

**HM Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London's Council on Faith**  
**A brief report of progress for period January to December 2023**

## **1. Summary**

HM Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London's Council on Faith was established in September 2016. Over the last seven years it has established relationships with religious communities and organisations that work towards community cohesion; enacting the Lord-Lieutenant's strategy of building bridges for a fairer London.

This has been another year marked by change relating to both Monarchy and the Council on Faith itself. King Charles III was coronated in May 2023, bringing in more faith leaders than ever before to play a part in the ceremony, signalling his interfaith commitment. The Council on Faith itself is about to experience a change, with Dr David Dangoor CBE DL stepping down at the end of 2023 and Revd Canon Dr Flora Winfield DL taking over as new Chair.

The Council on Faith has continued its mission with a range of activities, both familiar and new. The London Faith & Belief Community Awards entered its 7<sup>th</sup> year at the Royal Society of Medicine, while the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Interfaith Fun Run took place in September. An inaugural Waltham Forest borough-level award was held in September.

The Faith & Belief Forum continued to be the delivery partner for the Council on Faith.

## **2. Activities**

### **London Interfaith Fun Run 2023**

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2023, the third London Interfaith Fun Run was held at StoneX Stadium to bring together individuals, communities, and charitable organisations for a day of family fun, unity, and fundraising for good causes. Photos of the event can be found [here](#).

Continuing the good work of 2022, we were delighted to bring together old faces and new for an energising day. New partners, who brought an even greater diversity to proceedings, included Hunarly, Al-Kawther Academy and The Mindfulness Network for People of Colour.

Following the event, partners were consulted for feedback, which included:

- *The event is organised so that charities and participants feel welcome, that it is intentionally inclusive by nature and people feel comfortable to represent themselves and their identities fully.*

- *There's a chance to make a lot of new contacts and people reported engaging in a lot of conversations with new people socially and professionally.*
- *Food options were an improvement on previous years; there was a mixture of cuisines, with a higher quality and options for all necessary dietary requirements.*

Activities on the day included: 1K, 5K and 10K runs/ walks; food and live music from around the world, including Zende Delan, London International Gospel Choir, Kirtan London, The Oranim Dance Troupe, and Siri Sadhana Kaur; a charity zone representing the diversity of London charities; interactive interfaith activities for families including faith symbols train and arts and crafts; a community arts coordinator through Nine Elms Art Ministry; and an inflatables zone.

There was good engagement with 220 runners and 350 participants in attendance. There were 37 partnered charities that signed up, with 25 taking a stall on the day.

Thanks to encouragement and support from The Exilarch's Foundation, we were able to reach individuals from outside the charities' networks through securing the following media partners: Jewish News, Church Times, Voice of Islam, Eastern Eye, and Asian Media Group. The Interfaith Fun Run was also featured in the Jewish Chronicle, furthering the message of unity and togetherness that the event represents.



## **Celebrating Faith & Belief Communities Across London**

This year, two Faith & Belief Community Awards events have been held. At the borough level, the inaugural Waltham Forest Faith & Belief Awards were held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023, hosted jointly by Waltham Forest Borough Council and the Waltham Forest Faith Communities Forum. Programme and winners are detailed in [this brochure](#).

At the pan-London level, the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual London Faith & Belief Community Awards were held at the Royal Society of Medicine on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023. 32 faith-based community projects were granted £500 courtesy of The Exilarch's Foundation, Direct

Line Group, Morgan Charitable Foundation, Community Union, and Spice Village Restaurant. A further 24 projects and 6 outstanding individuals were recognised. Programme and winners are detailed in [this brochure](#) . Photos of the event can be found [here](#) and a video of the event [here](#) .

Both celebratory events saw new categories brought in to reflect the changing London and national landscape. The Covid-19 category, running since 2020, has been replaced by a Response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis category, while both awards also brought in a Schools & Educational Establishments category, to further reward those working with young people.



### **3. Promoting the Messages of the Council**

The Council on Faith met three times in 2023. In February 2023, it met at the London Islamic Cultural Society, in July at the Royal Foundation of Saint Katharine and in November at the London Fo Guang Shan Temple.

The Council on Faith continues to produce newsletters highlighting its plans and sharing the activities and views of its members. This year the two newsletters included



interviews with Bibi Khan MBE DL and Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE. These can be accessed at the GLL website [here](#).

The Council on Faith newsletter continues to release the interviews it produces with its members not just in written format, but now in audio or audio-visual format. Bibi Khan's interview is available as a [podcast](#) and Sir Kenneth's interview will become available on YouTube.

#### **4. Relationship Building and Planning for the Future**

Due to its forward-thinking membership and good connections, the Council on Faith continues to be embedded in London's civic community.

The Council on Faith & F&BF worked on The Big Help Out, one of the official projects during the weekend of the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, a huge public engagement campaign to promote, champion and showcase volunteering. F&BF hosted an information webinar, in partnership with Integra Group, on 30<sup>th</sup> March highlighting volunteer stories and encouraging individuals and organisations to get involved. The webinar featured speakers including Brendan Cox and Maurice Ostro. 150 people attended the webinar, many of whom were from The London Faith & Belief Community Awards network.

Many councils have either signed up or expressed an interest in working on future borough-level awards. Camden will host an awards event in March 2024; Southwark in late Summer/Autumn 2024; and Waltham Forest are committed to continuing their awards, either annually or bi-annually.

Following conversations with the Council on Faith, F&BF and Maccabi GB, the London Interfaith Fun Run is set for a rebrand. To make the event more open and inclusive to charities and individuals across London, the event will likely become a 'Wellness Festival'. Planning will continue into 2024, but the aim will be to centre wellness for faith organisations across London, with a Fun Run remaining one component of the day.

As Dr David Dangoor CBE DL steps down as chair of the Council of Faith, F&BF will continue to deliver the now well-established annual awards. In so doing, they have decided to rename them the Dangoor Faith & Belief Community Awards in recognition of the patronage and leadership of David Dangoor over the past eight years. It is envisaged that the Lord Lieutenant's Council on faith, under its new chair, will continue to support this important annual event in London's interfaith calendar.