was much appreciated.
Celebrations of faiths in response to 9/11
peace vigils

Other *6 mentions*

Special interest groups
Celebration of cultures (dance, food, sacred space, etc)
All aspects of being embedded in community
'Come round mine' tea parties to encourage individual friendships
Inter Faith Week
Helped Muslims with planning a fundraising event for their mosque

Q23 How do you decide which events and activities to offer?

16 respondents answered this question

Through a management committee *14 mentions-73.7%*

Other *2 mentions*

Whole group meets (a dozen or so)
Decide year's programme annually

Q24 Which of your events has been most/least successful? Why?

16 respondents answered this question.

Most successful 14 respondents answered this portion of the question.

Conferences or topic specific events *5 mentions-26.3%*

Topic of unemployment
Topic of Faith and the Government

Events for youth or children *4 mentions-21.1%*

Annual U.N. Children's Day
Inter Faith Week event with Faiths Schools

Walks between different places of worship *3 mentions-15.8%*

Community Fairs/Faith Festivals *3 mentions-15.8%*

Celebrations *3 mentions-15.8%*

Other *5 mentions*

Memorial lecture
Using art to approach and understand faith integration
Launch event
One world evening
Women's event

Least successful 8 respondents answered this portion of the question. Since each answer was unique, there are no viable percentages. Respondents answered:

- IFW planning was a nightmare; it all fell on the chair since no one actually wanted to follow through
- Partnership event, possibly because we had no leaflets to give out.
- House groups, was problematic when one group wanted to take over
- Attempt at organizing a big lunch, didn't work
- Day conference. It wasn't that it was poorly attended, but that it took so much time and energy to produce.
- Speaking event, where speaker not well known and publicity was organized late
- Specific Faith Community Visit, not well attended

Other responses 3 respondents answered in a way that could not easily be categorized with those answers above.

- ❑ People come if there is something special, eg a really good speaker, with a high profile. Takes a lot of effort and publicity to get people to come
- ❑ Anything that grows slowly, evolves, flows is successful. Least successful events are those put on for Council or to meet their agenda rather than the IF agenda
- ❑ We don't know how to get all faiths involved

Q25 Do your events focus on Inter Faith Week?

17 respondents answered this question.

Yes *3 mentions-15.8%*
 No *5 mentions-26.3%*
 Some *9 mentions-47.4%*

Q26 What sort of help, if any, could EEFC provide for your activities and events?

19 respondents answered this question.

Mentoring *9 mentions-47.4%*

'we need more advice on governance structures'

Funding (grants, application process, fundraising) *5 mentions-26.3%*

Speakers *5 mentions-26.3%*

Choosing which activities to plan *3 mentions-15.8%*

Advertising/Getting people interested *3 mentions-15.8%*

Unsure *3 mentions-15.8%*

Other *8 mentions*

Finding purpose of events

Contact with i-Trust

None

Seeing what others have done

EEFC presence at local events

Links with wider scene

Publicity

Website support

Section 5: Funding

Q27 If you are willing to share information regarding your finances, does your funding come from:

19 respondents answered this question.

Grants *11 mentions-57.9%*
 Donations *6 mentions-31.6%*
 Membership fees *6 mentions-31.6%*
 Charging for events (etc) *4 mentions-21.1%*

If your funding comes from a combination, which do you consider to be the largest source?

Grants from council *2 mentions*

Donations *2 mentions*

Voluntary time *1 mention*

In kind from the Cathedral and local authority *1 mention*

Q28 Do you have concerns about your financial sustainability?

18 respondents answered this question.

No *9 mentions-47.7%*
 Yes *9 mentions-47.7%*

Q29 If so, what are you concerned about?

9 respondents answered this question.

No long term funding plan *5 mentions-26.3%*

Increasing membership *1 mention*

Change in need *1 mention*

Grant money drying up *1 mention*

Not concerned *1 mention*

Q30 How are you trying to address these concerns?

9 respondents answered this question. All respondents stated that they have not had to make any changes yet, but were now looking to the future. To address financial concerns in the future, they were considering:

Reducing activities *2 mentions*

Starting to charge for membership or activities *2 mentions*

Applying for funding *2 mentions*

'Will set up constitution, financial entity status, and register as a charitable company'

'We will have to gain skills in order to secure grants; too hard for LIFO to do it all'

We are just starting to have these conversations *2 mentions*

Unsure *2 mentions*

Section 6: Security

Q31 Have any member groups (or individuals of a faith community) experienced hate crimes in the last year? If so, which faith group?

15 respondents answered this question. While many respondents felt that there were some instances of security issues among Jewish and Muslim populations, few were able to cite specific instances and seemed to indicate more a 'nervousness' in the air.

Jewish *7 mentions-36.9%*

The Orthodox Jewish Synagogue had some vandalism, & is now being sold.

Jewish synagogue is worried about security

also one Jewish person

Jewish cemetery experiences trouble. Community is nervous

Jewish community

Yes. Reformed synagogue.

Jews occasionally

Muslim *7 mentions-36.9%*

Yes-Muslims have reported crimes

yes. muslim

would assume Muslims are as well

last year the mosque was attacked by someone who went in twice

Muslims

Muslims are concerned; general fear contacts provided on hard copy

Occasionally at mosques

None *5 mentions-26.3%*

Q32 Have they reported them to the Police?

5 respondents answered this question. Since there are so few respondents, percentages are not pertinent.

Yes 2 mentions

Unsure 3 mentions

Q33 If 'Yes', are they confident the Police will deal with the matter?

4 respondents answered this question. All four respondents replied affirmatively.

Q34 If 'No', what is the main reason for not reporting the crimes against them or their property? (It may be that hate crimes are seriously under-reported, and as a result may not be recognised as a significant problem.)

1 respondent replied to this question, 'Muslims were very frightened but were supported by IFG and local community.'

Section 7: Other Member Concerns (see Appendix A for questions)

Q35 Are you aware of any of your members currently concerned with any issue relating to places of worship and meeting, for example a need for more space or to move?

14 respondents answered this question. Some mentioned more than one community experiencing issues with premises.

Muslim 8 mentions-42.1%

Hindu 3 mentions-15.8%

Jewish 3 mentions-15.8%

No 3 mentions-15.8%

Other

Pakistani Christian

For contact information or further comments, please see hard copies and contact the representative from the IFC directly.

Section 8: Services in an inter faith context

Q36 Are you aware of any of faith groups in your area that cooperate to provide services jointly? If so, which areas are these services in (eg: Health care and information, Education, Women's issues, Children's issues, Youth issues, Elderly people's issues)?

3 respondents answered this question. Their answers are as follows:

- No one is working in long-established partnerships, but they work together when things pop up.
- Jewish, Hindu, and Christians have collaborated on clean up day
- No. Have discussed possibility

This General Summary represents a compilation of raw data to be processed. While this may be circulated as an appendix, this data may lend itself to false conclusions. Please see the Final Report for more information.

To request a copy of the Final Report, please contact Anne Littlefair at the East of England Faiths Council via email at eeffc@cambcatalyst.co.uk or via phone at 01223 421606.

Thank you.