



Strategic Partnerships and Faith-Links_

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & FAITH LINKS

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STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & FAITH-LINKS

The Mapping exercise contacted every Strategic Partnership (SP) in the Region and asked about their links with Faith Communities.

They were asked if they had a partnership member who was:-

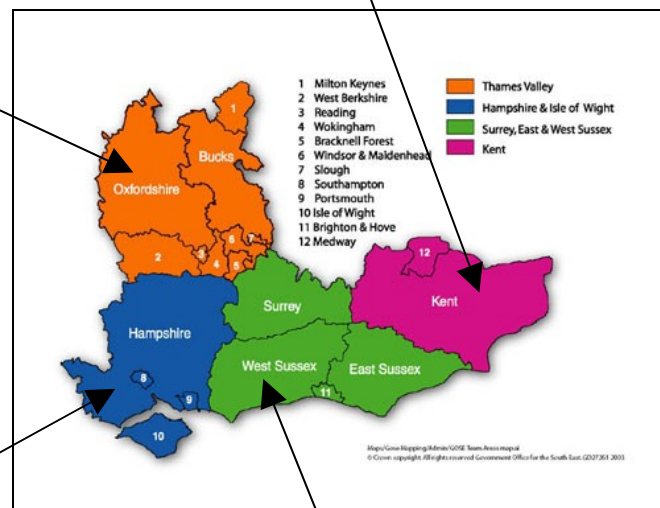
- Appointed to be a “faith” representative,
- Whom they represented,
- How they were appointed and their status in the partnership,
- How they contributed to the SP and how they fed-back to the “faith” organisations,
- And if there were any support needs.

The people named as faith links by their SP’s were also contacted and asked the same questions.

FAITH-LINKS in each GOSE SUB-REGION

9 out of 18 LSPs with FAITH-LINKS

5 out of 8 LSP’s with FAITH-LINKS



9 out of 15 LSP’s with FAITH-LINKS

15 out of 27 LSP’s with FAITH-LINKS

A table of Strategic Partnerships and Faith-Links will be found at the end of this report.

Partnership Main Boards

Of the 68 SP's of the Counties, Unitary Authorities and Districts in the South East, 51 replied; (17 did not respond). Of those 51, 13 said that currently they had no faith link person.

As well as Faith-Links on SP main Boards, it was recognised that faith representation was lacking on LSP steering groups and executives.

Wider Consultations

Some SP's with no Faith-Link person did invite representatives from a cross-section of faith groups to the conferences and consultations they held for their areas. One said that the Faith Sector was consulted as part of the renewal process of the Sustainable Community Strategy Action Plan. Another noted that they had a number of people representing faith interests on the smaller community boards that reported to the main LSP board.

Mixed Forums

Whilst recognising that faith was not the same as "culture", "diversity" and "voluntary and community", some LSP's noted that their contact with multi-cultural and diversity forums and the voluntary sector, kept them in touch with and able to be responsive to their concerns and issues, some of which were shared by the faith sector. One SP said that there was no direct relationship between the LSP and faith communities: their links were through a Voluntary Sector Development Partnership.

It was encouraging to see how many were keen to actively promote the role of faith communities.

Links not Representatives

It was clear that those members of SP's who specifically had a "faith" role, were not strictly representatives of the faith communities but more realistically links to faith communities. For this reason this survey has adopted the designation FAITH-LINK.

Diversity?

It also appears that all but two of the SP Faith-Links were from Christian Church organisations, and predominantly the Church of England.

The 33 people (N.B. six LSP's have the same Faith-Link person) who are currently Faith-Links on SP's are made up of 5 women, 2 of whom are clergy, and 28 men, 15 of whom are clergy.

REPRESENTATION & APPOINTMENT

Answers to the question about representation varied between the following:-

They reported that they represented Churches Together at County or District level, Church Leaders' Forum, The Diocese, and The Cathedral.

Two Faith-Link represented a Multi-Faith Forum (with members from the major faiths). They had both been selected by the Faith Forums they represented.

Others said they wore "more than one hat", as chairs of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) main boards, or representing other partnerships (e.g. youth) on the SP; but they were also recognised as a link to "faith".

The nature of appointments varied from "by invitation" to "suggested", particularly when the LSPs were being set up. For example, the Faith-Link had been approached because they were recognised as a "senior church leader with a civic role".

Another had been the "Faith Rep" for the district since the LSP was formed in 2002 and was recognised as such by the faiths, but had no direct support from them nor reported back to them in any way.

None appear to have been elected. It was also noted that some LSPs had reviewed their structures and as a result there was no longer a Faith-Link on the main Board. It was noted that "faith" was thought to be represented by the Voluntary and Community Sector LSP representatives.

SP's recognised the positive contribution made by the Faith-Links, representing "faith" and the interests of faith communities as well as "influencing priority setting for the Borough".

INPUT & FEED-BACK

Faith-Links were recognised as a “voice for faith and the faith communities” in SP meetings. Some were able to raise faith matters and help other partners recognise faith groups as potential partners in delivering services. (For example, with safer community partnerships, setting up Street Pastor schemes).

They were also a voice for minorities and able to ensure that wider moral issues were raised (e.g. in relation to licensing policies).

They could speak as “*a Christian leader in the County*”; to address specific religious and Christian issues and bring those perspectives and values into discussions (e.g. identity, community, quality of life, volunteering). It was recognised that partners representing other (non-faith) constituencies shared similar values.

Faith-Links were recognised as part of “an important cross-communication mechanism between the faith sector and the borough and public services in relation to plans, priorities, community cohesion and training initiatives”.

The ways that Faith-Links fed-back from SP’s to their respective constituencies varied across the region. Among them were feeding back to:-

- The Inter-Faith Forum (with “LSP” as a standing item, on the agenda);
- Church Leaders meetings;
- Churches Together Enabling groups and various faith organisation council meetings;
- Targeting information to groups for whom it would be useful;
- They were able to report matters of interest, controversy and uncertainty.

Some Faith-Links had initiated a number of ways of fostering better communication between SP partners and “faith” partners. Among them were:-

- A dinner for Church leaders and LSP members;
-

- Brokering meetings between LSP members and Church leaders to encourage drawing in the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) into active partnerships.

It was noted that the VCFS need to be helped to perceive and understand the contribution they can make.

Other SP-Faith communication flows were achieved through monthly Churches Together email newsletters, speaking at meetings, conversations, letters and articles in magazines.

It was also noted that some LSP agendas were “internally focussed and apparently of little interest to faith groups”. There was a lot of paper, a lot to read and little time (as volunteers) to devote it, however, being engaged with SP’s opened up opportunities for faith organisations to get involved.

An SP board that has a member / partner specifically designated as a Faith-Link makes it possible for “faith” interests to be voiced. It was recognised that many SP partners and board members are people of faith, but they may be constrained by their “day job” from being a voice for all-important faith concerns. Having a Faith-Link person allows other sectors, if necessary and appropriate, to be critiqued and challenged.

Faith-Links need to be professional and realistic about what they can and cannot commit to in relation to faith organisations, and this needs to be recognised by the other SP partners.

NEEDS

Strategic partnerships & faith-links

Some respondents, both LSP contacts and Faith-Links, said that there were no support needs as far as they were aware. However, a good number suggested the following.

Fulfilling the desire to achieve a Faith-Link person on every Strategic Partnership in the Region.

To make sure that “faith” is represented on the smaller and thematic partnerships (e.g. Children’s’ Trusts). We need to make the case and also recruit the right people with good relationship-building skills and who have the ability to offer to the partnerships.

Recognition of and an increased profile at national and regional levels that Faith representation is active in SP's would help to encourage SP's to engage Faith-Links and the Faith Sector to be more involved in strategic planning.

It would help to meet, network with and learn from other LSP Faith-Links and have opportunities to:-

- Think through with others the role of a Faith-Link;
- explore ways of contributing as a faith representative to Strategic Partnerships; and to become more effective.
- share with others how we can speak about community building and the contribution that faith communities and religious language have to offer (beyond "conversion" and "religious practices").
- Get some help and guidance from an independent perspective about the huge amount and wide variety of policies that are part of the SP scene.
- Find some help to understand the words and "policy-speak" of Government White Papers etc.
- share good practice and find ways of moving from talking about policies to delivering useful actions.

Being a Faith-Link person is only a small part of a "faith-workers" main job which has its own heavy time commitments. Some are unpaid volunteers.

It was noted that sometimes the "big" partners (Public Service, Government and Local Government) who have far greater resources and executive powers, may overlook the important and equally committed, but different, contribution of volunteers.

Some financial help to cover cost incurred through attending partnership meetings. It was noted that there are no Government (financial) resources provided to encourage groups to be part of LSP's.

It was noted that some Local Authorities do support Inter-Faith groups.

Some Faith-Link people acknowledged the support they receive from the inter-Faith Groups and Churches Together bodies that they represent.

LSP and Local Authority Needs in relation to Faith

Several LSP's and local Authorities expressed a desire to receive information and good practice advice about how to engage with faith communities.

The Government's focus on and funding support for community and social cohesion was recognised. It was closely related to the data about and impact of community tension. There was a strong desire to engage churches, mosques and other religious centres, particularly those with an increased number of migrant people.

Also, in those areas where there are no religious organisations other than Christian churches, some LSP's and local authorities would welcome opportunities to develop links with a variety of faith groups.

LSP's and Local Authorities would also be pleased to share and discover ways of reaching out to and opening up links with faith communities: and also be helped to understand their ways and perspectives.

Faith maps & infrastructure

One LSP would be helped by having a "faith community map" of the district, showing "all faiths, locations and numbers", and link it with the local authority's equality and diversity requirements.

It is difficult for one person from a single faith group to represent all the faith groups and denominations.

It is widely acknowledged that SP's find it difficult to know how to relate with all the different religious organisations, and the denominations within them, (not least the variety of Christian Church bodies). There is very little "faith infrastructure" and no single body that represents all faiths.

Almost uniquely, one LSP said that their "faith rep" represented all faiths and was informed by a District Faith Forum, which was attended by representatives of all faiths in the area.

It was noted that Churches Together groups do not include other religions and do not come together as a top level grouping.

It was also noted by some that Churches Together and other Faith groups don't come together across Districts. If they did there might be more strategic work rather than just individual community initiatives.

It would be helpful for religious and denominational leaders to meet, discuss and decide their roles in relation to the key issues, and their organisations' community engagement of in the county partnerships.

Sometimes that faith sector does not appear to be interested in being represented on the LSP.

One LSP noted a lack of interest among the faith community to be part of a strategic partnership and that faith groups were better engaged at community level through parish plans and small town health checks.

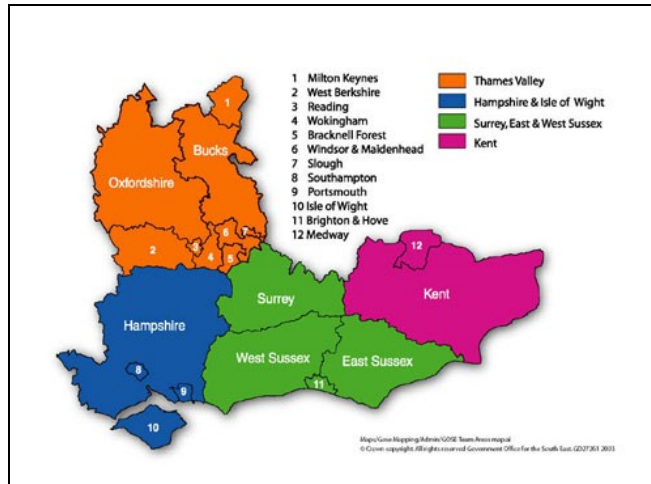
Finding new ways

One SP would welcome some support about the representation of faith communities in their work on reshaping the membership, governance and accountability framework of the LSP.

Another LSP was proposing to form a Community Network to be a forum for all community interest groups and that would embrace the faith sector. This Network would then select members to represent it on the SP Board.

Another LSP is proposing a Stakeholder Forum that will have other faith community representatives and contacts. This Forum will in turn be represented on the LSP.

FAITH LINKS with LOCAL AUTHORITY STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS



The Government Office for the South East (GOSE) ¹ divides the Region into 4 sub-regions: this shows the County Councils and Unitary Authorities (*The High Level Authorities*). The District and Borough Councils are listed by County (see below).

A FAITH-LINK is a strategic partnership member with a recognised connection to the Faith Communities. *A blank entry indicates that a reply is awaited from the LSP*

COUNTIES

COUNTY COUNCIL (7)	STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP	FAITH-LINK
Buckinghamshire	Buckinghamshire Strategic Partnership	
Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire Partnership	Bede Gerrard
Hampshire	Hampshire Strategic Partnership	Currently no Faith-Link Person
Surrey	Surrey Strategic Partnership	Revd. Canon Chris Rich
East Sussex	East Sussex Strategic Partnership	Ian Chisnall
West Sussex	West Sussex Strategic Partnership	Ian Chisnall
Kent	Kent Partnership	Rt. Revd. Stephen Venner

¹ Map from GOSE website

UNITARIES

UNITARY AUTHORITIES (12)	STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP	FAITH-LINK
Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes LSP	Revd. Olabiyi Ajala
West Berkshire	West Berkshire Partnership	Currently no Faith-Link Person
Reading	Reading 2020 Partnership	
Wokingham	Wokingham Borough Strategic Partnership	Revd. David Hodgson
Bracknell Forest	Bracknell Forest Partnership	
Windsor & Maidenhead	The Royal Borough Partnership (Windsor & Maidenhead)	
Slough	Slough Focus	
Portsmouth	Portsmouth LSP	Taki Jaffer
Southampton	Southampton Partnership	Currently no Faith-Link Person
Isle of Wight	Island Strategic Partnership	Venerable Caroline Baston
Brighton & Hove	2020 Community Strategy (Brighton & Hove)	
Medway	Medway LSP	Currently no Faith-Link Person (Very Revd. Adrian Newman a Board member)

DISTRICTS

County	DISTRICT AUTHORITIES (55)	STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP	FAITH-LINK
Oxon	Oxford	Oxford Strategic Partnership	Currently no Faith-Link Person
Oxon	Cherwell	Cherwell Community Planning Partnership	A temporary appointment
Oxon	South Oxon	South Oxfordshire Partnership	Rt. Revd. Colin Fletcher (Chair of SOP)
Oxon	Vale of the White Horse	Vale Partnership	Revd. John Robertson
Oxon	West Oxon	West Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership	Penny Joyce
Bucks	Aylesbury	Aylesbury Vale LSP	Revd. David Jenkins
Bucks	Chiltern	Chiltern Community Partnership	
Bucks	South Bucks	South Bucks Partnership	Revd. Brian Griffiths
Bucks	Wycombe	Wycombe Partnership	
Hants	Basingstoke & Deane	Basingstoke & Deane LSP	Currently no Faith-Link Person
Hants	Eastleigh	Eastleigh Strategic Partnership	Allan Cox
Hants	East Hampshire	East Hampshire Community Partnership	
Hants	Fareham	Network Fareham	Revd. Frank Wright
Hants	Gosport	Gosport Partnership	Revd. John Draper
Hants	Hart	Hart LSP	
Hants	Havant	Havant Community Partnership	Revd. Robin Hine
Hants	New Forest	Changing Lives: New Forest LSP	Currently no Faith-Link Person
Hants	Rushmoor	Rushmoor Strategic Partnership	Revd. Canon David Tonkinson
Hants	Test Valley	Test Valley Partnership	Revd. Dr. Derek Overfield

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Strategic Partnerships & Faith-Links*

Hants	Winchester	Winchester District Strategic Partnership	Beth Taylor
S'ry	Elmbridge	Elmbridge Community Partnership	Nabil Mustapha
S'ry	Epsom & Ewell	Epsom & Ewell LSP	
S'ry	Guildford	Guildford LSP	Tony Oakden
S'ry	Runnymede	Runnymede LSP	Currently no Faith-Link Person
S'ry	Spelthorne	Spelthorne LSP	Simon Fraser
S'ry	Reigate & Banstead	Reigate & Banstead LSP	Currently no Faith-Link Person
S'ry	Mole Valley	Mole Valley LSP	
S'ry	Surrey Heath	Surrey Heath LSP	Revd. Mark Chester
S'ry	Tandridge	Tandridge LSP	Currently no Faith-Link Person
S'ry	Waverley	Waverley LSP	Nasir Virji
S'ry	Woking	Window on Woking	
E Sx	Eastbourne	Eastbourne Strategic Partnership	Martyn Relf & Monica Elsen
E Sx	Hastings	Hasting LSP	Marian Povey
E Sx	Lewes	Lewes District LSP	Ian Chisnall
E Sx	Rother	Rother LSP	Currently no Faith-Link Person
E Sx	Wealden	Wealden LSP	Ian Chisnall
W Sx	Adur	Adur in Partnership	Currently no Faith-Link Person
W Sx	Arun	Arun LSP	Seeking one rep for all faith groups
W Sx	Chichester	Chichester in Partnership	Ian Chisnall
W Sx	Crawley	Crawley Together	Currently no Faith-Link Person
W Sx	Horsham	Horsham Community Partnership	
W Sx	Mid Sussex	Mid Sussex LSP	Ian Chisnall
W Sx	Worthing	Worthing Together	Ian Richardson
Kent	Ashford	Ashford LSP / East Kent LSP	
Kent	Thanet	East Kent LSP (<i>Canterbury</i> ,	Venerable Sheila Watson
Kent	Canterbury		

Kent	Dover	<i>Dover, Shepway & Thanet)</i>	
Kent	Shepway		
Kent	Dartford	Kent Thameside LSP <i>(Gravesham & Dartford)</i>	
Kent	Gravesham		
Kent	Maidstone	Maidstone LSP	John Cunningham
Kent	Swale	Swale LSP	Revd. David Ramsay
Kent	Sevenoaks	West Kent Partnership <i>(Sevenoaks / Tonbridge & Malling / Tunbridge Wells)</i>	Tony Cornfield
Kent	Tonbridge & Malling		
Kent	Tunbridge Wells		

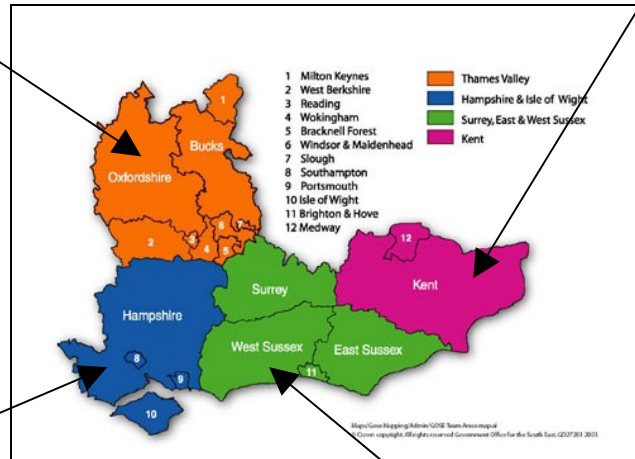
Please see the SE FAITH CONNECTIONS WEBSITE for more details about the Local Authorities, Strategic Partnerships and Faith Links.

www.se-faithforum.net

INTER-FAITH NETWORKS in each GOSE SUB-REGION

16 Inter-Faith Groups

5 Inter-Faith Groups



5 Inter-Faith Groups

14 Inter-Faith Groups

More detailed information about Inter-Faith Groups in the South East will be found in Section Two (*Celebrating Difference and Diversity*) of *Connecting Faith in the South East*, and on the SEEFF website. www.se-faithforum.net

If a County, Unitary or District is not listed, currently it has no Inter-Faith Group.

COUNTY COUNCIL	INTER-FAITH NETWORK
Buckinghamshire	Bucks Forum of Faith
Oxfordshire	Oxford Round Table of Religions
Hampshire	Hampshire Inter-Faith Network Hants & Dorset Branch Three Faiths Forum
Surrey	Surrey Inter-Faith Friendship Group Surrey Three Faiths Forum
East Sussex	Council for Religious Harmony - Sussex
West Sussex	Sussex Faith Forum (<i>in abeyance</i>) Faiths in Sussex

UNITARY AUTHORITIES	INTER-FAITH NETWORK
Milton Keynes	Inter-Faith MK (Milton Keynes) Milton Keynes Council of Faiths
Reading	Reading Inter-Faith Group Reading Faith Forum
Wokingham	Wokingham Borough Inter-Faith Group
Windsor & Maidenhead	Maidenhead Inter-Faith Windsor & Maidenhead Community Forum Eton Three Faiths Forum & Eton Faiths Forum
Slough	Slough Faith Partnership
Portsmouth	Portsmouth Inter-Faith Forum
Southampton	Southampton Council of Faiths (SCOF) Southampton Inter-Faith Link (SIFL)
Brighton & Hove	Brighton & Hove Inter-Faith Contact Group
Medway	Medway Inter-Faith Action Forum (MIFA)

County	DISTRICT AUTHORITIES	INTER-FAITH NETWORK
Oxon	Oxford	Oxford Abrahamic Group (<i>ceased to function</i>) Oxford Round Table of Religions (ORTR) Oxford Council of Faiths
Oxon	Cherwell	Banbury Area Religious Education Centre Inter-Faith Group
Bucks	Aylesbury	Aylesbury Inter-Faith Network
Bucks	Wycombe	Wycombe Sharing of Faiths
S'ry	Elmbridge	Elmbridge Multi-Faith Forum
S'ry	Guildford	Guildford Inter-Faith Forum
S'ry	Woking	Woking Multi-Faith Group Woking People of Faith
E Sx	Eastbourne	Eastbourne Faiths Forum
E Sx	Hastings	Hastings & District Inter-Faith Forum (HIFF)
W Sx	Chichester	Chichester Annual Gathering
W Sx	Crawley	Crawley Inter-Faith Network
W Sx	Horsham	Horsham Inter-Faith Forum
W Sx	Worthing	Faith in Worthing
Kent	Thanet	Thanet Inter-Faith Council
Kent	Canterbury	Canterbury & District Inter-Faith Action (CANDIFA)
Kent	Dartford Gravesham (<i>Thameside</i>)	North Kent Inter-Faith Relations Council Thames Gateway Women's Multi-Faith Forum

RELIGIONS represented in INTER-FAITH GROUPS in the South East:

Ahmadiyya, Baha'i, Brahma Kumaris, Buddhist, Christian, Christian Scientist, Hare Krishna, Hindu, Humanist, Jain, Jewish, Mormon - Latter-day Saints, Muslim, Nirankari, Pagan, Quaker, Sikh, Unificationist, Unitarian, Zoroastrian, and organisations related to faith, eg Musica Sacra, Universal Peace Federation

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