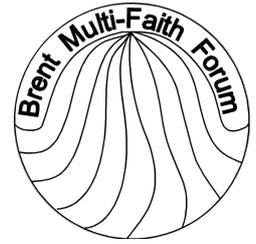


BMFF NEWS



First Edition | 2021 | info@brentmultifaithforum.org.uk

Brent Borough of Sanctuary

Our campaign to launch Brent as a Borough of Sanctuary continues. You can help Brent receive recognition as a safe haven for the most vulnerable members of society by applying for a Sanctuary Award for your organisation.

You are invited to a special workshop, supporting local organisations to apply to become a Place of Sanctuary on **Tuesday 18th January 2-4pm at Newman Catholic College.**

Please register to attend

We would like to express our utmost gratitude to Glaiza and the rest of the team at Rumi's Cave, who hosted the last meeting of the year on Thursday 9th December. We sincerely hope that the building survives beyond January and that their excellent service to the local community can continue.



Warmest greetings to all of you

On behalf of the leadership team of the forum we thank all of you; our friends, partners and stakeholders for your support over the years, particularly in 2021.



Dr Mario Phillip

As a multi-faith forum not only do we work across denominational and religious lines, we also have enjoyed meaningful collaboration with the local council, the voluntary sector and other statutory bodies. These partnerships we hope to further deepen as we go into the future.

What a year we've had, it was filled with a bit of everything—successes and failures, gains and losses, joys and sorrows. As a resilient people of faith, we've survived despite the odds. As we embark on a new year we wish the very best to each of you and your families. May your life be filled with happiness, health, completeness and faith.

Do remember that as a forum we are open to your suggestions, feedback and concerns. We are committed to being a voice on your behalf as we navigate through these tumultuous times.

Blessings to all of you

Mario Phillip, PhD, BMFF Chair

Climate Change and My Religion Exhibition

BMFF are proud to have supported this exhibition as part of Brent's Climate Festival during the first half of November at the Brent Civic Centre. It married powerful imagery with clear reminders of the duties of stewardship which faith places upon us. Each of the photographed Brent faith leaders shared the pledges that they have individually taken to curb climate catastrophe.

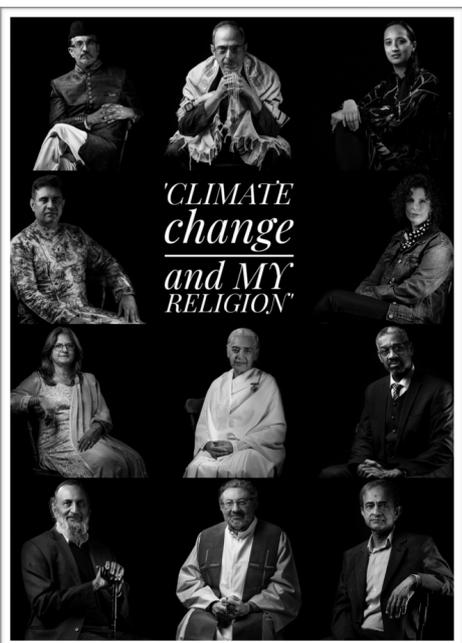


Image credit to Don Jordan of Powerful Photography.

BMFF are keen to hear from local faith communities

about how we can collectively and proactively collaborate to raise awareness and take steps to care for our environment. If you have any ideas or just want to register your interest, email info@brentmultifaithforum.org.uk



Celebrating Brent's Faith Covenant

Representatives from Brent Council, BMFF, Faith Action and faith organisations marking the occasion at the Civic Centre during Interfaith Week.

A wide range of representatives from Brent Council, Brent Multi-Faith Forum and local faith organisations were brought together on Wednesday 17th November 2021 to mark the fourth anniversary of Brent's accession to the Faith Covenant. This gathering was not only a celebration of all the Covenant has allowed us to achieve, but also an opportunity for the Council and BMFF to renew commitments to the central tenets of the Covenant. It was in this spirit of active and vigilant maintenance that our attendees put forth their vision for the further promotion of prosperity, co-operation, and greater civic representation for Brent's faith communities.

While traffic threatened the initial plans for the meeting, our attendees demonstrated a flexibility and resilience that was characteristic of the response of faith groups to crises over the past two years, with Cllr Neil Nerva and BMFF vice chairs Rabbi Dr Frank Dabba Smith and Mr Kirit Wadia providing excellent extempore speeches, touching on the significance of both faith groups in crises and of faith to Brent in particular. Unsurprisingly, one of the central themes of the night was the importance of faith groups in the response to Covid-19 - both in provision of material and spiritual aid - and how through the pandemic, faith groups had come to be invaluable

partners of local statutory bodies. This was highlighted by Daniel Singleton, the National Executive Director of Faith Action, who stressed that just as a dog isn't just for Christmas, the close relationships formed between the Council and local faith groups during the height of the pandemic can not be allowed to wither and must be actively maintained by both sides.



The Mayor of Brent, Cllr Lia Colacicco, photography courtesy of Rabbi Dr Frank Dabba Smith

This was a sentiment shared by the Mayor of Brent, Councillor Lia Colacicco, who noted that the Pandemic reminded us of "how often places of worship can be places of refuge", going on to say that "Brent Council [is looking] forward to working with local faith leaders and organisations in the future". Ms Colacicco cited the "Climate Change and My Religion" exhibition as a perfect example as to how faith leaders and statutory bodies can collaborate on major worldly issues.

These were followed by speeches from BMFF Chair, Dr Mario Philip, and attendant sub group leaders, during which the BMFF laid out its plans for the maintenance and development of the Faith Covenant moving forward. These sub groups are as follows:

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| 1) Faith in Mental Health - Led by Ms Tahseen Mehar | 4) Police Cooperation - Led by Rabbi Dr Frank Dabba Smith |
| 2) Brent: Borough of Sanctuary - Led by Ms Sue Grace | 5) Faith Communities Outreach and Engagement - Led by Reverend Ali Taylor and Bea Jackson |
| 3) Youth Empowerment and Advocacy Against Inequalities - Led by Pastor Yinka Afuwape | 6) Disaster and Conflict Response Crisis and the Environment - Led by Dr Mario Philip |

It is through these respective sub-groups that we hope to continue to be an organisation which proactively seeks progress and further pursues the central tenets of the Faith Covenant, developing the relationships of faith groups not only with the council, but with each other and communities throughout Brent.

The Brent Multi Faith Forum invite faith group representatives to each of these subgroups. If you would like to get involved, please register your interest [here](#).

Launch of Brent Thrive's 'Working Together for a Mental Health Friendly Brent' initiative

This month, Ashford Place's Brent Thrive project launched its "Working Together for a Mental Health Friendly Brent" initiative at the Brent Civic Centre. The central aim of the Brent Thrive project is to reinvigorate mental health services in Brent and to empower those living with mental health challenges to take collective action to create progress within our communities. Danny Maher called on everyone; statutory services, Faith communities, residents, businesses, voluntary sector, commissioners, and councillors to join Brent Thrive on a collective journey of working toward a mental health friendly Brent. Of the launch, Danny commented "Covid has demonstrated how well we have supported each other over the last 18 months. Now, all of us as residents, and agencies need to work together again to create a mental health friendly borough that supports our health and wellbeing"

Brent Thrive hopes to work with faith communities and places of worship through this initiative - **the initiative sees faith communities as a beacon of community driven collective action and believes that great progress can be achieved through cooperation** on this subject. Make your [pledge](#).

London Faith and Belief Community Awards

Brent Multi-Faith Forum were delighted to attend the fifth annual London Faith and Belief Community Awards on Monday 29th November, at which The Brent Shelter of Sanctuary received certification as a "Recognised Project"; a fitting award for the tireless efforts put in by all those involved in supporting the project.



The night was hosted with aplomb by the London's Lord Lieutenant, Sir Kenneth Olisa, and Reverend Nims Obunge of Haringey, and we thank the Faith and Belief Forum for their hospitality.

Myles Dolan, BMFF Development Officer, London's Lord Lieutenant Sir Kenneth Olisa and BMFF Steering Group member Manhar Mehta

The night was a fantastic opportunity to see all the great work being done across London by faith groups and people of faith, providing both inspiration, insight, and opportunities for new relationships to blossom.

Emergency support over Christmas

Brent Cove

Brent Cove Drop-in Service is where residents of Brent can go if they are experiencing a mental health crisis. Digital appointments are available every day over the Christmas period. Including telephone and zoom appointments.

Hestia.thecove@nhs.net | 07469856963

Food banks

For full details, please click on the links below:

SUFRA provides emergency supplies of essential food and toiletries to individuals and families experiencing acute crisis.

St Laurence's Larder provides a warm welcome and fresh food for those who struggle to make ends meet in the community and beyond.

Brent Adult Social Care

For those who need urgent help washing, feeding or dressing themselves but don't have any friends or family to support them, call 020 8937 6589.

Domestic Abuse

Speak to Advance by calling 07398 454898. In an emergency, always call 999.

Brent Civic Centre Vaccination Site

Brent Civic Centre Mass Vaccination Centre,

First Floor, Engineers Way, Wembley Park, HA9 0FJ - 020 8937 1234

Opening times during the holiday period:

Weds 22 Dec 9am-6.30pm

Thurs 23 Dec 9am-6.30pm

Weds 29 Dec 9am-6.30pm

Thurs 30 Dec 9am-6.30pm

Fri 31 Dec - 9am-2pm

Tues 4 Jan 9am-6.30pm

For other local places: <https://www.brent.gov.uk/your-community/coronavirus/vaccine/>

Report Hate Crime

Report hate incidents online through True Vision or via 3rd parties eg Community Security Trust (CST), Tell Mama UK and Stop Hate UK; at a police station; or by ringing the police on 101 (non-emergency) or 999.

Refer a Rough Sleeper

If you notice someone rough sleeping, please call Street Link on 0300 500 0914, visit www.streetlink.org.uk or download the Street Link app onto your phone.

The details you provide are sent to the local authority or outreach service for the area in which you have seen the person.

You will be asked to provide the following information:

- 1) A specific location for the rough sleeping site. You can use a map to pinpoint the exact location and then provide a written description of the location.
- 2) Details of the time that the rough sleeper has been seen at the location.
- 3) Any information about the rough sleeper that will help find them (gender, approximate age, what the person looks like, what they are wearing).

You can request an update on what has happened as a result of your alert.

If the person you are concerned about is under 18 please do not contact StreetLink but instead call the police.

Experiencing suicidal thoughts

Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you. Call 116 123 for free, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.