

Jane Winter

PRACTICAL SPIRIT

Interactive project development
for faith based organisations involved in social action

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www.fbrn.org.uk

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Foreword

I am delighted that support from the Department for Communities and Local Government, for Inter Faith Week 2010, has given FbRN the opportunity to produce this booklet. It builds on the work we did in 2009 producing display materials and a leaflet about faith based social action.

While doing that work we had such a great response, from groups spanning a wide diversity of faiths, that we longed to be able to use more of the information, and to delve more deeply into some of the stories.

This booklet enables us to use those stories not only to show the range of faith based social action, but also to provide the means for practitioners to learn from, and to inspire, each other.

Of course, we can only offer here a glimpse of what is happening in each of these projects, but we hope that you will follow up the suggestion to view the video clips on YouTube.

Please let us know how you have used this booklet, and what further help we can offer to you. If others will be able to learn from what you are doing, then get in touch with us through the 'contact us' section on our website: www.fbrn.org.uk

Dr Doreen Finneron MBE
Executive Director FbRN UK



Methodology

From providing activities that people want, to campaigning for policy change, what we do has an effect on those around us. In the very busy work of community development it can be hard to find the time, and a suitable method, to reflect on how we understand our communities, what we offer the community and how communities, organisations and individuals bring about positive change as a result.

People of faith are part of the communities they serve and also individuals within their organisations. What they do and how they do it has a huge effect on communities.

By using a reflection method that helps in understanding local situations, ourselves and the change we can bring about, we are more able to create sustainable faith based community projects and dispel the misunderstandings about why faith based organisations get involved with social action in the first place.

One such method adopted by the South American educationalist Paulo Freire is Conscientization. Conscientization is the ability to reflect objectively on what is happening around oneself, individually or as a community, to understand and then to act upon the learning for the greater good of the community.

This form of empowerment enables communities, often labelled disadvantaged, or who feel marginalised, to contribute important social, economic and environmental insights to those who think they know best.

It is a methodology whereby the 'done to' can respond with unique insights about cultural as well as situational needs in order to bring about appropriate and sustainable change.

Its biggest benefit is that local people can contribute to development, not just have development imposed on them.

It is a way in which faith based projects, and the people they serve, cease to be subjects of someone else's change process and become leaders in their own right.

The method is dependent on genuine dialogue which allows people to speak for themselves. This is the approach followed in the interviews with ten faith based social action projects featured in this book, each focusing on one aspect of project development. Their stories are captured on video and the main learning points written in the following chapters.

The method has three outcomes:

The first is the opportunity for the individual and the community to reflect critically on their situation because the starting point for learning is the current situation.

The second is to take the learning and use it to effect change locally.

The third outcome of the method, influencing change in other communities, is for you the reader to judge, as you reflect on your own faith based project in the light of the learning you are offered here. FbRN's hope is that you will share your learning and so pass on the good practice that makes faith based social action a sustainable and credible force for change in diverse communities.



What do Faith Based Social Action Projects Bring?

The buzz phrase is the Unique Selling Point, or USP. On the one hand it could be argued that faith based social action projects are not unique. There is a strong history across faith traditions of responding to social need.

This heritage can be seen around us in hospitals, schools, care homes and welfare provision most of which is now provided by the state, charities or private organisations.

On the other hand, there is something special that makes faith based organisations unique. Faith motivates and energises the work they do. Through faith they discern appropriate ways in which to respond to the communities they serve whether they be communities of faith, of interest or resident locally.

People of faith live out distinct values of trust, respect, and genuine care for those around them. Faith based social action projects demonstrate these values without

compromising either their distinct faith tradition or the people they seek to serve.

This short booklet illustrates how the unique contribution of faith infuses different elements of social action projects, from getting to know the community to managing the finances, from deciding how to operate and who to work with, to monitoring and improving the service offered.

Each project demonstrates how faith has contributed to providing a unique service to the local community and has shaped the organisation of that service.

Each story is a work in progress, constantly responding to local changes and constantly challenged to do so in such a way that ensures faith values are neither compromised by the lure of funding nor become a threat for partners in civil society.

Using this Resource

People of faith have an active spirituality which respects and values different approaches, infuses all aspects of life and is integral to sustainable, local flourishing communities.

That faith is demonstrated by their desire to work for the best for the world and the human beings in it. Through faith they show that situations and lives can be transformed, that people can bring about positive change when they work together.



‘Sounds interesting’ ... ‘Yes we’d love to be involved’... Ten faith based organisations responded positively to the invitation to take part in this project. FbRN hopes that you, the reader, will contribute too. This booklet is designed to be used not just read. It is part of an interactive resource particularly suitable for faith based organisations involved in social action.

Each chapter features one element of a successful community project. A faith based organisation reflects on that element in their context and in the light of their faith values.

This is captured in a video interview which you can watch on YouTube. The ten topics are not the only features of a successful project. For example we have not considered the essential relationship between the project and the trustee group, or looked at branding and marketing.

Elements of these dimensions do come through in a number of the interviews.

Chapters include a brief description of the project, and some detail about the topic, which is expanded through the video. This is followed by a response from the organisation identifying what they have discovered in the process and how they can now use that learning.

You are then invited to reflect on what you have heard and learned, and asked to consider how that might affect what you do to develop that particular element within your own project.

This reflection can be done alone but will be more significant if considered by a group.

By using the resource the contributing projects, and the readers, travel together on a road which others can follow. There is no imposed model; as readers we learn from the knowledge and experience that is shared, and

from that draw out guidelines for our own work, albeit in a different context. In turn the reader's experience informs the learning of others.

This achieves the aim of discovering our own resources through sharing those of other people. Knowledge, skill and experience fuse to create confident sustainable enterprise in a local context.

Readers are invited to contact FbRN to share their learning as a result of using the booklet.

In this way we can join together to develop practices and skills that ensure faith based community development is effective and the work we do is appreciated for its quality.

All the videos accompanying this book were taken in live situations. They are not intended to be perfect broadcasts, but capture the project story in normal working conditions.

Understanding Your Local Community

Riaz Ravat

St Philip's Centre, Leicester

Schools play an essential role in learning about others who are different from you by using the neutral space provided for dialogue and engagement. Leicester's richness of religious and cultural celebrations enables new friendships or consolidates these connections further.

Dialogue has been very important and informative, reminding us how important it is to listen well. However, we need to do more than just talk in order to understand what goes on in our communities. Some of the best understanding about communities has come from those who are ordinary, grassroots members of their faith groups not just the faith leaders.

Women play a central role in holding families and communities together. Our Mitzvah Day celebration this year is a good example.

The League of Jewish Women has invited all the faith groups to provide practical care and love for victims of domestic violence. It is a small start but we believe it will grow.

Doing a deed of love and kindness is a central expression of faith for all of us. Faith groups are a powerful force for justice and human dignity. For this to be effective we need to know our community well to understand what will work.

It takes time and you have to be persistent. You might not always achieve instant results. The multifaith work in Leicester has been happening for over twenty five years through a wide variety of activities. We know it has an effect when communities work together against threats from intolerant and racist groups.

'The thing that makes it for me is that I know my neighbourhood and people know me, that's what makes it home.' Local Resident.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/localcommunity

Project learning

The positive effect of one event can live on and help to transform the community as people build on friendships and grow trust. We want to encourage faith groups to continue to work together not just on one-off events. We can raise the profile of smaller groups who are doing very good work like the Family of Abraham Dialogue Group. By working together this group removed barriers and designed what they wanted to do, not what someone else told them to do.

We need to make the inter faith agenda more relevant to grass roots communities by finding faith entrepreneurs who are passionate about local well-being.

Reader reflection

- ▶ How do you understand your local community?
- ▶ In the light of the Leicester story, what gaps emerge in your understanding of your local community?
- ▶ Who could help increase understanding of the local community so it is shared among all those who need to know?



Responding to Local Needs

Rauf Bashir

Building Bridges, Pendle

The starting point for me is knowing the community. We live in the bi-cultural community of Pendle which is made up of a white indigenous population and a Pakistani population that has been settled for four generations. We have two significant religious groups, Christian and Muslim. Knowing local needs is not just about census information or government reports. Living here means we are part and parcel of the community so we have particular insights into local needs.

We use our local knowledge in a professional approach to respond to needs based on a pillar of trust. Our events sound attractive and inviting but what really draws people is the trust we have developed with the community by being clear about what we stand for. People discover our values by being with us,

we gain from each other through our conversations. Our volunteers and staff bring values which we develop on our shared journey. The ripples of what we do spread through the community through work done by individuals and partners.

Ten years ago success was about having people of different cultures in the same room. Needs have changed. Now success is having those same people in the room working and talking together to meet local needs and dispel myths and fears about each other. We challenge people to do more to meet the needs they identify, not just leave it to public agencies, that way we break segregation.

The faith values of Building Bridges Pendle are an extension of our values. As we have become more multicultural our values have been challenged and strengthened. We believe what we offer is genuine, and not a token

gesture. We care because we have a deep understanding of local people. People share their life story with us. Meeting needs is heartfelt, it's not something we put into words, we do it.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/localneeds

Project learning

Making the video gave us a chance to reflect on what we do and how we meet local needs. It reminded us that the content of our work and the way we do it is important and does make a difference. It is easy in the busy-ness of every day to forget that.

It reminded us that we always need to be open to change because needs change all the time. It has helped us to reaffirm our values which are central to what we do and how we do it. Time to talk together is always good.

Reader reflection

- ▶ How does your project meet community needs and hold your faith values?
- ▶ In the light of the Building Bridges Pendle story how will you respond to changing needs and hold your faith values?



Buying Premises

Dr Shah

Jain Community, Colindale, London

Dr Shah came to London from Leicester in 1996 to promote Jainism. He talks here about buying a building to become a place of worship, learning and care for Jains and the community of Colindale.

The Jain premises need to accommodate space for: worship for all Jains; learning, to promote the culture and society of Jains, and philanthropy, because a Jain aims to improve the quality of life for all people and creatures. We had two objectives in purchasing our own building: to create something beautiful that people can feel proud of and to create a place of pilgrimage.

The centre in Colindale will be the first place in the world where Jains of different groups can come together to worship and study. Colindale was a good choice because there is a strong

Jain community in the area and the access from London is very easy.

Buying a building required us to abide by planning rules and regulations. We took risks, for example in agreeing the purchase before we knew if we had planning permission for redevelopment and before raising the money. We have transformed the building, from a workshop and warehouse to a temple and community centre, in two years. We have a long way to go to complete the rebuild and refurbishment.

The finished building will be an asset to the area. There are plans for major local redevelopment and we will be part of that by providing a community facility that does not exist at the moment. To achieve this we needed to build rapport with local people and the local council.

We had to raise the capital for the purchase.

Members of the community, friends and family gave; they have invested in the building. There is no mortgage. Currently we are raising money for the building's redevelopment.

We will apply for grants but that is the cream. We need to raise the majority of it ourselves by telling our story and inviting people to see what we are doing. We do not want to be dependent on government money.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/buyingpremises

Project learning

If you have good things to do, continue the work, even when it is hard and then people will follow you. Sometimes this requires patience.

The building needs to give people a sense of ownership and belonging. That can be achieved in part if people are able to contribute to the

cost and be involved in the maintenance as well as the activities. People lose interest if they do not feel involved.

Focus on your values: for Jains they are non-violence, forgiveness, self knowledge and the equal potential of all. We demonstrate our values by providing a centre for promoting non-violence and equality of life and through the way we work with other people. If you hold true to your values you will take people with you, and then work together to find truth and achieve your aim.

Reader Reflection

- ▶ How do you ensure that your faith values are demonstrated through the type of building you choose to buy?
- ▶ What could you do to make the values clear for the other agencies involved in the purchasing process?

Business Planning

Anna Colao

Repaying the Kindness (RTK), London

Repaying the Kindness (RTK) is a carers respite project based in Jamyang Buddhist Centre in South East London. RTK has been running for nine years and the current manager has been in post for one year.

It has taken between eight to twelve months to develop the business plan. The project is deeply embedded in the Tibetan Buddhist gelug-lineage, where altruism and loving-kindness stand central in achieving self-realisation.

RTK seeks to honour those who care for a relative or close friend, often at great personal sacrifice such as giving up a job, willing to go into poverty.

RTK literally seeks to “repay” the kindness that carers freely give every day, by offering relaxing

day breaks. The project is open to all carers over eighteen of any faith and none. It runs with a small enthusiastic team of two part time staff and eight volunteers.

The business plan has taken time to grow and now supports the RTK project to focus firmly on its aims and objectives for the coming two years. It includes a vision and mission statement, our aims and objectives (including time-schedule with deadlines to realise these) and practicalities such as: a funding strategy, budgets, marketing and service delivery. The overall focus though is to ensure we can deliver our service: ‘to value unpaid carers and the amazing work they do.’

It takes time to write the business plan. The Board of Trustees has been very involved and it is a constant process of proof reading, re-writing, re-reading etc. We really had to investigate our strengths and weaknesses

honestly to create a business plan that will help RTK become stronger as an organisation. The plan is used actively to check up on our progress. Having the plan means the project is not dependent on the work of just one or two people, RTK can stand in its own integrity and others can implement the business plan.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/businessplan

Project learning

We constantly need to re-visit the plan, to ensure that we are still on track, sometimes adding new ideas, analysing what has not worked and removing things that are no longer necessary. It has been really good to have the Trustees involved and developing a sense of shared ownership.

It is accepted that things do go wrong or do not work out, as long as we know why and learn

from the experiences. Having the plan means we will not lose focus, always keeping to the overall aims and purpose of the project in sight.

Reader reflection

- ▶ Drawing on the experience of Repaying the Kindness how do you know your business plan enables the organisation to be effective, where does it hold the organisation back?
- ▶ What can you do in the light of your answer?



Finance

Balvinder Kaur and Gurmel Singh Sikh Community Youth Services, Nottingham

The Sikh Community Youth Service in Nottingham works in the local community to provide a range of activities that contribute to each individual's well being and personal and social development, and also to promote social cohesion. The project has strong Sikh roots but serves people across faith and cultural traditions.

The project is a charity and so complies with Charity Commission accounting requirements.

The two key drivers in building and managing funds are: being clear about what we want to do and ensuring that the funding we receive does not compromise our faith values.

For instance we will not accept funding from organisations involved with tobacco, alcohol or any other unethical practice.

Having strong faith values makes it very easy for us to decide which funding streams to apply for. When we are looking for funding we want to be sure that the funder will understand and support our values as well as our activities.

Our funding comes from individual donations, subscriptions for activities, self-help fundraising events and from various grants. The facility we use belongs to the council, and a diverse range of voluntary organisations also use it. Currently we are in discussion with the council, for a consortium of user groups to either lease or purchase the facility and to run it themselves. The feasibility study has been completed and a business plan has been produced. The success of this enterprise relies upon all the user groups working together and maximising the income potential of the complex.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/finance

Project learning

When we first employed staff we quickly discovered that this affected the commitment of our volunteers who began to rely more and more on the paid staff to do the work. We have now found the right balance, between the activities of the volunteers and the paid staff, to ensure that the volunteers remain active and motivated.

We expect that finding funding will get harder and the need for our services will increase over the coming months and years. We need to stay focused on what we do, and why we do it, in order to remain a successful and essential community organisation.

Reader reflection

- ▶ What kind of tensions does your project face about funding?
- ▶ How could the tensions be reduced?
- ▶ What action will you take in the light of this reflection?



Staff

Melanie Danan

Interlink Foundation, London

Interlink is an umbrella body which supports the Charedi/orthodox Jewish voluntary sector.

Its small staff group work very closely as a team. The staff are motivated through their faith and see the work not just as a job but as an expression of one of the tenets of their belief 'acts of loving kindness', in other words 'giving to others'.

The nature of the work, and the people Interlink serves, require core staff to have an intimate knowledge of the local community including religious laws and practices. Quite often staff come from the local community.

The organisation follows a standard recruitment process with policies to match. Posts are reviewed when they become vacant, job specifications drawn up and the post

advertised. Interviews may involve panel members from partner organisations.

We have discovered that the best staff are not necessarily those who produce the best application forms; listening hard at interview helps us to discover more than just the standard answers and reveals the depth of a person.

Staff enter an induction period. The team support each other on a day to day basis and expertise is shared across work roles. Each staff member has a regular supervision session with the director.

The self motivation of staff and the ethos of the Jewish faith mean that there does not need to be an imposed hierarchy.

Staff training is very important and is included in the budget for the post. Interlink are keen to see staff develop new skills and expertise.

Most members of staff are active in a voluntary capacity with other organisations and Interlink supports this through sharing resources or skills.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/staff

Project learning

The key to a successful staff team in a small organisation is that we intertwine, we all know our own roles and how they weave with the others. We all know who needs to know what.

We have developed strong working links with other professionals which has enabled our effective methodology to benefit the wider community. Our work on housing benefit would be a good example.

Reader reflection

- ▶ What stand does your project take about employing people of no faith or a faith different from your own?
- ▶ What more might you need to find out about good staff management? For example: Equalities Act, Data Protection.
- ▶ Staffing can feel like a huge and daunting area of work. What can you do to make the task manageable?

Volunteers

Lindsay Peniston

Trinity at Bowes (TaB), London

There are two types of volunteers at Trinity, those who come through the church and those who come from a range of other agencies like local voluntary services. Volunteer opportunities are advertised in a variety of places such as Enfield Voluntary Action Centre, our website, partner organisations and are held with broker agencies. All volunteers complete an application form, have an interview and receive a task description along with an agreement letter. They receive regular one-to-one meetings with the volunteer co-ordinator. When they leave each has an exit interview and references will be supplied if required.

It can be hard to get the church people to understand the requirements of good volunteer practice, especially when they have been doing the work for years. People do not want their

volunteering formalised; if we are not careful we can cause offence when we ask people to go through the recruitment process.

People volunteer for a range of reasons: to give something back, because they have time, to gain experience and skills which help towards getting a job. There is a wider range of volunteering opportunity at Trinity.

‘The volunteers at Trinity are all very friendly.’

Volunteers have their needs met at Trinity. Training is provided for particular skills like food hygiene or fund raising. Travel expenses are paid and lunches are available. Many volunteers are at the margins of society and need support, encouragement and empowerment as well as practical skills.

Volunteers were thanked for their work and presented with certificates in Volunteers Week, June 2010.

Trinity was delighted to be awarded Investing in Volunteers. This shows they care about volunteers and provide a good experience for those who offer their time, skill and experience at the centre.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/volunteers

Project learning

We need to have the volunteering structure and the one-to-one meetings.

We need to recognise there are challenges and be prepared to meet them. A lot of what we do is good and hearing someone else say that makes such a difference.

As a Christian organisation we care about empowering people to achieve their full potential. Volunteering fits with the values of the centre.

'I do not feel like a volunteer.' Volunteers are members of the team. Difficulties can arise around accountability and being flexible. We recognise the other commitments volunteers have, but we want everyone to feel part of Trinity Centre Plus.

Reader reflection

- ▶ What sort of support do your volunteers receive?
- ▶ What else might you do in the light of the video and the learning from Trinity?



Partners Working Together to Improve Individual's Lives

Ishwer Taylor

Gujarat Hindu Society (GHS), Preston

GHS is a registered charity and has operated for over thirty years. There are three strands to the Society's life: worship, culture and social welfare. Ten years ago they nurtured a partnership with Lancashire Health Authority (LHA) and Lancashire Gujarat Health Users Forum (LGHUF) was established.

The partnership provides an Annual Health Mela (fair) with stalls from health providers and free health checks. It organises monthly health seminars, on relevant topics, with bilingual professionals who explain the cause and prevention of a particular health related problem in simple understandable terms. The forum meets monthly to tackle health issues relating to the Hindu community. The partnership brings the two organisations closer in developing policies, raising health awareness

and testing out and monitoring services. This co-operation complements the other work of both organisations.

LHA reduces life threatening illnesses through awareness raising and practical support. They achieve high results. LGHUF works in partnership with other agencies through the centre. They meet the health needs of a specific community, building trust through communicating in the first language.

GHS demonstrate 'sewa' – unconditional gratitude and dedication to the service of others. This is an essential expression of Hindu faith, shown through the service of volunteers, use of the building, the time dedicated to the activities and a celebration of the achievements and appreciation of the whole community.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/partnerships

Project learning

We need a vision of what we want to offer the community so the management group need to be outward thinking, for example, because our partnership keeps growing young people are aware of their health and diet.

It is important to engage professionals so that the service is good. The professionals need to understand our philosophy so we can communicate equally and together promote the service. A healthy partnership creates better understanding of the services on offer; it is non-threatening and it does not get hampered by regulations.

We make decisions about partnerships primarily based on the needs of the community, not on the needs of our funders and partners. We do not enter into partnerships if the focus is not the local community.

The partnership has made a difference to diet and increased exercise while, at the same time, honouring our Hindu culture. It has enabled individuals to take responsibility for their lives through greater understanding of health issues and prevention methods. People are making life 'happy, healthy and cheerful'.

Reader reflection

- ▶ Potential partners can feel unsure about working with faith based organisations because of the faith element. How can these anxieties be reduced?



Monitoring and Evaluation

Neslyn Pearson

Faith in Queens Park, Bedford

Faith in Queen's Park, Bedford began in 2004. It has four strands of activity: sports and music-making both focus on young people; there is an oral history project and a 'three faiths' experiential visits programme. The project serves a diverse community with strong Christian, Muslim and Sikh traditions.

It is good to re-think why and what we monitor, and how we want to use the evidence.

The stringency of grant providers requires statistical evaluation but that is not the whole picture. We need time for evaluation that is not based solely on grant providers' requirements.

We have to evaluate, especially in the current climate but I do not want monitoring and evaluation to be a meaningless exercise. I want to use it to help us plan for the future, be honest with ourselves about what is working,

and about what is not going well, to analyse where we are not achieving or where the work is developing in a different way from our expectations. We need to be able to take the evidence back to funders when things need to change and use it to our advantage.

Evaluation can feel threatening because we like to be in control; there is an element of pride in our work so we do not want to fail, nor do we like to show our vulnerability especially if other people are committed to the work with us.

We might be tempted to interpret evaluation to suit the project rather than use it objectively.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/evaluation

Project Learning

We need to have one evaluation form for the whole project with space on it to identify the

activity being evaluated. Currently we have different forms for each activity. We need to be careful in our choice of language so the form is clear. It will need space to record comments and observations. By ensuring the form is user-friendly, it should be possible for any nominated person to complete. That way we can develop a sense of shared responsibility for evaluating the projects between all partners.

We want to be able to analyse the evidence so there is learning for session leaders, coaches, staff and volunteers as well as using it to report to funders and partners. This requires time to complete the forms and time together to review them. This will mean discussing evaluation as a regular feature of our meetings.

The reflection helped to reassure me that what I am thinking about evaluation does make sense and could be helpful. We need to make the changes to enable us to be more effective,

and watching the film has made me more determined to get the message out to the team sooner rather than later.

Reader reflection

- ▶ What kind of evaluation would be helpful for your project?
- ▶ What would you look for in an evaluation process?



Communication

Jerry Drew

The Centre, Newlyn, Cornwall

'The way in which we are, we welcome and treat people is fundamental to me because it communicates our values and ethos.' The first lesson in communication is to know your audience. We have two: those who know about us and those who do not. Secondly, communication is always two-way; we need to listen to the community as well as tell our story. Thirdly, understand what you want to say and say it. Our most important message is 'you are welcome'. Our automatic doors, right on the street, say this to all who pass by. It is also communicated in the way we work with people. Making time for people is the priority of community work and also a priority in communicating. It is essential to walk through the building daily to meet informally with those who use it. You get a huge amount of information this way about how you are

operating and what people think, do not sit in the office and wait for people to come to you.

We are a small organisation and a small team with no budget or time for elaborate communication, although some grants provide a marketing budget. We communicate in a variety of ways because people use different media to receive news. We use: posters and fliers; monthly news sheets displayed around the village; a weekly 'community' column, which the development worker writes, in the local paper. It ensures that community news is spread between organisations as well as to the public, and shows we are interested in the whole community not just the Centre.

Church notice sheets keep a strong link between the church and the Centre. We also use regular slots on local radio; facebook; our web page, a free site hosted by BT, updated weekly by a volunteer; and an email list.

Electronic communication will increase as people of all ages become more confident with the technology. The development worker plans two communication slots in the weekly diary and makes these a priority and is ready to respond quickly to requests from radio and television.

Training is important but not always possible. The best media training is to remember that you have something that the media want so take the time to develop an equal relationship with them. Be prepared to say what you want to say, and do not turn down media invitations even if it means a long journey and early start. It is worth it.

Our best publicity comes through word of mouth; people have a good time at the Centre, enjoy the facilities and activities, appreciate the welcome and tell friends. Pictures really help to convey this message. We use them in all our communications.

Do not be surprised if people have not heard of you, there is always a new audience so tell your story over and over again.

Watch the video

www.youtube.com/user/fbrn/communication

Project Learning

We want to develop video as a communication tool to show our activities, produce an annual review, use it for promotion and for funders and partners. It would help to break down barriers created by the written word.

Reader reflection

- ▶ What skills do you have within your team for developing effective communication?
- ▶ What is your community project message and how will you communicate it?

Contacting the Projects

Some of the projects featured in the booklet are old friends of FbRN. We have enjoyed the opportunity to meet new projects through this work and welcome them to FbRN.

The ten topics chosen for this booklet are drawn from some of the requirements of the VISIBLE quality framework standard.

If you are interested in finding out more about the standard and whether it would be suitable for your faith based organisation please contact Community Matters:

www.communitymatters.org.uk

All the projects will be very happy to talk with you about the topic they have shared.

Contact details

Riaz Ravat

St Philip's Centre, Leicester

www.stphilipscentre.dioceseofleicester.com

Rauf Bashir

Building Bridges, Pendle

www.bbpendle.org.uk

Dr Natubhai Shah

The Jain Centre, London

<http://www.jainnetwork.com/>

Anna Colao

Repaying the Kindness, London

www.repayingthekindness.org

Balvinder Kaur

Sikh Community Youth Service, Nottingham

www.scys-notts.co.uk

Melanie Danan

Interlink Foundation, London

www.interlink-foundation.org.uk

Lindsay Peniston

The Centre

Trinity at Bowes Methodist Church, London

www.trinityatbowes.co.uk

Ishwer Tailor

Gujarat Hindu Society, Preston

www.ghspreston.co.uk

Neslyn Pearson

Faith in Queen's Park, Bedford

www.allsaintsbedford.co.uk

Jerry Drew

The Centre Trinity Methodist Church, Newlyn

www.thecentrenewlyn.uk.com



Faith Based Regeneration Network

The Faith Based Regeneration Network (FbRN) was established in 2002. We have two aims:

To support faith based organisations working in local community settings. Some of these projects are very small, some have grown to be big players in delivering local services.

All faith based social action projects are unique. Each serves its own local community responding to local need.

We encourage faith based social action projects to use community development methods which empower local people to be the positive change they want to see.

We affirm the differences that make faith based work unique and draw out learning that can be transferred to other projects.

To link the work and knowledge of faith based practitioners with policy makers so changes proposed by local or national government can be well informed and therefore realistic.

We have become a key partner for government and voluntary and community organisations, at national policy level.

We are called on to offer advice at a national level and we do this either by directly linking policy makers with projects or feeding in the learning we have received from practitioners.



We provide opportunities for faith based practitioners to:

share their knowledge and experience

support one another, particularly when faith based projects can feel threatened or undervalued by those who do not understand their motivations

contribute to, and learn, from current research in the fields of community development, public policy, faith and civil society.

We provide opportunities for policy makers to:

listen to the stories and evidence from faith based social action

convey policy thinking and development to faith based practitioners

recognise the benefits faith based organisations offer communities through their values and motivations.

You can find out more about FbRN and access all our resources from the website:

www.fbrn.org.uk



Readers Tell Your Story, and Learning Passes On...

We hope that you have found this resource helpful and that you have been able to develop your own project in the light of the learning offered by the faith based organisations who have contributed to it.

We would love to hear about your project, and offer you the opportunity to share your learning with others, thus continuing the method used in this book of sharing practice that works.

Every faith based social action project is different because it involves different people, responds to different needs and is set in different contexts. It is not surprising that there are many different ways to approach the elements of a project and secure its sustainability. If you have different ideas that have worked for you then please share these through the network.

If you would like to tell your story please contact the Faith Based Regeneration Network

email: admin@fbrn.org.uk

post: Faith Based Regeneration Network
Ground Floor
12-20 Baron Street
London N1 9LL

We will be delighted to talk about your work, visit your project and share your learning through the website.

You can find out about other projects from our website: www.fbrn.org.uk

Further Reading and Resources

Faith Based Regeneration Network supports local faith based social action across the UK and acts as an interface between practitioners and government policy makers.

The website has a series of worksheets to help you apply your learning from this booklet and develop your project's sustainability.

www.fbrn.org.uk

Community Matters are partners with FbRN in the VISIBLE quality standards project.

Community Matters are a leading community development organisation providing a wealth of resources, knowledge and experience to support your project – well worth joining. Membership provides resources covering all aspects of managing community based projects.

www.communitymatters.org.uk

National Council for Voluntary Organisations provides support and information on all aspects of management for voluntary and community organisations including guidelines on good governance.

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

Good Governance A Code for the Voluntary and Community Sector Second Edition

The code explains six principles of good governance, and using these identifies all the practical responsibilities of trustees.

The resource provides a comprehensive check list to ensure that your project is compliant and that the relationship between the trustees, staff, volunteers and users is healthy.

http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Library/guidance/good_governance_full.pdf

Charity Commission offers support for establishing charitable status. Publications are available covering all aspects of charity management.

www.charitycommission.gov.uk

Church Urban Fund are also partners in the **VISIBLE** project. They offer an online resource covering all aspects of project management. The CUF Academy provides more detailed training, but you do have to pay to join.

www.cuf.org

Media Trust a charity providing communication training for charities, covering a range of media including bespoke support.

www.mediatrust.org

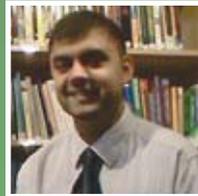
Your Chance to Change the World: no fibbing guide to social entrepreneurship by Craig Dearden-Phillips, Directory of Social Change 2008. Recommended by Anna Colao, RTK, for those who want to create a business plan.

Investing in Volunteers is an independent organisation providing a quality standard for organisations working with volunteers.

The process provides a detailed assessment of the provision of care for volunteers. It is suitable for all sizes of organisations and has been used by a variety of faith based groups. Organisations working through the standard are well supported by Investing in Volunteers.

<http://iiv.investinginvolunteers.org.uk/>





One of the best ways to learn is with others, sharing and discovering knowledge, skills and experience. While theories are important there is nothing like putting them into practice to reap the wisdom they hold.

This resource offers just that opportunity to learn with community practitioners inspired by their personal faith, and committed to the faith values of the projects they run.

How do they make it work so the faith values are secure and the project sustainable? Read on, watch the videos and then apply your learning to your project.

'Exactly the sort of resource we have been waiting for' FbRN Member

'An excellent resource which I shall circulate in our area' Project Worker East Midlands