

The Inter Faith Week Toolkit

Developing successful activities



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2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH

ifnet@interfaith.org.uk

www.interfaith.org.uk

www.twitter.com/IFNetUK

www.facebook.com/IFNetUK

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Department for
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Front cover photo: Cllr Manjula Sood with
members of Leicester City Council's Muslim
Support Group and Christian Fellowship
digging a community allotment
(Photo: Leicester City Council)

Back cover photo: Inter Faith Week launch
(Photo: Myles Fisher)

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The Inter Faith Network for the UK

The Inter Faith Network for the UK (IFN) www.interfaith.org.uk was founded in 1987 to “advance public knowledge and mutual understanding of the teachings, traditions and practices of the different faith communities in Britain, including an awareness both of their distinctive features and their common ground and to promote good relations between persons of different faiths.”

IFN's role is unique: linking national faith community representative bodies, local, regional and national inter faith bodies, academic and educational bodies with a focus on inter faith or multi-faith issues and working with them to deepen inter faith understanding and cooperation as part of working for the common good.

IFN carries out its work through raising awareness within wider society of the importance of inter faith issues, creating opportunities for linking and sharing of good practice, and providing advice and information to help the development of new inter faith initiatives and the strengthening of existing ones. Inter Faith Week is one of IFN's major programmes.

IFN works for the public benefit and its work is wide-ranging, touching the lives of many thousands of people directly and through the organisations and initiatives with which it engages. Working with its member bodies is an important part of this. Each of those makes its own contribution to inter faith understanding and cooperation in the UK.

To find out more or to make a donation to support IFN's work of promoting inter faith understanding and cooperation, please visit www.interfaith.org.uk

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“Inter faith understanding and cooperation are of year-round and ever growing importance but national Inter Faith Week provides a special time in the year when the spotlight falls on these issues. It is also a time when people in communities around the country highlight the significance of faith and the contribution that faith communities make to society. Young and old of all backgrounds get the chance to find out more about their neighbours’ faiths and beliefs and to discuss, debate, learn, contribute together to projects and celebrate their diversity. Finding commonalities, sharing what matters most deeply to us, asking questions, exploring differences of view – these are all part of the Week.”

RT REVd RICHARD ATKINSON OBE AND VIVIAN WINEMAN, CO-CHAIRS,
INTER FAITH NETWORK FOR THE UK

“Inter Faith Week helps to bridge gaps in understanding and encourage dialogue between the different faith communities. It plays a pivotal role in bringing together people of faith and of none in a range of events. I would encourage all faith groups and institutions up and down the country to support this year’s Inter Faith Week activities and help make it a week that truly celebrates the rich diversity of the communities we serve.”

BARONESS WILLIAMS OF TRAFFORD, MINISTER WITH RESPONSIBILITY
FOR INTEGRATION AND FAITH, DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Welcome to the Inter Faith Week toolkit

What is Inter Faith Week?

Inter Faith Week is a time in mid to late November each year when across the UK the spotlight falls on faith communities and inter faith activity, including engagement between those of religious and non-religious beliefs. You can find this year's dates and more at www.interfaithweek.org

How we get on as people of different faiths and beliefs is ever more important and this special Week brings a focus to that. It is a time for:

- strengthening good inter faith relations at all levels
- increasing awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society
- increasing understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs

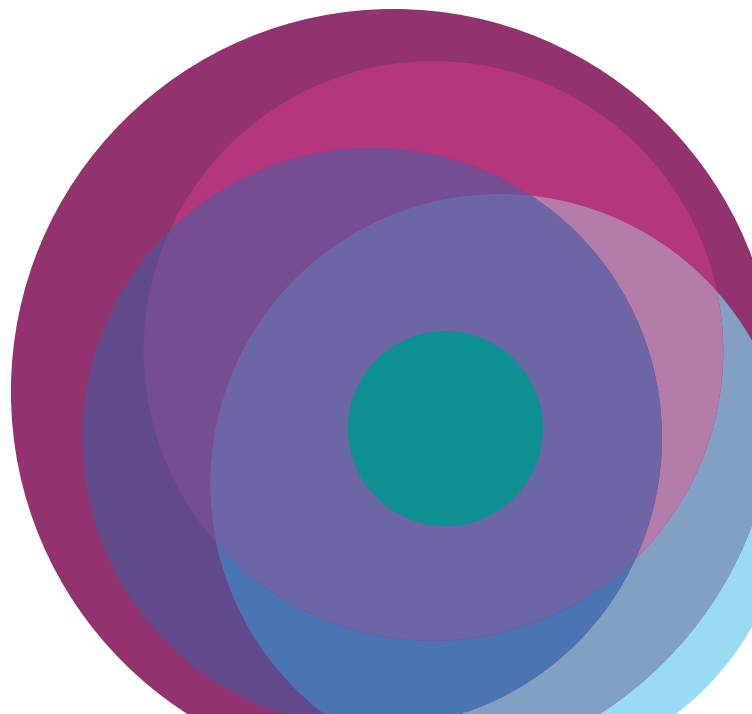
The Week was launched with those aims in 2009 by the Inter Faith Network for the UK, in partnership with the Government for that first year.

A Scottish Interfaith Week has run very successfully since 2004. Further information from www.interfaithscotland.org. From 2016, its dates are the same as those for the Week in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Creating an event or activity can be a great opportunity to celebrate your work and a well-run

event can help you attract the local community and encourage greater participation. We hope that this practical toolkit it will be a valuable resource and a spring board for getting involved this year.

As well as planning pointers, you will find a spread with some ideas for projects and events for different kinds of organisations. They draw on some of the exciting range of activities that have happened in previous Weeks. You can find even more ideas in the lists of events held in each Week in the Resources section of the Inter Faith Week website: www.interfaithweek.org



Taking part – making a difference

Anyone can take part in Inter Faith Week!

Taking part in the Week contributes to developing and deepening inter faith understanding and cooperation, increasing understanding about and between religion and belief groups and their individual members, and the development of the kind of society encapsulated in the vision of the Inter Faith Network for the UK:

“Our vision is of a society where there is understanding of the diversity and richness of the faith communities in the UK and the contribution that they make; and where we live and work together with mutual respect and shared commitment to the common good.”

THE INTER FAITH NETWORK FOR THE UK

Thousands of organisations of different kinds have taken part since the Week began:



“The work of inter faith is very vital and necessary in a diverse community for many faiths – no faith and community to unite work for peace and harmony in our towns, country and globally. It helps to raise the profile not locally but nationally too...Inter Faith Week is the way forward in breaking down the barriers and perceptions and learning about one another with RESPECT.”

BOLTON INTERFAITH COUNCIL

How will the Inter Faith Network’s Inter Faith Week team support you?

We can:

- Help you list your event or project on the Inter Faith Week website so that people can find it and get in touch with you
- Explore ideas for an event
- Offer advice to help you run a successful event
- Put media enquirers in touch with you

Tell us about your activity

Please register your activity on the Inter Faith Week website at www.interfaithweek.org

You can also email us at interfaithweek@interfaith.org.uk
or call us on 020 7730 0410

“The most important thing about Inter Faith Week is to show that belief holds no barriers within community; that by joining together we are stronger and we can learn to trust and build relationships.”

CHERWELL FAITH FORUM



Events map from 2015 Inter Faith Week

✿ Activity ideas: local inter faith groups

There are over 250 local inter faith groups around the UK which bring people together year round to make a difference to their local communities through dialogue, education, social events, social action projects and engagement with civic life. There are also many groups that bring together two faiths or three faiths, such as branches of the Council of Christians and Jews.

While your group is involved in inter faith work all year, Inter Faith Week is a great way to showcase what your group does, and can enable new people to find out about and become involved with inter faith work.

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You could...

- Organise a 'faith trail', inter faith walk or 'open door day' to help the public get a taster of local places of worship
- Put on a 'fair', festival or exhibition for groups to share information, with hands on activities to learn about topics like food or festivals of different faiths
- Team up with your local authority or others to organise a social action project such as a park clean up or tree planting – perhaps for both Inter Faith Week and Mitzvah Day www.mitzvahday.org.uk
- Join with local schools to help organise a special series of assemblies about different faith groups in the community, with presentations from local people of different faiths
- Launch a new initiative



Top: Watford Inter Faith Association pilgrimage participants receiving refreshments from Mitzvah Day team at local synagogue (Photo: Christophe Murphy)

Above: York Interfaith Group and volunteers mark Inter Faith Week by planting trees. (Photo: Nigel Holland and York Press)

- Hold a dialogue, talk or a 'Question Time' on a topic of shared concern or interest
- Host a multi faith meal with a conversation menu
- Arrange an inter faith sports event
- Put on a music event with contributions from different communities.

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org
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Activity ideas: local faith communities

As a local faith community, Inter Faith Week offers you a great opportunity to highlight your practical contribution to local life and your inter faith engagement and to open up your place of worship to the public to enable members of the public to learn what happens inside and deepen understanding of your community.

In areas where inter faith groups exist, you may want to work with them to run an event in partnership.

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You could...

- Encourage your members to take part in Inter Faith Week events
- Approach members of other local faith communities to discuss possible ways of marking the Week together
- Include in your regular worship service a sermon or talk about inter faith issues to mark the Week
- Open the doors of your place of worship to the public as part of an ‘open door day’ or act as one of the ‘stops’ on a ‘faith trail’ walk
- Offer time, in partnership with a local inter faith group or SACRE, to take part in educational events in local schools during the Week
- Partner with other local faith communities to run a social action project, perhaps working with a local charity or a branch of a national charity or a programme such as Near Neighbours



Above: Faith leaders’ observance in Inter Faith Week following terrorist attacks in Paris, Newcastle (*Photo: Newcastle Chronicle*)
Below: Flyer of Hounslow Friends of Faith



- Hold an event or activity focusing on the contribution your faith group makes to the community and how it does this
- Host an inter faith dialogue event, inviting members of other local communities.
- Arrange a ‘pulpit exchange’ between your clergy and others or a congregation exchange for members to visit and learn about each others’ places of worship.

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

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✿ Activity ideas: national faith communities

Inter Faith Week provides an opportunity for national faith communities to highlight their inter faith or inter religious relations activity and also the contribution that they make to society.

At the inauguration of Inter Faith Week, national faith community leaders affirmed their support for inter faith engagement and their commitment to working together for the betterment of society. You can find their statement, together with the Millennium Act of Shared Commitment which is often used at inter faith events, under Resources and at www.interfaithweek.org/statement and www.interfaith.org.uk/AoC

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You could...

- Highlight Inter Faith Week in a communication to your members and through your social media channels
- Use the Week to launch a new resource or project with an inter faith focus
- Host a visit of a leader or leaders from a different faith community
- Invite your member organisations to use sermon and talk opportunities during the Week to highlight the importance of good inter faith relations and discuss your tradition's bases for engagement
- Encourage participation of members in an Inter Faith Week related social action project

- Hold an event or activity about the common good and the ways that your community or denomination works towards this
- Develop a new leaflet or website section about the basis for involvement of your members in inter faith dialogue or multi faith social action
- Run a special training day on inter faith engagement for grassroots lay activists within your faith tradition
- Join together with another national faith community or communities to explore a particular issue such as responding well to refugees, healthcare, homelessness, food poverty or common values

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

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Cardinal Vincent Nichols with Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe President Malcolm Deboo at Zoroastrian Centre (Photo: mazur/catholicchurch.org.uk)

✿ Activity ideas: non-religious belief groups

One of the aims of the week is increasing dialogue between religious and non-religious groups and people from both religious and non-religious backgrounds are warmly welcomed to take part.

For some of non-religious beliefs the term ‘inter faith’ can be off-putting; however, it is used inclusively in this context. A number of non-religious groups have taken part since the Week began and there has been dialogue, including through an Inter Faith Network and British Humanist Association event.

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You could...

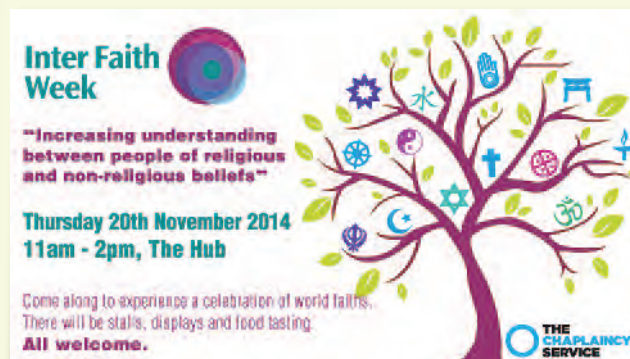
- Arrange a bilateral discussion with a particular faith group
- Open your meeting place or space for visitors
- Welcome people from other belief backgrounds to your meetings and events during the Week
- Respond positively to any requests for speakers for Inter Faith Week events
- Hold a discussion or debate on a particular topic of mutual interest
- Start planning for, or launch, a new dialogue initiative
- Participate in the kind of projects highlighted under the sections for national and local faith communities, local inter faith groups and others

These are just a few ideas drawn from participation in the Week and consultation with the BHA’s Dialogue Officer. For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

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Above: Discussing “the Impact of Extreme Religion on Humanity”, Slough Faith Partnership and Windsor Humanists (Photo: SFP)
Below: Flyer of Edgehill Chaplaincy Service
Bottom: Web page of University of Southampton Students’ Union



Activity ideas: national and regional inter faith organisations

Inter Faith Week provides a central public focal point which enables national and regional inter faith organisations to highlight the good inter faith work they are involved in year-round.

It offers a high profile opportunity to showcase your work and to make aspects of it better known, as well as to get new people involved.

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You could...

- Facilitate a public panel event which brings religious leaders and academics into dialogue on topical issues
- Hold a day conference to address an issue of common concern, such as the role of women in faith communities, working for peace, religious freedom,



Above: Participants at Interfaith Summit organised by 3FF Parliamentors programme (Photo: Beatrice Foschetti)
Top right: IFW Launch of Near Neighbours and IFN *Faiths Working Together* toolkit, Vauxhall Community Centre



or responding well to the inter faith impact of overseas events.

- Use the Week as an opportunity to increase the visibility of your organisation's work through such routes as social media
- Encourage your networks to take part in the Week to highlight your and their work
- Launch a resource or a new programme during the Week
- Use the Week to highlight existing resources to help develop inter faith understanding.
- Provide speakers for local Inter Faith Week events
- Arrange a special activity, such as a youth event or a social action project

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

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✿ Activity ideas: universities and colleges of further education

Multifaith chaplaincies, Students' Unions, faith and belief and inter faith societies, and staff are very active during Inter Faith Week on an increasing number of campuses. Inter Faith Week can be an excellent way to bring people from across your university or college community together, as well as a catalyst for longer term inter faith and faith awareness projects. It is also a good way of building relationships with other groups within your local community.

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You could...

- Set up a 'faith fair' where faith socs and members of local faith communities provide educational displays about their faith, and answer questions
- Do a tour around local places of worship
- Hold a pop up inter faith café with menus of questions and food from different communities



Above: Cambria College 'A taste of Faith and Culture' (Photo Cambria College)

Right: Buckinghamshire New University Students' Union Christian and Islamic Societies litter pick in High Wycombe (Photo: Stephen Taylor, BNU)

- Do a multi faith social action project or raise funds together for a local charity
- Arrange an inter faith football or netball match
- Invite a local inter faith group to set up a display station about inter faith activity and to be present to explain a bit about their work
- Host a talk and Q and A with local faith leaders
- Encourage faith and belief societies to work together to host a discussion about a religion and belief issue
- Arrange a seminar or conference to highlight the relevant work of your centre or department and contribute to dialogue on a particular issue.

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

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The National Union of Students has guidance for Students' Unions in *Good Inter Faith Relations on Campus* www.nus.org.uk.



Activity ideas: schools

Inter Faith Week is a great opportunity for pupils to explore inter faith issues and for schools to build relationships with faith groups in their community.

A number of special resources were created for schools marking Inter Faith Week and these can be found at www.interfaithweek.org/schools

You could...

- Work with your local inter faith group and SACRE to host a special assembly or 'Question Time'
- Organise an exhibition featuring information and objects about a range of religions and beliefs
- Arrange a friendly sports match between your school and a school with pupils of mainly other faith backgrounds from those at your school
- Host a parent-teacher 'faith quiz' one evening in collaboration with local faith communities or a local inter faith group
- Visit a local place of worship to investigate the importance of faith in the lives of believers
- Create an Inter Faith Week poster, artwork or multifaith calendar
- Have a dialogue about a topic such as 'shared values' or how people of different faiths and beliefs can live well together.
- Invite local MPs/MEPs/councillors to an RE lesson to see how faith is studied and/or to discuss the importance of learning about others' beliefs

- Make a video of events at your school held for Inter Faith Week

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

Among IFN's member bodies are a number with an RE focus. You can find these listed on the IFN website. Check out also the youth microsite on the IFN website youth.interfaith.org.uk



Above: Hampshire calendar competition: Wellow Primary School
(Photo Hants CC)

Below: 'Hands-on-Faith' workshop at Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Huddersfield organised by Kirklees Faiths Forum (Photo: KFF)



✿ Activity ideas: youth organisations

Many youth organisations such as Guides and Scouts have taken part in Inter Faith Week since it began. It provides an exciting opportunity for events about faith and inter faith issues.

You could...

- Hold an event bringing young people of different backgrounds together to discuss a particular theme such as ideals of 'service' in different religious and non-religious belief traditions, or the environment
- Create a social media campaign to highlight the importance of inter faith understanding and friendship
- Organise an opportunity to visit two faith community places of worship
- Create a multi faith volunteering opportunity – perhaps working with the local inter faith group or two or three faith groups in your area
- Arrange a visit to a faith-based organisation such as a care home run by a particular faith community and talk to people about their faith
- Hold an inter faith 'bake off', baking breads of different faiths
- If your organisation is single faith-based, invite speakers from different faith communities to come and talk or arrange a joint event with another youth organisation or organisations from a different faith community
- Develop a special resource about inter faith issues



Above: Parallel Versing; Beyond Skin (Northern Ireland) and the Music Project (Sri Lanka) event for IFW
 Right: Faiths for Fun Day, Birmingham Council of Faiths and Scouts in West Midlands (Photo: Myles Fisher)



- Create a video with interviews of members of some of the different faith and belief groups in your area

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

There are a number of bodies that specialise in support of inter faith initiatives involving young people, such as 3FF. Details about these and other relevant bodies, along with ideas about inter faith activity developed with and for young people, can be found at youth.interfaith.org.uk

The Interfaith Youth Trust has a special small grants programme for Inter Faith Week events and projects developed with young people. You can find out more at: www.ifyouthtrust.org.uk

✿ Activity ideas: cultural organisations

For many people it is through music, theatre, dance, film, art and poetry that commonalities and differences are explored during Inter Faith Week. The Week has been used by many cultural organisations since the outset to bring their particular contribution to understanding and celebrating diversity (to say nothing of the many other organisations which have run arts and cultural events!).

You could...

- Arrange an activity to learn about the calligraphy or art of particular faith traditions
- Write and/or produce a play with an inter faith theme
- Arrange a musical event with contributions from people of different backgrounds
- Host an evening with poets of different backgrounds
- Run a photography or art competition with a religion and belief theme
- Encourage artists from a range of backgrounds to collaborate on a particular work or series of works
- Hold an inter faith comedy evening



Above: Devon Faith and Belief Festival for Inter Faith Week in Paignton Library, Torbay (Photo: Simon Culley)

Below left: Batley Poets event flyer

Bottom: Cambridge Inter-Faith Programme tweet about Scriptural Reasoning event with the British Museum

- Make a video about an aspect of religion and belief in the UK today
- Arrange an exhibition of different forms of religious art/ iconography

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org



✿ Activity ideas: sports organisations

Inter Faith Week can be a great time to initiate inter faith sports programmes or celebrate those that are already going. Cricket, football, netball, and rugby are just some of the sports that have taken advantage of the Week so far.

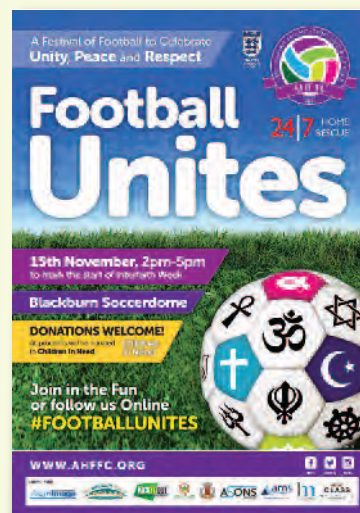
You could...

- Include an Inter Faith Week section in your regular match programme
- Through your community or diversity programme, hold a half day or day event to bring together supporters and others to discuss issues about sport and multi faith, multi ethnic communities
- Profile your club's existing support of inter faith sport programmes in its area
- Arrange an indoor five a side football match



- Hold a special inter faith training session to learn cricket skills
- Set up an inter faith netball match
- Work with a local college or school or with faith and belief societies on campus to put on a mini Inter Faith Week tournament
- If you have rooms in your grounds that you can make available without charge on a charitable basis, explore whether the local inter faith group or a youth organisation might like to hold an Inter Faith Week event there
- Run an event at which sportspeople talk about the impact of their faith or belief on their sporting career

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org



Far left: Inter faith netball tournament in Windsor, organised by Thames Valley Police and Aik Saath (Photo: Baylis Media Ltd)

Left: AHF FC tournament for people of different faiths, professions and organisations at the Blackburn Soccerdome, fundraising for Children in Need

See also page 19, Charlton Athletic and partners

Activity ideas: workplaces and businesses

Inter Faith Week provides businesses and workplaces with a unique opportunity to engage with diversity and equalities and to encourage religious literacy and positive relations in the workplace. Most businesses have customers and clients of many faiths and beliefs and the Week is an excellent time to highlight appreciation of diversity.

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You could...

- Hold an Inter Faith Week training day on Religion and Belief in the workplace
- Invite members of local faith communities to provide an opportunity for your staff to ask



Above: Faith Through a Lens competition held by Congregational and General Insurance with photographer Don McCullin

questions, and to gain insight into the different religions, customs and cultures of their communities

- Launch – or start planning for – a staff inter faith network.
- Run a webinar or chat with your offices around the country on religion and belief issues and the importance of good relations
- Hold a ‘Managing religion or belief requests in the workplace’ session for line managers looking at the process by which the particular employer deals with a religion or belief request from an employee, for example a request for time off work for a religious festival or holiday
- Organise a food event where members of your staff can experience dishes from different faith groups and learn about their traditions
- Find out about your local inter faith group and offer sponsorship or in-kind support to their Inter Faith Week event or another project, such as advice, employee time, advertising, use of IT or printing facilities, or discounts on products and services
- Hold a discussion about the ways in which religious literacy and dialogue might contribute to and strengthen the realisation of your corporate values.
- Make part of your retail premises available for a faith and belief exhibition

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

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Activity ideas: local authorities

Inter Faith Week provides a great platform for local authorities to celebrate positive inter faith relations in their areas and to explore issues of religious and belief as part of their work to promote integration and cohesion.

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You could...

- Encourage your teams to use the Week creatively – for example your environment team could put on an opportunity for local faith and belief groups to come and learn about their work and discuss sustainability and environmental care
- Encourage elected members to attend as many local Inter Faith Week events as possible to enthuse grassroots activists and help raise the profile of their work
- Sponsor an exhibition, competition or other event in partnership with the local inter faith group.
- Host an internal event where elected members and officers have an opportunity to discuss issues – such as faith and belief in the workplace
- Work with other local community leaders to promote ‘faith awareness’ among elected members, officers and other public service providers in the area
- Host a discussion about an issue such as the difference between ‘extremism’ and conservative religious views.
- Hold a breakfast reception for faith leaders

- Make a space available as ‘in kind’ support for the local inter faith group or others wanting to hold an Inter Faith Week event
- Take part in – or help arrange – a special event or observance for the Week.

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

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Above: IFW reception at Belfast City Hall with the Lord Mayor of Belfast and the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum (Photo: BCC)
Below: Bristol Celebrates event organised by Bristol City Council and local inter faith groups (Photo: Terry Rook, Glance Image)



✿ Activity ideas: emergency services

The emergency services work with all sectors of the community. The Week is a good time to highlight the multi faith dimension of that and to work with faith groups and non-religious belief groups towards safer and more cohesive communities.

You could...

- Profile Inter Faith Week in your newsletter or through your social media channels and encourage involvement by your members.
- Hold a talk about inter faith relations in your area
- Explore the role of police and faith community groups and other bodies, such as the Crown Prosecution Service, in addressing hate crime
- Organise a 'faith literacy' day in partnership with a local inter faith group, local authority or local faith leaders to enable members of your team to learn

Safer Transport Team of the Metropolitan Police inter faith event, LB of Barking and Dagenham *(Photo: Safer Transport Team)*



Above: Transplant register drive: Multi Faith Centre at the University of Derby, the NHS Blood and Transplant Service, Derby City Council, Derby Open Centre and the Ukrainian Association GB (Derby branch) *(Photo: MFC Derby)*
 Right: Flyer of LAMAG, Faiths Together in Lambeth and the Metropolitan Police



about some of the faiths in your local community.

- Arrange a multi faith sports competition
- Offer a space for a local community inter faith event
- Work with local faith community representatives to prepare fire safety briefings for places of worship
- Host a special day to showcase the work of your ambulance service to local faith and belief groups

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

✿ Activity ideas: other types of body

Many other kinds of body hold Inter Faith Week events, such as Armed Services, prisons, hospitals, Rotary Clubs, and national and local voluntary organisations. Some will have chaplaincies and these often play a lead role in Inter Faith Week events as part of their year round work to support people of different faiths and beliefs.

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You could...

- Include a feature about Inter Faith Week in your newsletter or bulletin
- Contact your local inter faith group and make or develop a link with it.
- Arrange an Inter Faith Week talk
- Invite guests from different faiths or from a non-religious belief group to come and talk
- If an institution, include a dish linked to a different faith each day of the week of your canteen menu
- Hold a combined Prisons Week and Inter Faith Week event (they often fall in the same week)



Faith leaders at event to raise awareness of need for foster carers, West Midlands Faith Forum and Birmingham City Council Fostering and Adoption Service (Photo: Nishkam Centre)

- If you have a chaplaincy, ask if it can lead on an event or series of events during the Week about inter faith and religion and belief issues
- Hold an Inter Faith Week quiz
- Hold a conference or seminar looking at different faith perspectives on a relevant topic such as justice, healing, or citizenship.

Many of the suggestions for different types of body will be relevant, and for more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org

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Left: Flyer for week-long programme at Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro with Cornwall Faith Forum and Mitie Far left: IFW event organised by Charlton Athletic Community Trust, Greenwich Islamic Centre, Charlton Athletic Race & Equality and Project Mosaic, in partnership with the Armed Forces Community Covenant

✿ Activity ideas: media



Above: Minister Lord Ahmad at IFW launch of Jewish News interfaith channel (Photo: Jewish News)

Below: BBC Songs of Praise Inter Faith Week special with Mitzvah Day and LSE Faith Centre participants on how cooking and singing are helping build bridges between religions (Photo: BBC)



Mitzvah Day is a Jewish-led day of social action encouraging projects which partner with other faith communities. It takes place in, or very close to, Inter Faith Week www.mitzvahday.org.uk

In this toolkit, there are pointers for activity holders to get coverage, but press, radio and television – as well as newer forms of media – are of course themselves participants in the Week! An increasing number are using the Week to connect with their audiences on religion and belief issues and finding creative ways to do this.

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You could...

- Run a special feature on Inter Faith Week
- Cover Inter Faith Week events that are happening
- Include a series of interviews with people of different faiths and non religious beliefs
- Host a roundtable of religious affairs correspondents to discuss inter faith relations
- Bring an Inter Faith Week dimension to your regular programme – from news to cooking, there is an inter faith dimension to most things!
- If you are a single faith based media outlet, consider a joint programme or series of interviews with one from a different faith community
- Broadcast from a faith community location such as a place of worship
- Run a competition for young people in your town or city to report on an Inter Faith Week event
- Co-sponsor an Inter Faith Week event

For more ideas visit www.interfaithweek.org
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Starting to plan

All sorts of different activities take place during Inter Faith Week: some are 'events' and others are activities that take place in classrooms, workplaces and many other contexts – and also online.

You may already have an idea in mind. If you are looking for inspiration, details of events held for previous Weeks can be found in reports on past weeks and events lists on the Inter Faith Week website: www.interfaithweek.org

What are we working towards?

The aims of the Week provide the framework. However, what people do depends on what they are hoping to achieve. Some of the first questions that are worth asking yourself are:

- Who are we hoping to attract?
- What are the messages that we are hoping to communicate?
- What do we hope the outcomes will be?



Some planning pointers

Depending on what kind of activity you are planning, some or all of the following pointers may be helpful:

- Get together a small planning group
- If you are planning a multi faith event, start with a planning group that has people from a range of backgrounds so that everyone feels ownership
- Talk through the shape of the project or event and who to invite to contribute
- Choose a time for the event or activity that enables participation from members of particular faiths that you hope to involve – check that it does not clash with any times of worship or other observance
- Clarify your aims and objectives and think about how you will monitor and evaluate whether they are achieved
- Decide on people's responsibilities
- Agree your budget
- Think about how far people may be willing to travel to take part and what would be a suitable venue
- Check out whether you need any special insurance or permissions for holding the event
- If you are working with, or involving, young people or vulnerable adults, make sure you are aware of relevant safeguarding requirements

- Draw up a plan for how to publicise the event and encourage media coverage
- Think about how you might use social media before, during and after the event.

If you are thinking about working with people of other faiths and beliefs on a project for the first time, check out the following publications for some useful pointers:

- Faiths Working Together: Connecting for the Common Good Toolkit
Near Neighbours and the Inter Faith Network,
www.interfaith.org.uk/publications/all-publications/all-publications/147-faiths-working-together-toolkit/file
- The Local Inter Faith Guide: Community Cooperation in Action
Inter Faith Network for the UK,
www.interfaith.org.uk/publications/all-publications/all-publications/18-the-local-inter-faith-guide-faith-community-co-operation-in-action-second-edition/file
- Belief in Dialogue, a good practice guide produced by the Scottish Government
www.interfaithscotland.org/resources/publications/belief-in-dialogue

Choosing your space



Launch of Inter Faith Week in Wales at the historic Yr Hen Gapel, Llwynrhydowen, Pontsian, Llandysul, Ceredigion (Photo: Unitarians Wales)

It may be that your venue is a given. You might be, for example, a teacher arranging a classroom activity, an environment group planning a tree planting in a park, or a prison chaplain working on an on-site event.

If you don't have an obvious choice of venue, consider such options as local community centres, schools, civic buildings, sports venues, faith community communal spaces, and other public buildings where they may have suitable facilities.

Explore whether the venue may be willing to make its space available to you free or at a discounted rate, given the purpose.

For both indoor and outdoor venues, you will want to check how well served these are by public transport and accessibility.

When you are thinking about a venue, it is usually a good idea to go for a venue that is slightly on the large side rather than too small.

Indoor venues:

- How many people can the venue safely hold?
- Can the venue provide the equipment that you require?
- Is the venue accessible for people with a disability?
- What facilities does the venue have for catering and other needs?
- What are the security/ registration arrangements (if any)?

Outdoor venues:

- What permissions do we need to hold an event in this outdoor space?
- Are there public toilets nearby?
- How good is the access to the site?
- Are there special arrangements for bad weather?

Some event listing sites have useful information eg: www.eventbrite.co.uk/blog/event-management-checklist-venues-ds00/#sthash.hrvYuKyO.dpuf

Some considerations

Health and safety

Conduct a short risk assessment to help you think about how you can remove or minimise dangers (you can find a template on page 34).

Permission

Check whether you need permission from any authorities before the project. If so, get written permission before the activity takes place.

Insurance

Inter Faith Week and the Inter Faith Network for the UK cannot take responsibility for the content or insurance of Inter Faith Week activities organised by other bodies. If you are organising an activity it is important that you have appropriate insurance for the event. Contact your existing insurance broker and also your local authority to ensure you have a correct level of cover.

Leaders and supporters from different faiths at an Inter Faith Day organised by Holland House Retreat Centre, Worcestershire (*Photo: Nishkam Centre*)

If you are using a venue, you will also want to clarify who is responsible for insurance for the event or activity and see copies of their public liability insurance certificates.

DBS checks

If your event involves your staff or members volunteering or working with children or vulnerable adults, there may be a need for a DBS check. These used to be called CRB checks.

To see a full guidance report on DBS checks, visit www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview

If you would like more detailed guidance on running events, the Cabinet Office guide on running voluntary events is a useful resource – www.gov.uk/government/publications/can-do-guide-for-organisers-of-voluntary-events/the-can-do-guide-to-organising-and-running-voluntary-and-community-events



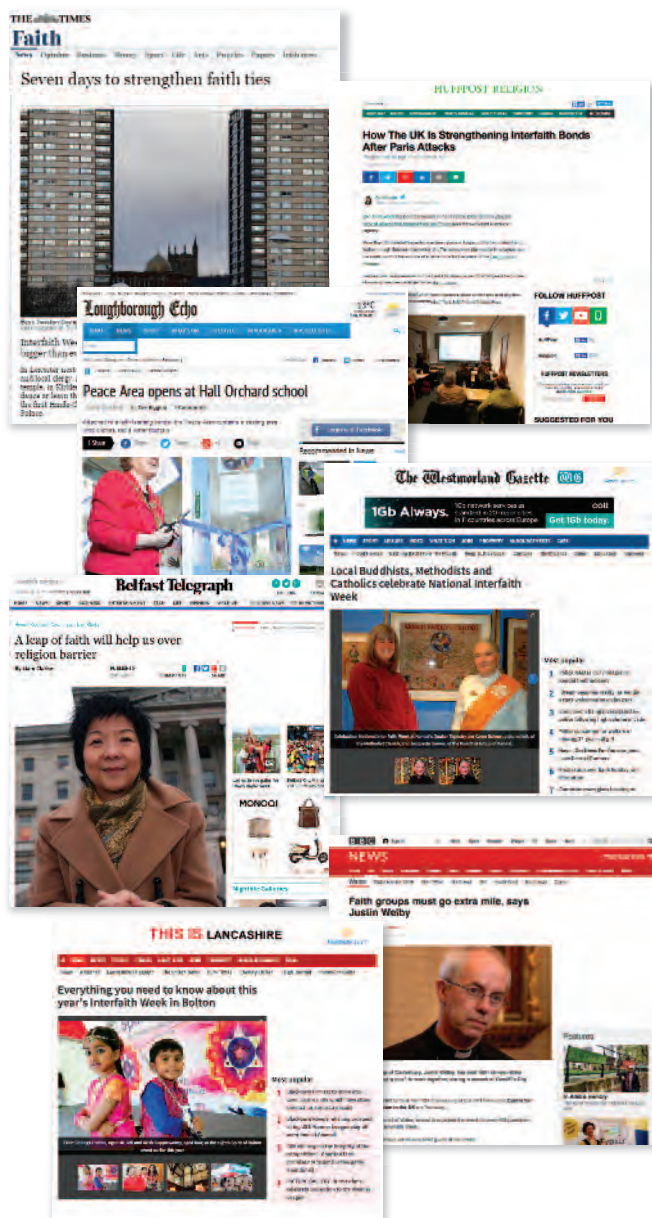
Publicity and media coverage

Raising the profile of your activities

There are a number of simple ways to raise the profile of your organisation and your activities during Inter Faith Week, and some of these are covered below.

A good starting point is to talk through who your target audiences are and what channels are most likely to reach them.

- Use posters, leaflets and social media to make your event known
- Local media – appoint a press officer or media contact for the event
- Find out who are the editors of local papers and radio stations in your area and phone or email them to ask for their deadlines and what sort of information or stories they are interested in
- Write a news release and use it to make your event known
- Answer any enquiries swiftly
- Invite the local paper's photographer to your event
- Follow up with good quality photos of the event and provide captions with people's names
- When people register, ask them to sign a release form to say that they are content for photos to be used
- Ask permission from parents/ guardians when using photos of children





Above: Aaqil Ahmed, BBC Head of Religion and Ethics, Manchester Interfaith Network and FN4M IFW conference
 Right: The Feast tweet as part of its #FaithFriends social media campaign to mark the Week

Social media

Social media is a very effective tool for raising awareness and profile of activities. More impact is achieved if you actively engage with other users. You can find out more starter points for social media online at www.interfaithweek.org/smstarter

Additional help and support guides to create social media accounts can be found below. They provide simple step-by-step guides for use of the platform:

- Facebook: en-gb.facebook.com/help/34512135559712/
- Twitter: support.twitter.com/articles/215585
- Instagram: help.instagram.com/182492381886913/?ref=hc_fnav

The Near Neighbours Social Media Toolkit contains many useful pointers: <http://bit.ly/1NjN0RP>

Facebook and Twitter are currently the most widely used social media platforms in the UK, but it is worth checking whether that is true for your audiences.



IFN makes use of Facebook and Twitter, operating separate accounts for Inter Faith Week: www.facebook.com/IFWeek and www.twitter.com/IFWeek.

As well as posting/ tweeting information about your event, try to tag key individuals and organisations. You can do this on Facebook and Twitter putting @ before a username, for example @IFWeek will tag the

Some IFN Faith Communities Forum members with IFW flyer





Inter Faith Week account and let us know you have mentioned us. This makes it more likely that a user will notice and share your post more widely to their networks.

Making use of hashtags is a good way to signal that your post is linked to a wider initiative or 'trend'. For Inter Faith Week, IFN encourages use of #IFWeek and #InterFaithWeek. If you are running an event at which lots of people are likely to tweet, you might consider creating your own specific hashtag.

Including photos or graphics within posts is another good way to get attention.

Websites

If your organisation has a website, it is a good idea to add details about your activities there. If you are running an event in partnership, encourage all partner organisations to list the event, too.



Above: Scottish Interfaith Week launch – photo opportunity with faith leaders with Minister Aileen McLeod signing inter faith declaration on climate change (Photo: Interfaith Scotland)
Left: Leeds City Council LGB&T* Hub tweet about an event in partnership with Stonewall, Changing Attitudes and Equity Centre

Do list your event on the Inter Faith Week website at www.interfaithweek.org. This can be a good way to connect to a wider audience.

Newspapers, magazines, blogs and broadcast media

If you want local, regional or national media to pick up on your activities through stories or features, it is usually worth building up relationships with journalists, bloggers, editors and presenters well in advance. Relationships are two-way, and being available to comment/ give interviews on relevant topics can be helpful to journalists and build trust.

If you know that a particular journalist has an interest in inter faith engagement, or in the kind of activity you are planning, it is worth contacting them directly.

For further tips on engaging with 'traditional' media, including how to write a news release, visit www.interfaithweek.org/media1/media-tips

Get support for your activity

Local faith communities

Ask faith groups in your area to support the event and see if they may be willing to make space or other resources available as a 'gift in kind'.

Contact your local Mayor and MP

You can contact your Mayor through the local authority and your MP by visiting www.theyworkforyou.com

Local businesses

See if your local shops and other businesses might like to support you – invite them to sponsor the event or the publicity material, or ask if they may be willing to make resources available as a gift 'in kind'.



DCLG Minister, Baroness Williams of Trafford, at Near Neighbours IFW event, Southall (Photo: Near Neighbours)



Mayor of Southwark and panellists at Southwark i-Witness IFW event (Photo: Southwark Council)

Your local authority

Contact your local authority and ask if they might be willing to support with a small grant or through a gift in kind of venue space or some administrative support.

Grants from Trusts

You could apply to Trusts for grants towards your event. This may be particularly relevant to local events.

The Interfaith Youth Trust makes available small grants for youth inter faith activities and events for Inter Faith Week.

On the day and afterwards

On the day

- Arrive early to check all the facilities are as required – including any audio/ visual equipment – and have all reception arrangements in place
- Put up signs including a big welcome sign
- Meet and greet – with staff or volunteers on hand to meet people and show them where to go
- You might want to ask visitors to fill out a simple monitoring form to give a sense, after the activity, of the diversity of people who have taken part
- Make sure you have brought any paperwork such as evaluation forms or a risk assessment
- Make sure that there is an identified First Aider and that you know where the First Aid kit is
- Ensure that people taking part know where toilets, changing areas and refreshment areas are and also, fire escapes and meeting points in the event of an emergency
- If you are running an activity, keep a list of who has arrived or get them to sign in
- If you are encouraging people to tweet from your event, display prominently any hashtags you are using
- Bring a camera to take pictures for your records, to tweet, etc.
- At the end of the event, thank people



Students at University of Bradford handing out flowers for peace to mark the Week in the town centre (Photo: UoB Chaplain)

After the event

- Tell the media of your success – have a news release ready to send to the national or local paper highlighting how your activity went
- Include a photo from the activity with the news release to add value to the story
- Fill in the online survey on the Inter Faith Week website – by learning from each Inter Faith Week we can develop it strongly for the future
- Evaluate your own activity

Evaluating and learning for the future

Monitoring and evaluating events is not exciting but it is good to do! It can help you as you think about planning an even more successful event in the future and it may also help you demonstrate to your users and funders the impact of your work.

At the outset of planning, decide what you want your event to achieve; monitor it; and then later evaluate to see how well you judge it has met your objectives. Even if an event has not gone 100% as you hoped, it can be an opportunity to learn and grow. And very often, evaluation will show that events have gone even better than people hoped!

Look to gather basic information such as:

- number of people attending
- what was the drop out rate (after pre- registration)
- diversity of attenders of the event/activity
- contacts made
- money raised (if relevant)

Also gather participants' opinions and observations. That might be gathered through:

- A comment form handed to all participants to give in at the end of the event/activity or a post-event survey by email or through an on-line survey
- A collation of media coverage
- Social media statistics: comments, retweets, mentions, new followers

“We put on our most innovative and interactive activities which appeal to a diverse range of people, those of many faiths and those of no faith. It’s a chance to meet people who normally wouldn’t be involved in our work. It showcases our work and highlights the importance of inter faith to other bodies.”

KIRKLEES FAITH FORUM

- Possibly a small number of interviews
- A debriefing meeting of the organisers

Before your event, discuss and agree what the questions to participants will be. Some of the kinds of questions you might ask are:

- Did the event meet your hopes and expectations?
- Was it thought provoking?
- Was there a high level/quality of speaker(s) and/or participants?
- Did you meet and talk with people of different faiths and beliefs from your own?
- Did you come away from the event with greater understanding of another religion or belief tradition or traditions?
- What was, in your view, the best thing about the event/activity?

- How could the event/activity have been improved?
- What did you think of the event location/ menu/facilities?
- What is your religion and belief background/ gender/age?
- Would you come again/recommend to a friend?

If respondents are providing their contact details on the same form, for example in response to being invited to give details if they are happy to be contacted about their response, a data protection statement should be included.

Ask two or three people to record details of your event while it is happening by making notes and taking pictures.

When doing your evaluation, draw together the information and views that you have gathered but also reflect together as organisers on some overall questions such as:

- Did the event or activity bring together a new pattern of participants?
- Did it create new patterns of contact and engagement?
- If it was a social action project, who did it help and in what ways?
- Did the event or activity stimulate debate or new thinking?

- Did it inspire a commitment to a follow up activity?
- Did the event/activity raise awareness or build profile of your group/project/organisation?

Good evaluation is useful to you, because it can help you to improve your future events. It can also be useful to other people. Aim to write up in a clear and simple style a short 'evaluation report' which explains what your event or activity was, what the aims were, who attended, how you evaluated and what you found out.

Highcross shopping centre provided footfall figures for the exhibition in Leicester pictured below.



Leicester Council of Faiths and Leicester City Council exhibition on faiths at Highcross shopping centre

Resources: Inter Faith Week activity checklist

- Identify a project or an event
- Create a tasks list
- Find a venue
- Invite speakers or any other contributors
- Invite the audience
- Register your project on the Inter Faith Week website
- Contact companies or bodies such as your local authority to seek in-kind support
- Invite your MP or Mayor
- Get permission if necessary
- Complete a risk assessment
- Make sure you have appropriate insurance
- Ensure that participants have DBS checks if necessary
- Make sure you have the necessary equipment
- Let participants know where or when they need to be
- Update your website with your event
- Send out news release about your project
- Hold your activity/event
- Use social media to highlight your event
- Thank your volunteers, supporters and sponsors
- Record feedback from participants, stallholders and volunteers
- Fill in a survey on the Inter Faith Week website
- Evaluate your event

Resources: Risk assessment template

Name of risk assessor:	
Signature:	
Name of the event:	
Short description:	
Date of the event:	
Name of venue	
Name of main venue contact:	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
List of equipment to be used:	

Anticipating the main problems

	Potentially hazardous activities	Action needed to eliminate or reduce each risk	Name of person responsible for each risk
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Resources: Faith leaders' statement

A question asked by some event organisers since the Week began is whether there are any multi faith statements or words that can be drawn on or said together at events. Some develop their own; others have found it helpful to have the following two as resources.

If your organisation develops its own statement or act of commitment, do let us know.

Faith Leaders' Statement at the inauguration of Inter Faith Week

As part of the 2009 Inter Faith Week, the Archbishop of Canterbury hosted an event attended by faith community leaders. At the event, participants signed a statement acknowledging the value of, and representing their commitment to, inter faith work and practical cooperation for the common good:

We believe that good inter faith relations are a vital part of a harmonious, just and respectful society.

We pledge, today, to deepen our work to increase understanding about and between our faiths and to strengthen our cooperation on social issues.

We renew our commitment to developing effective and long term ways of dialogue and mutual learning. We shall continue to seek to understand the patterns of engagement of our faith communities – through history and today; to affirm the positive aspects of these patterns; and to heal wounds of misunderstanding where these are found.

While our great religious traditions are distinct in belief and practice, there is much that unites us. We will draw on fundamental values held in common and on the wisdom of our respective faith traditions to continue to work – as individual communities and together – for the wellbeing of our society, our wider global community and the planet that is our home.

Alongside all of good will, we will work to tackle with renewed determination the challenges of poverty, ignorance, injustice, crime and violence, and social fragmentation and to help shape a society where all feel at home; all are valued and justly treated; and all have a chance to thrive.

Resources: An act of commitment

Act of Commitment by the Faith Communities of the UK

This was developed by the faith communities of the UK with the Inter Faith Network for the UK for the Shared Act of Reflection and Commitment at the House of Lords as part of the official Millennium celebrations.

*In a world scarred by the evils of war,
racism, injustice and poverty,
we offer this joint Act of Commitment as we
look to our shared future.*

*We commit ourselves,
as people of many faiths,
to work together
for the common good,
uniting to build a better society,
grounded in values and ideals we share:*

*community,
personal integrity,
a sense of right and wrong,
learning, wisdom and love of truth,
care and compassion,
justice and peace,
respect for one another,
for the earth and its creatures.*

*We commit ourselves,
in a spirit of friendship and co-operation,
to work together
alongside all who share our values and ideals,
to help bring about a better world
now and for generations to come.*

And finally...

Whatever you do, we hope it is successful and enjoyable and do take the time to tell us about it! www.interfaithweek.org



Participants in an inter faith walk, organised with the University of Sunderland Chaplaincy and Sunderland Interfaith Forum (Photo: USC)

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