



How Hyndburn Works Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum

Quick Guide 4b Version 3
November 2010

BACKGROUND

The Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum was initiated in partnership between Hyndburn Community Network, 'To promote positive relations between the faiths in Hyndburn'.

'to promote positive relations between the faiths in Hyndburn and become a vibrant network to develop better relationships between faiths through discussions, dialogue and sharing information in relation to faith issues'.

AIM

The Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum is where people are empowered to live their lives in the way they chose and where their skills and expertise are valued. The Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum is a group of people with a desire to improve services for the people in Hyndburn by different faiths working in partnership. These volunteers are willing to work together and use their influence to stand up for the interests of faith communities across Hyndburn.

It also aims to promote good relations, the values which underline equal treatment for people of different religions and which contribute to the fight against discrimination and seeks to eradicate the stereotypical views some people have of faith communities.

OBJECTIVES

The Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum is the recognised Forum for Hyndburn in which people represent the diversity of faiths in Hyndburn. The Forum promotes social cohesion by getting to know each other's worship, witnessing each other's ceremonies and celebrating the common commitment to spiritual values.

The Forum provides a 'hub' of faith access and engagement and undertakes the role as the 'identified faith' body for Hyndburn which speaks for the people of the faith community by way of the Forum and its nominated members.

The Forum provides a central voice of the faith sector for the benefit of the media and works towards racial and religious equality in all areas of life. The Forum acts as a consultative forum on local issues for local government to influence decision-making, provide advice to public bodies and form links with the statutory and other voluntary groups.

PURPOSE

- a. Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum was initiated to connect up Faith communities and feed their ideas and knowledge in to the strategic decision-making processes.
- b. Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum is all about faith communities working together for the common good to build friendship, understanding, justice, peace and harmony.

- c. Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum aims to enable members of different faiths to learn about each other's beliefs, practices and traditions and work to eliminate prejudice and fear by promoting knowledge and appreciation of each other.
- d. Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum is a local group, affiliated to the Hyndburn Inter Faith Network for the UK. We seek to implement the values of inter-faith dialogue and translate them into practical action in the diverse area of Hyndburn.
- e. Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum is a multi-religious organisation, involving believers of the following faiths: Buddhism; Christianity; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism and Sikhism. All others of any faith or none are welcome to participate.

Governance

The Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum has a Constitution & a Terms of Reference as its governing document.

Progress Report

Meetings

During the current financial year the Forum will hold up to six business meetings.

Agenda items for 2011 will include many of the following: Multi faith dialogue, community cohesion, promoting good relations, racial harmony, inter-faith awareness raising, shared worship and spirituality and developing community resilience, multi-faith chaplaincy, discussions on religious topics and social issues, statements on current issues, partnership working including school and college links, college citizenship work, National Inter Faith week.

Key activities under consideration for 2011 are: Visiting places of worship, Multi faith walks and pilgrimages, a faith trail, multi faith civic ceremonies, prayer or worship, social gatherings and shared meals, working with schools, events for young people, exhibitions and inter faith awareness raising, diversity training, special events, a special sport event to celebrate "peace one day" , joint meetings with other organisations, women's meetings, acts and statements of solidarity, invited speakers, twinning with other areas and/or exchange visits to promote good relations and community cohesion.

Discussion Topics: prayer and meditation, worship, fasting, festivals, attitudes to other faiths, saints, holy men or women, scriptures, religion, peace and violence, music, the roles of men and women, the environment, values, human rights, developing community resilience, action planning for the Forum, money and business ethics, disadvantage and/or discrimination experienced by different faith groups, economic and social needs of the area, religious education and collective worship in local schools.

Events since 2007 have included:

- The Spirit of Hyndburn exhibition
- Dialogues at Accrington & Rossendale College
- Faith and the environment dialogue
- Multi-cultural education in Hyndburn dialogue
- Different faiths rites of passage and youth work within faiths dialogue
- Tastes of Hyndburn event in November 2009
- Racial discrimination, equality and human rights conference in March 2010
- Celebrating 'Peace One Day' with a multi-faith football event in 2010.

2010 - 2011 dialogues

- Veil – whose question is it?
- Should faith schools be banned?
- What role do the media play in preventing violent extremism (PVE)?
- Did PVE work?
- What role has politics had on the preventing violent extremism agenda?

Representation

Mohammed Safdar (Chairperson) represents the Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum as Chairperson. Bernard Holden (Vice chairperson) represents the Forum on matters of health and wellbeing and some community safety matters.

Rev Michael Woods represents the Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum on Hyndburn Local Childrens' Trust Partnership and on issues relating to children and young people.

Paul Toman is the Forum's champion for economy and enterprise issues.

CC Mohammed Younis represents the Forum on county-wide public sector issues.

The Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum has links with Lancashire Forum of Faiths.

Anjum Anwar MBE from Blackburn Cathedral supports the Forum.

LCC and HBC officers are invited to attend as and when appropriate to the Agenda items.

Publicity

There have been several press releases issued this year.

Posters have been circulated throughout the voluntary, community and faith sector to promote the Forum.

The Forum has also agreed that it would like to produce a regular newsletter if funding can be secured.

The Forum would like to hold 3 – 4 large events per year to promote the Forum and bring the wider faith community together.

Consultations

The Forum responded to the Department for Communities and Local Government's Face-to-Face and Side-by-Side inter-faith dialogue and social action consultation on the future of inter-faith dialogue. The aim of the consultation was to build interfaith networks and partnerships.

The Forum has also taken part in the following consultations:

- HBC – Community Cohesion Strategy
- HBC – Equality Strategy
- HBC – Parks and Open Spaces REAP survey
- HBC – Sustainable Community Strategy
- LP – Ambition Lancashire
- HBC- Community Engagement Strategy



Management Team

The Forum has a management team which is currently reflecting on the Forum's role and activities. These are being informed by research including a questionnaire. Discussion will include: What kind of Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum is best for our area? Are we 'representative' of local faith communities? What area should our faith initiative cover? Which local faith organisations need to be on board to ensure that the initiative is well backed and high profile? What should the main aims/focus of the Forum be? What sort of activities and events do we want to run? What sort of role do we want to play in relation to external bodies and the local authority? Where will financial support come from? Should we have a newsletter or website/page? How do we put our work across to local people through the media? How will we make sure that our local Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum is sustained and developed and responds well to changing circumstances over the years?

Contact

To find out more telephone Hyndburn Community Network on 232426 or email admin@hyndburncommunitynetwork.org.uk or visit www.hyndburncommunitynetwork.org.uk

The Forum is open to individuals and you do not need to have a faith as all views are welcomed and valued. We also welcome representatives from the many faiths and faith related organisations from across Hyndburn.

 <p>HYNDBURN The place to be an excellent council - as rated by the audit commission</p>	<p>Hyndburn Inter Faith Forum works with Lancashire Forum of Faiths, Churches Together in Lancashire, Accrington Faith Partnership, Blackburn Diocese, United Religions Initiative UK and is part funded by Hyndburn Borough Council and is a member of The Inter Faith Network for the United Kingdom</p>	
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