



BCF Updates and Events

September 2021



Annual General Meeting – 7.0pm, Mon 13th Sept

Clifton Mosque, Clifton Rd Balsall Heath, B12 8SX

Hear what we have been doing during the last year

Meet our Honorary President, Lord Mayor, Cllr Muhammad Afzal,

and our Management Committee

Hear our Guest Speaker - Sheikh Nuru Mohammed

Watch the Video and join the Tour of the Mosque

Fully Covid Compliant

No Need to Book – Just Arrive on the Evening

Membership Renewal

Birmingham Council of Faiths renews membership subscriptions once a year, in July.

The membership subscription is £10.00 for individuals and £20.00 for families and organisations.

If you have not yet paid your membership for this year, 2021 – 2022, please use the update form that is attached. Cheques should be made out to Birmingham Council of Faiths.

The easiest way is to set up a direct debit to be paid in July each year, you can also pay monthly with this option if you wish.

Birmingham Council of Faiths relies on its membership subscriptions as its main source of income, and therefore, thanks you for your continued support.

Andrew Nicholls
Membership Secretary



The meeting of the BCF:Faiths Promoting Health & Wellbeing Forum was very positive. Presentations were given on:- Plasma Donation, Social Prescribing, Migration Policy & Practice, Cruse Bereavement Service, Healthwatch update

The Minutes, after approval, will follow, and the next Forum meeting will be at 2.30 on Thurs 16th Sept on Zoom. One of the main items for discussion will be the Birmingham Faiths map. Please let me (pjrookes@gmail.com) know if you have a topic that you would like us to discuss, or you would like to present to faith organisations.



Interfaith Week 2021 – 75 Days to go
Thurs 11th Nov, 2.30pm Interfaith Week Launch
Watch this space for further details.

[Inter Faith Week](#) takes place from Sun 14 to Sun 21 Nov.

A tremendous platform to:-

- *learn more about different faiths and beliefs and the communities that follow those;
- *highlight the contribution of faith communities to society; encourage understanding about and between different faith and belief groups; *Encourage inter faith cooperation.

It's a Week for everyone – young and old and of different faiths and beliefs, including non-religious beliefs. Activities benefit those who take part; they also send a strong message that good inter faith relations in the UK matter and that there is appreciation of people's faiths and beliefs and how those inspire them to contribute to the community and live well together.

Birmingham Council of Faiths will again coordinate the Birmingham Programme. It's time to think about an activity you could arrange – nothing is too big or too small.

Contact pjrookes@gmail.com to discuss your idea.



**Birmingham
Museums**

The Birmingham Museums Trust is developing a new Vision, which will shape what we do across all our nine sites. Our aim is to become **a socially useful service for the people of Birmingham**, ensuring that everyone can access our sites, services and collections; see themselves as part of the city's story; use our sites to benefit them; and for local groups and organisations, that we can be part of you achieving your missions and aims.

Some of us are attending a consultation in September. If you would like us to express views on your behalf, please email pjrookes@gmail.com.



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Discussing current topics with key people

Co-hosted by Mahmooda Qureshi &
Dr. Peter Rookes

Tune in every fortnight; Mondays @ 4pm

Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger

Rabbi Schlesinger is an Orthodox Rabbi, a teacher and a passionate Zionist settler who has been profoundly transformed by his encounters with Palestinians. He helped to found Roots/Judur/Shorashim and serves as Director for International Relations. He is also the founder of the American Friends of Roots, a multi faith organisation.

Noor A'wad

Noor was born into a family of Palestinian refugees. Whilst studying to become a tour guide, Noor travelled to Israel for the first time and saw Israelis beyond the frame of "occupying soldiers". His transformation continued when he met Roots activists in 2016. Noor currently serves as part of the leadership team of Roots.

The speakers will speak about their personal journeys & the work of Roots whose aim is promote peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Wednesday 1st September

7.45pm on Zoom*

(Please register in advance for this meeting)

Two Truths in One Heart, Two Peoples in One Land

Some call it Palestine, Some call it Israel, Both call it home.
Unlikely Partners for Peace?



To Register:-

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0sdOGvqjojGNE9d9fuZT1H7xiPnpZU+LKH>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting

Our Connecting Communities programme takes place on Unity FM radio 93.5 at 4.0pm on alternate Mondays, co-hosted by Mahmooda Qureshi and Dr Peter Rookes. Use the links to listen to our last 2 programmes: -

Mon 16th Aug – Bereavement

Helen Juffs, Network Development Worker, End of Life, BVSC, and End of Life Doula

Surjit Heer, Head of Wellbeing at John Taylor / St Mary's Hospices

Abdullah Rehman, Coordinator, Kindness Project, BAHU Trust

<https://www.mixcloud.com/.../connecting-communities-show.../>

Mon 2nd Aug – Stroke Rehab

Prof Christine Roffe, Professor of Stroke Medicine, Keele University

Nicholas Cox, Speech Therapist, Birmingham Community Health Trust

Fathimah, Person who is recovering from a stroke

<https://www.mixcloud.com/Uni>

Then listen to our **next 2** programmes live at 4.0pm on Unity FM 93.5:-

Mon 6th Sept – Healthwatch

Andy Cave, Chief Executive
Other guests to be confirmed

Mon 20th Sept - Birmingham Museums

Sara Wajid, Co-CEO of Birmingham Museums – overview of what we do and the future
Andy Fowles, Learning & Engagement Manager – our work with communities and volunteers
Lynsey Rutter – future events at our various sites.



Birmingham’s new Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Foster, wants to hear what your priorities are, what crimes you are most concerned about and your views on the way the police is funded.

He’s launched a consultation as part of the Police & Crime Plan – please complete the survey and share with your friends:-

[Have your say.](#)



Birmingham

Birmingham MIND are running a series of FREE “Being Well” courses, designed to support adults at home via an online platform. Topics include:-

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------|
| Anxiety Management | Building Resilience | |
| Food, Mood and Lifestyle | Mindfulness | |
| Relaxation | Tai Chi | Yoga |

Contact: beingwellservice@birminghammind.org



ELLA BAKER
school of organising.

For a full list of free training events visit

[Events | Ella Baker School \(ellabakerorganising.org.uk\)](#)

6 Sept, 5-6pm Training/Workshop - Welcome call

<https://actionnetwork.org/events/september>. This is an opportunity to learn a little more about the school and to learn about how we deliver training. It is a must for anyone who wants to volunteer as a facilitator with us.

7 Sept, 6.30-8.0 Network Event Hackney Unites Big Meeting!

https://actionnetwork.org/events/hackney-unites-big-meeting?source=direct_link&. Join us (Hackney Unites and the Ella Baker School of Organising) for 'Hackney more in common, the Big Meet! Join us to share what your group is doing and its aspirations, or simply to hear about the vast array of great community building taking place in our borough. as we emerge from covid and continue to build a more united Hackney.

9 Sept, 7pm In conversation with Alicia Garza, Co founder of Black Lives Matter

https://actionnetwork.org/events/ella-baker-school-in-conversation-with-alicia-garza-co-founder-of-black-lives-matter?source=direct_link&.

Alicia's book titled The Purpose of Power will be out in the UK and we will be in conversation with her discussing key themes in the book. Following on with Q&A we will break out into break-out groups discussing key questions. This is a live, participatory session and will not be recorded.

14 Sept, 7-9pm Introduction to Organising Theory

https://actionnetwork.org/events/organising-theory?source=direct_link&. The aim of this session is to consider the roots of organising theory, and in particular to show that there are several different traditions. At the end of this session participants will be able to:

Feel: confident to playfully reinvent organising to meet specific circumstances, rather than feel the need to apply rigid 'formulas'

Know: that what we refer to as Organising is contested, and there are multiple roots and branches of Organising, some of which are more likely than others to stress the role of agency.

Do: Place agency at the centre of their organising strategies.

18 Sept, 11.0 -1.0 Winning by Organising https://actionnetwork.org/events/winning-by-organising-3?source=direct_link&. This session looks at the theories advanced by Jane McAlevey. In particular 'super majority organising', 'whole worker organising' and the concept of organic leaders. There's lots to think about!

25 Sept, 11.0 -1.0 Organising to end sexual harassment in the workplace

https://actionnetwork.org/events/organising-to-end-sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-2?source=direct_link&. Most employers have policies that make it clear that sexual harassment is unacceptable, and yet it remains an almost constant issue in the workplace. This unit recognises that sometimes the harasser is a trade union member and seeks to explore how we as the workforce can design, and make dominant, narratives that challenge the culture (and the underlying assumptions) that allow sexual harassment to take place in the workplace.

30 Sept, 7.0 – 9.0pm Muslims and Community Organising

https://actionnetwork.org/events/muslims-and-community-organising?source=direct_link&.

This session is designed to help you if you find your organisation is failing to attract Muslim support. It will introduce you to the key elements of the Muslim faith, give organizing examples, and highlight contributions made by the Muslim communities. We often hear one-sided news coverage about Muslim communities, this is part myth-busting, part introduction to the religion and in particular we will be delving into community cohesion and organizing. All are welcome, whether you belong to a faith group or not.



NHS Cadets aims to attract young people into careers in the healthcare system and develop their skills so that they are ready to fully sustain themselves in health volunteering opportunities.

Through a 36-week programme, we will be helping young people to not only gain new skills and knowledge, but to get hands on experience in the NHS. We are aiming to specifically widen access to careers in the NHS for 14–18-year-olds who come from groups which have not traditionally entered into volunteering opportunities in the health care system.

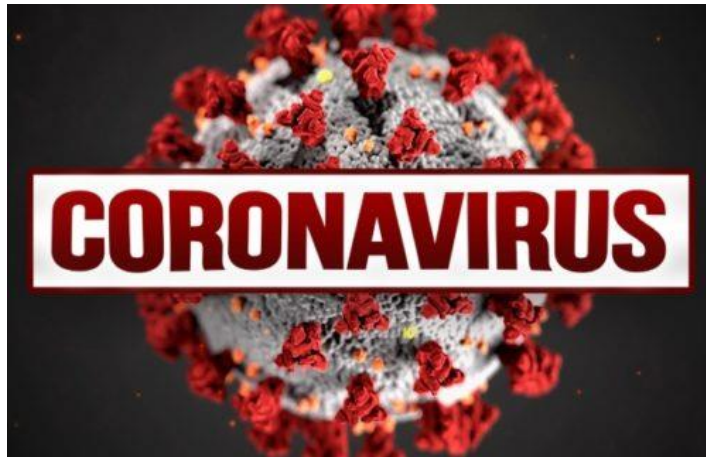
We are recruiting the young people for the programmes in your area.

Do you work with young people aged 14-18 in the following criteria who may be interested in joining NHS Cadets:

- *Living with learning difficulties and / or disabilities (we will need to discuss if we have the support network to help you participate)*
- *Young people in the care system, or recent care leavers*
- *Refugees or Asylum Seekers*
- *Young Carers*
- *Homeless young people*
- *Those previously involved with drug or alcohol misuse*
- *Those not in education, employment or training, or with poor school results / predicted to get poor results*
- *Those living with mental health concerns (same principle as anyone with a learning difficult or disability)*
- *Those who identify as being part of the LGBTQI+ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer intersex+)*
- *Those coming from low-income families /young people in receipt of free school meals*
- *Young people from ethnic minority communities whose race/religion could be or has been a barrier to considering a pathway to healthcare*

South Birmingham and Solihull - Foundation 14 - 16 year olds and Advanced 16 - 18 year olds -

[NHS Cadets expression of interest - South Birmingham and Solihull \(office.com\)](#)



COVID-19 and safe use of places of worship England On 19 July England moved to Step 4 of the 'roadmap'. There are no longer legal requirements for physical social distancing or the wearing of face masks in indoor spaces. However, the UK Government has emphasised that COVID-19 remains a serious health risk and that it is important to remain cautious to help protect one another.

Updated guidance on the safe use of places of worship is at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship>.

There are no longer legal limits on the number of people who can attend weddings, funerals and other life events or the receptions that follow. All restrictions on chanting and singing have also been removed.

Since 26 July the legal requirement for social distancing indoors has been reduced to 1m. The legal requirement to wear a face covering in a place of worship, during an act of worship, has been removed, however it is still strongly advised. Where singing or chanting is deemed to be essential to an act of worship, this should be at a low volume and it is strongly advised that face coverings are worn.



IFN Statement on Election Campaigns:- “We affirm the right of people to express, within the law, their strongly held views, including during election campaigning. However, it is vital in our diverse and democratic society that views are expressed in a peaceful and respectful way and also that care is taken that observations on situations locally, nationally or abroad do not reflect or play into antisemitism, Islamophobia or hatred of other communities. During election campaigns, symbols and images of different faith communities are sometimes co-opted and manipulated by organisations and/or public figures to justify or promote divisive political agendas.”

A recent example of this is a campaign leaflet for a far-right candidate for election in Batley and Spen, with a crude collage of the candidate against the background of a local church and

with a large image of a cross. Slanted and inaccurate portrayals of religious and cultural history often accompany such misuse of imagery. At such times, solidarity of response from faith communities and inter faith initiatives is crucial: nurturing existing good relationships between different communities and seeking to safeguard those; speaking out against politics of division which set communities against each other; rebutting misappropriation of our respective faith communities' symbols, traditions and history; reporting any hate incidents; and encouraging informed dialogue and respectful expression of views at all times.

Hate crime Home Office data released in July shows that a total of 61,851 racially and religiously aggravated offences were recorded in 2020, a 7% increase on 2019. CST's Antisemitic Incidents Report January-June 2021, published on 5 August, shows 1,308 anti-Jewish hate incidents nationwide recorded by CST in the first half of this year. The Cross-Party Group on Tackling Islamophobia, published by Newcastle University, speaks of increasing verbal and physical assaults on Muslims.

The RE Council for England and Wales reports that the number of Religious Studies A-level exam entries in England and Wales has increased 6.1 percent year on year. The subject outperformed other A-level subjects as a whole, which increased by 5.1 percent, with a greater increase than most other humanities subjects. It says that this year's increase, and the long-term trend in entries, "suggest that candidates continue to recognise the value of RS A-level for Higher Education entry, graduate employment, and as an essential life skill".

A new **APPG on Safeguarding in Faith Communities** was established in July. This is a successor to an older APPG on Safeguarding in Faith Settings. The aims of the group are "to increase awareness of issues relating to safeguarding within faith settings and to provide an opportunity for faith communities to inform safeguarding discourse, share best practise and work together to create safer places." The Co-Chairs are Janet Daby MP and Lord Bishop Viv Faull. Thirtyone:eight, an independent safeguarding charity, provides the secretariat. For more information, visit <https://thirtyoneeight.org/about-us/all-partyparliamentary-group/>

National Resilience Strategy - The Cabinet Office published a call for evidence for the National Resilience Strategy, which closes on 27 Sept: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-resilience-strategycall-for-evidence>.

Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre Planning - permission was granted by the Government on 29 July to build the country's first national Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens, next to Parliament. The Memorial will be the national focal point to honour the 6 million Jewish men, women and children who were murdered in the Holocaust, and other victims of Nazi persecution, including the Roma, gay and disabled people. The co-located Learning Centre will also focus on subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/planning-permission-granted-for-new-ukholocaust-memorial>

The Shap Calendar of Religious Festivals for 2021-22 is available to order from <http://www.shapcalendar.org.uk/>. The e-calendar provides: 3 A4 calendar sheets and a booklet giving a brief description of each religious festival in 12 of the world's faiths and traditions, from Baha'i to Zoroastrian, including Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Pagan festivals. A hard copy wallchart is also available.

The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales. It also maintains the Charity Register: <https://www.gov.uk/find-charity-information>. Its purpose is to ensure that charities can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society. Almost all charities with an income of over £5,000 must register with the

Charity Commission. Being a registered charity has advantages, such as: tax benefits, such as Gift Aid; opportunities to apply for grant funding; support and guidance to help you run your organisation more effectively; and increased public confidence in your organisation.

The Commission's Faith Charities Outreach Team works with faith charities, such as churches, gurdwaras, mosques, synagogues and temples to provide free support to trustees - also known as committee members or directors - of faith organisations that are required to register as a charity. To arrange a meeting, discuss registration or find out what support they can offer, email faithoutreach@charitycommission.gov.uk. The Commission's website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charitycommission> has more information about their work.

The Religion Media Centre was launched in December 2017 and is working as a resource for journalists, aiming to encourage the highest quality coverage of religious issues in the media. It also offers training to journalists in the coverage of religion, and media training for religious organisations to better understand the media and the way it works. A new monthly podcast is due to start in the autumn. The RMC produces fact sheets, daily and weekly news bulletins and regular zoom press briefings on religion and belief topics and also holds two annual events - a public lecture and a festival celebrating and challenging the coverage of religion and belief. Its content is regularly featured in the main UK news outlets. The Centre is keen to collaborate with academic, media and religious organisations that wish to be a part of the work. It has previously featured publications and projects from Cambridge University, SOAS, The Woolf Institute and others. Further info at:- <http://religionmediacentre.org.uk/>.

Little Amal: The Walk

This is a project aims to raise awareness of the plight and journey of refugees and asylum seekers. Little Amal is a 3.5m tall puppet of a little refugee girl walking from Turkey to Manchester.

Everywhere **Little Amal** goes, individual artists and communities will welcome her with city-wide festivals and performances of poetry, music, theatre and dance.

The 'Active Arts Castle Vale' has arranged a programme of activities to welcome Little Amal to **Erdington, on 28th October 2021**.

You can find out more at: <https://www.walkwithamal.org/>

Mayor's Cricket Cup, Sun 26th Sept – West Midlands Mayor, Andy Street, is inviting all faith and community groups to participate in the Mayor's Cricket Cup – a one day intergenerational cricket event on Sunday 26th September at Edgbaston Stadium. We are calling for all girls and boys aged 14-16 and adults over the age of 55 years of age to come forward and take part in the day. The event will give young people the chance to play with the older generation at one of the country's most iconic venue right here in the West Midlands, Edgbaston Stadium.

The tournament is being supported by Warwickshire County Cricket Club, with the club providing professional coaches and umpires on the day. This is a soft-ball event with mixed -

aged teams of 8 a side, and we welcome players of all abilities. Registration for places is now open and places are limited. It will be a first come, first served basis. For more information on the event and registration, please visit:- <https://edgbaston.com/foundation/edgbaston-foundation-projects/creating-connections/registerfor-the-2021-mayors-cricket-cup/>
Questions - email sukhdeep.nijjar@wmca.org.uk

Midlands Thriving Community Programme NOW OPEN, to support **third sector in Social Prescribing**
Thriving Communities is a new national support programme for voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise groups, supporting communities impacted by COVID19 in England, working alongside social prescribing link workers.

Thriving Communities will help you to share your learning, gain new ideas and develop partnership across sectors work to be better placed for funding. Please click [here](#) to learn more about the midlands Thriving Communities programme, now open for cohort 2 of Learning Together applicants.

Closing date 17th September 12:00 pm

Stephanie Bloxham, Health and Social Care Business Unit Manager, BVSC.

This Birmingham Council of Faiths Update & Events is distributed monthly to over 430 individuals & organisations. Please feel free to pass it on, be added or removed from the mailing list.

Copy should be sent by the last day of the month to pjrookes@gmail.com

Peter

Dr. Peter Rookes Ph.D. MPH. DHSA. FETC. RCNT. RGN. RNMH

Secretary and 3rd Sector Liaison Officer

Coordinator, BCF:Faiths Promoting Health & Wellbeing,

Birmingham Council of Faiths