



**A FORUM FOR
FAITH COMMUNITIES
IN BARNESLEY**

Constitution

Date of ratification:

Review date:

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Accessibility

This Constitution can be provided in different formats and languages. Please contact Julian Horsler, Barnsley Council Equality and Diversity Manager (julianhorsler@barnsley.gov.uk, 01226 787638)

FAITH IN BARNSELEY - CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

The name of the Forum shall be "Faith in Barnsley - A Forum for Faith Communities in Barnsley".

2. PURPOSE OF FAITH IN BARNSELEY

The **vision** for *Faith in Barnsley* is that it will be an active, open and transparent forum promoting faith equality, community integration and cohesion.

Its **role** is to work collaboratively to bridge the gap between communities and services and provide a strong and representative voice of the diverse faith communities of Barnsley.

The **objectives** of *Faith in Barnsley* are to:

- Share, learn, work and experience harmony together.
- Identify how the faith communities can work together in Barnsley to promote social justice, participation, integration, equality, health and well-being.
- Contribute to the consultation and decision-making process to further the aims of the forum.
- Create space for sharing experience together

3. VALUES

The values of *Faith in Barnsley* include:

Accountability: This includes the accountability of the Steering Group to the Forum.

Openness and transparency: all the activities of the *Faith in Barnsley*, including those of the Steering Group will be recorded and shared to ensure transparency.

Inclusiveness and accessibility: *Faith in Barnsley* will be open to all who have an interest in promoting Faith Equality and Integration and will ensure it is accessible to meet the needs of people who would like to participate.

Integrity: the integrity of Members will be assumed. This means that Members will uphold both the values and code of conduct enshrined in this Constitution.

4. ACTIVITIES OF FAITH IN BARNSELEY

Faith in Barnsley will hold events

- where people from different faiths come together to discuss and undertake activities that help promote the Forum's purpose (vision, role and objectives).
- to enable services across the One Barnsley partnership to engage with members of faith communities in Barnsley.

Events and activities might include:

- Organising joint commemorations of issues important to all faith communities - for example Holocaust Memorial Day.

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- Cultural and religious awareness and celebration events where people of all faiths can share their faith, traditions and rituals - for example an event where communities share their bread and its religious and cultural significance with each other.
- Community action where people of all faiths are encouraged to work together in common cause for the benefit of people in Barnsley - for example volunteering in support of food banks.

5. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of *Faith in Barnsley* is open to any Barnsley resident with an interest in promoting faith equality and community integration and cohesion. People from all faith communities, including those of no faith, are welcome.

Members will all be encouraged to be active participants, contributing towards the Forum and its events actions.

Members will receive regular updates on the work of all the forums that form part of the Network of Equality Forums and will be welcome to attend any events and activities they organise.

6. RELATIONSHIP TO FAITH ORGANISATIONS

Faith in Barnsley is a collection of individuals rather than an affiliation of organisations and institutions. Faith organisations however are invited to support and publicise the work of the Forum by promoting its activities and encouraging members of their faith community to take part and join the Forum.

7. ORGANISATION

Faith in Barnsley is a forum to plan and undertake activity and not a formal organisation. As such it has no management committee or governing body. However any structure for bringing people together in common cause and activity needs some coordination and planning. It also needs to ensure it works in a transparent and integral way.

a) Self-Organisation

Faith in Barnsley will as far as practicable be self-organised by its own members. However organisation requires time and commitment and not necessarily the same set of skills as those required for Delegates. It is therefore proposed to establish a Steering Group of up to 11 people to help plan and organise the Forum's activities.

b) Role of Steering Group

- To provide coordination and planning for the Forum's activities.
- To liaise with key partner agencies to promote the Forum and enhance coordinated partnership working.
- To organise regular Forum events and activities.
- To ensure members receive regular communication about Faith in Barnsley and its activities.

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- To prepare an annual report on the work of Faith in Barnsley.
- To promote Faith in Barnsley and encourage wider participation.

c) Representation

Faith in Barnsley will select delegates to represent their views at decision-making bodies and forums.

d) Diversity of the Steering Group

The members of the Steering Group will represent the views of whole Forum and not those of any one particular faith community or other community they may belong to.

The Steering Group members as a whole will endeavour to reflect the diversity of the faith communities in Barnsley. This means it will seek to have good balance of different faiths, a good balance of men and women, and to reflect where possible other diverse characteristics such as disability, age and sexual orientation.

e) Selection Process

The Steering Group will be selected by consensus at a properly constituted meeting of the Faith in Barnsley Forum.

8. COMMUNICATION

Faith in Barnsley Members will be able to keep in touch with each other and receive information in the following ways:

- *Faith in Barnsley* Facebook Page
- Twitter
- Email
- Text messages
- Newsletters

9. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Any changes to this Constitution must be agreed by two thirds of a properly constituted meeting of the Forum.

10. EXPECTED STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

All Members of *Faith in Barnsley* will agree to the following standards of behaviour:

- a. The views of all Members will be valued and respected, however views that express intolerance against any particular group or person, or prejudice will be challenged.
- b. Members will understand the duties of the Equality Act 2010 and will agree on an Equality and Diversity Policy to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect, regardless of their race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status.

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- c. Any conduct that is suspected to be a Hate Crime or Hate Incident under the Criminal Offences Act 2003 will be referred to South Yorkshire Police, resulting in the immediate suspension of a member or Representative, pending an investigation.
- d. Members will be familiar with and abide by the *Faith in Barnsley* Code of Conduct.

11. SUPPORT FOR FAITH IN BARNSELEY

Faith in Barnsley will be supported by BMBC, either directly or by a contract with an independent organisation. This support will include:

1. Organising meetings and events
2. Preparing agendas and taking minutes
3. Encouraging and supporting people to volunteer
4. Supporting with language/communication needs to ensuring that *Faith in Barnsley* is accessible to all
5. Producing newsletters
6. Sending information out by post and email
7. Developing an internet site
8. Making sure rules are followed
9. Preparing reports or writing letters on behalf of the Forum
10. Other: E.g. providing training e.g. Equality & Diversity training and ensuring Members have access to other available training

12. GLOSSARY

Faith	Belief in God or in the doctrines or teachings of religion; a system of religious belief.
Faith Community	A group of people who share a particular religion or belief.
Forum	An organization or meeting where people have a chance to publicly discuss an important subject.
BMBC	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Protected characteristics	Defined by the Equality Act 2010: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disability• Race (including ethnicity and nationality)• Gender• Gender Reassignment• Sexual Orientation• Religion or belief• Pregnancy and maternity• Marriage or civil partnership

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age
Steering Group	Members of <i>Faith in Barnsley</i> who have been selected to help organise and develop the Forum and its activities, to represent the views of the Forum at decision-making bodies.
Community Integration	The bringing of people of different groups into unrestricted and equal association, as in society or an organization; desegregation.
Community Cohesion	<p>Local Government Association (LGA) defined this in the following way.</p> <p>"A cohesive community is one where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;• the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;• those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and• strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods."
One Barnsley	The strategic partnership of statutory services in Barnsley
Barnsley Reach	A working group made up of representatives of all the equality forums and statutory agencies in Barnsley. Its purpose is to plan and coordinate community engagement with equality target groups.