

Report on the Work of Reading Faith Forum 2009-10

Development Worker

Tom Hudson started work as our Development Worker last December as part of the Building for Strength consortium. He is helping faith organisations from “harder to reach” groups to develop and relate. Muslim organisations and new African Christian organisations are the largest groups.

Charity Status

As a result of the grant to pay his salary, we have had to register as a charity. Some changes in the constitution were needed to do this. The main change is that our objects now read:

"The promotion of religious harmony and the relief of poverty and sickness for the benefit of the public in Reading and the neighbouring boroughs by working with faith groups, statutory bodies and other organisations and in particular but not exclusively through the provision of a multi-faith forum."

Media – Reading Community Radio & Ummah Radio both featured RFF

The Stronger Together report on Media coverage lists 8 events coverage of which 5 were Faith Forum events. Since then Nigel has been on Ummah Radio and on BBC Radio Berkshire to talk about Green Issues and the Hustings.

Representatives

RFF receives regular reports from representatives on:

- The Local Strategic Partnership- Tim Clewer
- LINK Local Involvement Network – John Rogers
- Community Development Strategy Steering Group – Andrew Taylor
- Reading Compact – Alan Magness

RFF participated in the LSP Forum, the Reading 2030 process and Holocaust Memorial Day.

Conferences and Training

Hearing Voices (1 & 2) - Faith and Mental Health

This was an excellent conference. Nearly 100 people were present including lots of people from the mental health services who have been told by government they must take faith into account. There were also plenty of people from Faith Communities and people with mental health problems. The working group is following up with a Resource Handbook & a conference called “Hearing Stories” on Thursday 8 July 2010 at Emmanuel Methodist Church, Oxford Rd.

RE Matters - Schools RE lesson training, 16 November 2009 10am-2pm

REInspired helped us run a training course for people of several faiths on working in schools to deliver the RE syllabus.

Hustings

The Forum organised hustings for Reading East in the Hindu Temple and Reading West at Tilehurst Methodist. About 90 people were present at each meeting. The candidates from the three main parties were asked questions. Other parties were invited to provide a 300 word statement that was made available at the meeting or after it.

Safeguarding

Joint Stronger Together Training sessions have been led by RVA & RCVYS about changes in protecting children and vulnerable adults. This will affect lots of faith organisations.