

Redcar & Cleveland Faith Scoping Study

Final Report June 2010

Michael King
Jim Robertson
Peter Brookes



The authors of this report would like to acknowledge with thanks the support received from the Redcar and Cleveland Community Cohesion Partnership in the preparation of this report.

Michael King is a freelance consultant (MKAssociates) and works with the voluntary, community and faith sector in the north of England. He is the North East Regional Partner for the Faith to Engage project, which is supported by the Big Lottery. In addition to this role he is a facilitator/trainer for FPM Training, a national training consortium and he works as an associate consultant for LTS International, a Scottish based overseas development agency.

Jim Robertson is a project consultant with the Churches' Regional Commission in the North East (CRC). He is currently involved in various action research projects embracing community development and organisational change in public bodies and voluntary and community sector organisations. He has a special interest in concerns relating to faith in the public realm.

Peter Brookes MBA is the lead Partner with the Cedar Partnership - a Community Engagement and Development Consultancy. He was the Head of Community Support Services with Durham County Council and founder of Trimdon 2000, a successful Community Regeneration Project in his home community.



faith to engage

SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS, TRANSFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT
IN OUR REGION

Redcar & Cleveland Faith Scoping Study

Table of Contents		Page
1.	Executive summary	4
2.	Preamble	6
3.	Scoping study brief	10
4.	Research methodology	12
5.	The Redcar & Cleveland context	13
6.	Faith in community	17
7.	Where are we Now?	19
8.	Where do we want to be?	23
9.	Engaging with faith groups in Redcar and Cleveland	25
10.	Development Recommendations	28
11.	Action Plan and Strategy	30
12.	Appendices	
	Appendix 1 - Contributors to the research	33
	Appendix 2 - Social action by faith communities in Redcar and Cleveland	35
	Appendix 3 - Population statistics from the 2001 census	36
	Appendix 4 - Places of worship in Redcar and Cleveland by faith group and denomination	37
	Appendix 5 - Faith based schools	39
	Appendix 6 - The vision of the local strategic partnership	40

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report arises out of three influences on the local authority, which impact on the Community Cohesion partnership:
 - i) A national cross-party political expectation of greater engagement of local authorities and public bodies with the faith communities.
 - ii) Work undertaken regionally for the Churches' Regional Commission by the Cedar Partnership, who delivered the project called: 'Engaging with Faith'.
 - iii) The engagement in that work of the Community Cohesion Officer for Redcar and Cleveland.
- 1.2 The report recognises and refers to work previously carried out in the North East Region and in the Borough, which highlights the high level of engagement of the faith sector in community cohesion and in building social capital. In particular the report 'Faith in the Community' published in 2003.¹
- 1.3 The research brief was developed to ensure that as much intelligence as possible about the current activities of the faith sector could be captured and recommendations made to increase engagement, especially at a more strategic level.
- 1.4 The research methodology involved significant desk top research and one to one meetings with faith leaders and others in the community.
- 1.5 Redcar and Cleveland has a very mixed demography and geography. There are high levels of social and economic deprivation in some parts of the Borough, while in others there is considerable wealth. There is a dense urban population with scattered rural communities. 44% of the population of Redcar and Cleveland live in a rural area, in some scattered but some large parishes / communities made up of several villages.
- 1.6 The faith community comprises predominantly people of the various Christian denominations; there are two mosques serving the Muslim

¹ Faith in Community: Kath Smith & Christopher Stevens: Teesside University 2003.

community, but members of other faiths have to travel out of the Borough to access their worship centres.

- 1.7 The report 'Faith in the Community' is a significant historic resource for the Community Cohesion Partnership as part of the development of a strategy for the engagement of faith communities.
- 1.8 The faith communities currently offer significant opportunities to their adherents and neighbourhoods, which they serve, to engage in social and civic activities.
- 1.9 There is a Churches Together structure in 3 communities in the Borough, but no single forum which brings together faith leaders from across the area. This would seem to be an important first step toward wider cooperation.
- 1.10 Engaging the faith communities at a strategic level in the life of the Borough and its partnerships will contribute to a more cohesive community and build the social capital of the area significantly and for good, given the level of volunteering that is inherent within faith groups.
- 1.11 In order to achieve this, however, there will need to be a significant investment in capacity building both for faith groups, the local authority and its partnerships.
- 1.12 What will need to be carefully considered in all of this is the purpose and motivation for engagement. There will need to be a building of trust between faith communities and partnerships, which does not universally exist at present.
- 1.13 The report concludes with recommendations for action by the Community Cohesion Partnership, the Local Authority, Health, other Public Bodies and the Voluntary and Community Sectors and provides an action plan through which the recommendations can be developed.
- 1.14 The researcher and authors of this report have made every attempt to provide accurate information to inform the content. Any inaccuracies, omissions or errors contained herein, are not deliberate, nor should they detract from the central messages offered and recommendations for action.

2 Preamble

Background

- 2.1 The impetus behind this report is the result of a number of different influences currently impacting on the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland and being managed by the Community Cohesion Partnership, as part of the development of Redcar & Cleveland Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2021 – More Cohesive empowered and active communities.
- 2.2 Firstly, there is a national political imperative, shared by all political parties, which requires local authorities and public bodies to engage the faith communities in a more strategic way as a contributor to improving social cohesion, building social capital and creating a more just and fair society. Central Government has, for a long time, recognised that the faith communities have a long history of engaging with communities they serve and want to see a renaissance of the sort of initiatives associated with the mid-nineteenth century, when many social service type functions arose out of the faith communities. The Government also recognises that faith communities are able to harness volunteering and contribute to improving the well-being of individuals, groups and whole communities. This volunteering culture extends, in many cases, beyond the immediate beneficiaries of particular faith groups to include other community services. Furthermore, under current legislation and the remodelling of education, faith communities are being positively encouraged to set up schools with a specific faith ethos and culture as a way of improving educational standards and contributing to a better society. In a letter from John Denham (MP)² the importance of Voluntary and Community Sector in delivering *‘high quality, innovative services that bring added value to the work of front line staff and have local roots too’* is emphasised. His letter requests Chief Executives to respond by 10th May 2010 outlining how local authorities are engaging the

² Letter to Local Authority Chief Executives from John Denham, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (January 2010)

voluntary and community sector, particularly in terms of the way in which the procurement strategy may be used to support the sector.

- 2.3 Secondly, there is the work recently undertaken by the Cedar Partnership on behalf of the Churches' Regional Commission with North East Regional Faiths Network, delivering the 'Engaging with Faith' project across the North East Region. This initiative was funded by the Community Cohesion Unit's 'Faith in Action' fund and followed the production of a national report 'Face to Face and Side by Side'³. The Project brought together representatives from each of the local authorities in the North East Region in a two day workshop/seminars to facilitate a greater understanding of the way in which the faith communities can be better engaged in civic life and leadership. This was followed up by an action learning set for local authorities, which included Redcar and Cleveland.
- 2.4 Thirdly, as a result of the participation of the Community Cohesion Officer in the Borough in those workshops and the focus of the Community Cohesion Partnership, a decision was made to fund a Faiths Scoping Study that would inform the Partnership's implementation of the 'religion and belief' diversity strand, which forms part of the new single equalities scheme.
- 2.5 It is important, however, to recognise that faith engagement in social action, community cohesion and the development of recognisable social capital has always existed.
- 2.6 In a report written by Kath Smith⁴ which undertook an extensive survey of the social action by faith groups in the North East region, this research found that: *'worshipping communities, in the main, live close to the buildings in which they worship, which highlights **the direct insight people in these communities have** into the issues and concerns facing local people. This concern can be mobilised quickly and effectively through the strong networking capability that each faith community has'*.
- 2.7 The report went on to say that: *'The survey collected information about the number of people directly involved in activities set up by faith communities,*

³ Department for Communities and Local Government (2008)

⁴ Faith in the North East: Social Action by faith communities (Churches' Regional Commission 2004)

either as staff or volunteers. 457 respondents indicated they have paid staff and 544 indicated they have volunteers.

- 2.8 Furthermore the survey showed *'the number of volunteers from worshipping communities who are involved in activities in the wider local community within the region. **This information shows that there are 13,439 volunteers working in the wider community, putting in an average of 6 hours per week – a total of 4,192,968 volunteer hours each year.** This aspect of the survey serves to show the way in which faith communities are in touch with and closely linked to the experiences of wider society'*.
- 2.9 Information drawn from the database of the Churches' Regional Commission, indicates that there are 63 Christian faith communities and two Muslim. A reported 280 volunteers are engaged in social outreach activities and 30 plus community groups use faith premises each week for their activities (see Appendix 4).
- 2.10 What is interesting to note is that much of the work undertaken by faith groups engaging as activists in their own communities goes largely unseen and unrecognised by 'authorities'. Appendix 2 illustrates the level of activity and engagement that exists amongst the faith communities in Redcar and Cleveland - its value should not be underestimated or undermined.
- 2.11 This study has also referred extensively to the work done in 2002/03 entitled: 'Faith in Community'⁵. This research, which was supported by Government Office for the North East, the Churches' Regional Commission, the Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency, the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and Tees Valley Ministry, produced an extensive report on the contribution of the faith communities to the voluntary and community sector in Redcar and Cleveland, and provided some important recommendations that will be referred to later in this study.
- 2.12 It is within this context that the scoping study is being undertaken: recognising that there is a desire within the Redcar & Cleveland Partnership to engage with the faith community at a much more strategic level; to have

⁵ Faith in Community: Kath Smith & Christopher Stevens: Teesside University 2003.

access to the 'voice' of the faiths in the decision making processes, whilst acknowledging that there is already a considerable level of faith engagement in social action in each of the communities that make up Redcar and Cleveland.

- 2.13 The study also recognises the infrastructure changes that are taking place in Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council with the adoption of Neighbourhood Management, as a way in which local area partnerships can be effectively developed, including the faith communities. There is also the development of stronger networks within the PCT (Primary Care Trust) specifically focussing on the well being agenda. In this, the faith communities can also contribute positively and add value.

Development recommendation 1

The local authority and the Community Cohesion Partnership should re-visit the 2003 research report 'Faith in Community' to evaluate the progress made in each of the recommendations as outlined in 6.4 and to consider how they can take developments forward.

3 The Scoping Study Brief

3.1 The research brief that was agreed between the Community Cohesion Partnership and the Cedar Partnership envisaged that the study would:

- Identify existing networks of faith organisations currently active within Redcar and Cleveland.
- Provide information on their levels of activity, their interests, their concerns and what will prevent them from becoming involved.
- Assess the level of their interest in, and engagement with, any community forums, partnerships and local government committee structures.
- Assess the extent to which faith network groups could provide a faith perspective in relation to the goals of the Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy and its thematic priorities.
- Assess the potential for interfaith bridging and linking of faith communities.

3.2 From this, it is anticipated that there would be greater levels of awareness amongst faith network groups and the Partnership which could:

- Strengthen and facilitate a coming together of the faith sector within the Partnership Strategic Plans.
- Identify the development and training needs, particularly in relation to engagement with community/civic structures and initiatives/equality and diversity issues.
- Enable faith networks to work collaboratively on projects and initiatives of common concern.
- Enable faith networks to build and sustain interfaith understanding and co-operation.
- Increase awareness and understanding of the faith sector amongst partners.

- Contribute to the delivery of Redcar and Cleveland Partnership thematic priorities in the North East Voluntary/Community Sector Equalities Coalition action plan.
- Strengthen links with other key equality ‘strands’ in Redcar and Cleveland.
- Provide a report with key information and intelligence to inform the work of the Community Cohesion Partnership relating to serving the interests and concerns of the faith communities and the local authority.⁶

⁶ Mapping faith Networks in Redcar and Cleveland (Scoping Study proposal August 2009).

4 Research Methodology

- 4.1 The researcher was allocated a limited amount of time to carry out the research, prepare the report and present this to the Community Cohesion Partnership. As such it is a relatively small scale, snap shot study, which lays the foundation for future development.
- 4.2 A considerable amount of information used to assess the impact of the faith communities in the Borough was accessed from desk top research and clarified in one-to-one interviews. Furthermore, there are some significant paper-based research reports that were accessed to provide a framework for the preparation of this report.
- 4.3 A number of face-to-face interviews have been carried out with faith leaders in the Borough, the Community Cohesion Officer of the Borough and the Redcar & Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency. Conversations were also held with youth and community workers, both employed by the Local Authority and the voluntary sector, which helped to provide a picture of the context and culture of the Borough.
- 4.4 Whilst access to most faith leaders was very straightforward, it was more difficult to contact others. Clearly, there is a significant workload that many faith leaders carry and this impeded their ability to participate fully.

5 The Redcar and Cleveland Context

- 5.1 Redcar and Cleveland has been a unitary authority since local government re-organisation in April 1996.
- 5.2 Redcar and Cleveland is on the North East coast of England. Lying to the south of the River Tees, it is the southernmost authority in the northeast region and covering nearly 25,000 hectares, is the largest Borough within the Tees Valley city-region. The population of almost 140,000⁷ (2006), comprising 59,400 households, is spread across the main urban conurbation of Redcar and Greater Eston, and many smaller commuter towns, rural villages and coastal settlements. The population density of only 5.6 persons per hectare, is considerably lower than the 8.2 average of the Tees Valley. Rural areas make up a significant part of the Borough, especially the landscape in East Cleveland, which is largely agricultural, making up 90% of the total land area.
- 5.3 There is a very small black and ethnic minority population (mostly from Asiatic countries: Pakistan, India and Bangladesh). See Appendix 2 for a table showing the demography of the population. The communities in the Borough are as diverse as its landscape. Although many of the towns and neighbourhoods are thriving, some are experiencing extreme levels of deprivation, with low housing demand, high levels of crime and unemployment, poor health and low educational attainment. Although these areas are predominantly within the urban areas of Redcar and Greater Eston, pockets of deprivation can also be found within the rural communities of East Cleveland.

Overall, the Index of Deprivation (ID) 2007 suggested that the picture was improving. In 2004, Redcar and Cleveland was the 44th most deprived Borough in the country, dropping to 50th in 2007. Concentration of deprivation however, moved in the opposite direction. In 2004 the Borough had the 14th highest concentration of deprivation in the country but in 2007 this had worsened to 12th position. Neighbourhood level data 2007 show that

⁷ Estimated population at 2006 by the Office of National Statistics

for overall deprivation, of the 92 Super Output Areas (SOA) in the Borough, 11 are ranked within the 3% most deprived, 9 within the 3-10% most deprived, and 11 are within the 20% most deprived SOAs nationally. For example, Loftus is in the top 5%, demonstrating a particular problem with rural deprivation. Thus, tackling deprivation and “narrowing the gap” between the most and least deprived communities continues to be a major priority for the Redcar and Cleveland Partnership.

- 5.4 There are high levels of social and economic deprivation both in the urban and rural areas, with higher than average levels of Job seeker Allowance claimants. The unemployment level recorded in February 2010 stood at 6.6% of the working age population up from 5.7% at the same time in 2009 and the highest in this decade.⁸
- 5.5 Alongside this, parts of the Borough enjoy higher than average levels of income and prosperity, which affect average statistical information on income and deprivation compared with other parts of Teesside and the North East Region.
- 5.6 Of those who are in employment, the largest group are in the service industries, followed by public administration, manufacturing and distribution. The recent closure of the Corus Steel Works has added to the potential deprivation and unemployment levels in the Borough, the impact of which is yet to be determined, but it is anticipated to be significant.
- 5.7 The Redcar and Cleveland Health Improvement Strategy Delivery Plan⁹ provides the context in which contribution of the faith sector is set. Of the principles underpinning the plan the following are of particular relevance to faith communities:

Working in partnership

Maximising the impact of the voluntary and community sector

Adopting a community development approach

⁸ Tees Valley Unlimited: March 2010 issue: 3/10

⁹ Redcar and Cleveland Partnership, Health Improvement Strategic Delivery Plan 2010 – 2015 (Feb. 2010)

The faith communities have a contribution to make to each of the ten themes adopted by the plan¹⁰.

- 5.8 Statistics from the most recent census (2001) indicate that, of those who claimed adherence to a specific religious group, 82% were Christian, 0.5% were Muslims, 0.5% Hindu, 0.4% Sikh, 0.3% Jewish, 0.1% Buddhist, 0.15% of other religions, with 9.7% claiming no religious affiliation and 7.3% not stating any religious adherence. With the exception of those claiming to be Christian, all the other figures are lower than the average for England and Wales.¹¹
- 5.9 In 1998 the Redcar and Cleveland Local Strategic Partnership was formed, one of the first in the country. The remit of the partnership is to: *'set out the vision of an area and coordinate and drive the delivery of local services leading to improved outcomes that go beyond the remit of one partner, promoting and guiding the social, economic and environmental enhancement of the Borough'*¹².
- 5.10 To ensure the Partnership was 'fit for purpose', a review of its structure and membership was undertaken in 2005 which led in May 2006 to the implementation of a new way of working that aligns the Partnership to the shared priority policy blocks between central and local government of:

1. Children's Trust
2. Health and Well-Being
3. Community Safety Partnership
4. Stronger Communities Partnership
5. Regeneration Partnership

It was recognised at that time, not only by central government but also locally, that the faith communities should play an important part in the process of community renewal, bringing distinctiveness and value that is unique to this sector which is part of the wider voluntary and community sector.

¹⁰ Contribution of the faith community to health improvement in Redcar and Cleveland

¹¹ 2001 Census information.

¹² Redcar and Cleveland Local Strategic Partnership website

- 5.11 Within the Christian faith there is a significant presence of Anglican, Roman Catholic and Methodist Churches, five United Reformed Churches making up the East Cleveland Mission Partnership, a Baptist Church, two Salvation Army citadels and a number of other independent Christian groups, including some of what are termed new churches (evangelical house church groups). Statistically, the traditional denominations are losing members, whilst the evangelical non-denominational groups (young churches) are growing exponentially.
- 5.12 The Christian community in the Borough provides and supports chaplaincy services to industry (Corus), local hospitals and is negotiating a presence within the further education institution.
- 5.13 Of the other faith groups, there are two mosques, which serve different Muslim groups, whilst those who are members of other faith communities travel out of the Borough, usually to other parts of Teesside (specifically Middlesbrough) for worship and engagement in faith based activities aligned to their religious group. There is some discussion taking place about the viability of establishing a Gurdwara in Redcar. At the present time the Sikh community travels either to Thornaby or Middlesbrough for their worship.
- 5.14 Appendix 3 provides details of the places of worship in Redcar and Cleveland and the location of other faith based community services, eg chaplaincies.

Development recommendation 2

As part of the development process of the engagement of faith communities in the civic and social life of the Borough, some work needs to be done across the Borough to identify and map what already exists, and the extent to which the Partnership already engages with the faith communities. For example, the Children's and Young People's services youth work staff engage with faith groups on a regular basis where there are specific projects based in localities (eg Guisborough and Saltburn).

6 Faith in Community

- 6.1 In March 2003 a report entitled 'Faith in Community' was published by the Redcar and Cleveland Community Network. This report was produced by the University of Teesside in collaboration with The Churches' Regional Commission, Government Office for the North East, the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, the Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency and the Tees Valley Ministry. The report sought to identify the *'range and scope of regeneration activity taking place in the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland under the auspices of faith communities'*¹³.
- 6.2 The report was commissioned by the Tees Valley Faith Committees Regeneration Group, in partnership with Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency. The report sought to identify the range and scope of regeneration activity taking place in the Borough under the auspices of faith communities.
- 6.3 The report made five recommendations and offered five elements of good practice for the development of faith engagement in social and civic life and community regeneration that would build social capital and enhance the life chances of the population of the Borough.
- 6.4 **Recommendations:**
- Community-development resources be sought to undertake a more detailed study of the faith communities in the Borough.
 - Consideration should be given to the employment of faith-community development worker(s).
 - Any further work should take account of the role of faith communities in tackling rural decline.
 - Steps are taken to engage both faith leaders and lay members of faith communities with the Redcar and Cleveland Local Strategic Partnership.

¹³ Faith in Community: Smith & Stevens 2003: University of Teesside

- Encouragement is given to the formation of a Redcar and Cleveland Faith Network.¹⁴

6.5 **Good Practice Recommendations.**

- Take things in small steps, recognise that good initiatives begin small and take time to develop.
- Create networks amongst the faith group leaders. In 2002 the fact that most faith leaders knew their peers was seen as a strong starting point.
- Make use of available skills and talents.
- Avoid duplication, begin with what there is.
- Drawing down money is not the first objective.¹⁵

6.6 The 2003 report offers a larger and more detailed base than the current study and should be revisited. Despite being seven years out of date, it offers some important insights from which any new initiatives could benefit.

6.7 Given the commissioning of this current report, and the recommendations made in section 10, it would be worth considering what, if any, action has resulted from the recommendations made in 'Faith in Community'. This information could be used alongside the recommendations contained in this report.

¹⁴ Faith in Community: Smith and Stevens 2003: Teesside University.

¹⁵ Faith in Community: Smith and Stevens 2003: Teesside University.

7 Where are we Now?

- 7.1 Information provided earlier in the report identifies the presence of a range of faith groups in the communities that make up the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland.
- 7.2 The largest of these communities are of the Christian faith and are established across the Borough.
- 7.3 Two mosques are located in the South bank area and serve the Muslim populations, most of whom originate from Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- 7.4 Those who attend the South Bank Mosques tend to be people who live in the area, or personnel employed locally in the service industries and who attend the Mosque for Friday prayers. Usually, between 70 – 80 people attend prayers on a Friday.
- 7.5 The picture painted of the Mosque (Middlesbrough Road), which largely serves the Bangladeshi community, is different. Here, there is a very small membership (20-35 at Friday prayers). Many of the former members have moved away as the area regeneration plan has led to the demolition of large tracts of housing. As this plan moves forward, it is envisaged that the community will shrink still more, although some who move away continue to come back to the Mosque due to the familial ties.
- 7.6 Members of other faith groups travel outside the Borough to access their worship centres.
- 7.7 Currently, there is no formal structure across the Borough that brings the faith sector together. This is despite the recommendation made in the 2003 'Faith in Community' report. However, there are three Churches Together Forums in Redcar, Saltburn and Guisborough. These local structures bring together representatives from most of the Christian Churches in their locality, although it was recognised that some of the more independent Christian groups tended not to be part of these structures.

- 7.8 In all cases, the Churches Together Forums deal with local issues and ways in which the various churches can work more closely together. In each case, and some while ago, a social action project has been established through the Churches Together Forum.
- 7.9 In two cases, this was a youth engagement initiative (The Bridge Association, Guisborough and Doorways, Saltburn) and the third, an initiative supporting older people in West Redcar, (Helping Hands for You). In each case, principally to procure funding and to create sustainability, these initiatives have become independent charitable bodies, still aligned to, but not part of, their founding body. While each of the governing bodies has faith representatives on them, the influence of the instigating faith group has been removed as charitable status was obtained.
- 7.10 An observation of the researcher would be that, in general, Churches Together Forums reflect the communities which support them and focus on very local issues rather than on larger strategic political/social/economic issues that impact on communities. This is largely a common trait of Churches Together Groups, although there are those that are developing a more proactive campaigning role (eg Darlington Churches Together has written to all prospective parliamentary candidates in the election to challenge them to put 'morality before politics' in the General Election. A 13 page document has been prepared which outlines their political and moral expectations¹⁶).
- 7.11 It is significant, in the context of this study, that capacity was an issue; the time constraints, that most faith leaders feel, are impacting on them and restricting their ability to engage in anything significant beyond the maintenance of their denomination or the requirements of their role (eg a Priest in the Church of England, who has a Church School in the Parish, has a requirement to be a governor - a demanding role in its own right).
- 7.12 Both the Church of England and the Roman Catholic denominations have faith based schools in the Borough (see Appendix 4), which, whilst being state

¹⁶ The Northern Echo: Thursday April 15th 2010: Politicians given moral challenge by Church group.

funded, provide a particular value base to the education of the children and young people they serve.

- 7.13 The Churches also support chaplaincy roles in industry and health care, most notably through the Teesside Industrial Mission and its engagement with the Corus Steel Works in Redcar and Skinningrove. There are also volunteer chaplaincy roles in the hospital (paid and unpaid) and negotiations are underway with the Redcar & Cleveland FE College to provide chaplaincy support there.
- 7.14 In common with the rest of England, there are ecumenical initiatives within the Borough: local ecumenical projects between the Anglicans and Methodists, and between the Methodists and the United Reformed Church, with the sharing of resources, such as buildings and clergy in an effort to reduce costs, use resources better and to ensure a continuing presence in communities.
- 7.15 What did emerge, during conversations with Church leaders, was that there is a significant engagement of people of faith in local social and political structures (eg Parish, Local and Borough Councillors). This is seen as an important part of faith based outreach and influence in communities, contributing to developing social capital and faith influence in civic life.
- 7.16 One of the Mosques (South Bank) provides Islamic Religious teaching to young people at the mosque, whilst the Bangladeshi community joins with others from the Teesside area to provide religious and language education at a school in Middlesbrough on Saturdays. Whilst this is principally focussed on children, there is an increasing number of adults accessing the education offered.
- 7.17 Engagement in the local Independent Advisory Groups was also significant amongst the faith leaders interviewed. Particularly in the South Bank area this was seen as the place where networking took place, and where contact with other faith representatives occurred.
- 7.18 However, what was worrying was the lack of knowledge about local authority and partnership structures and developments. One faith leader interviewed indicated that they were not aware of the Local Strategic Partnership or the

Community Cohesion Partnership and the work which both are developing in the Borough. Another felt that, although there is a principle to engage and involve faith communities, the reality is that there is no strategy for doing this and engagement is accidental, personality-dependent and potentially 'cherry picked' rather than planned.

- 7.19 It became apparent that the faith communities' engagement in the infrastructure in the Borough is low. The Redcar & Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency, as a membership organisation, does not specifically target faith communities, although if approached, would be able to offer advice on a range of issues from governance to funding to safeguarding etc. However, an observation made was that in many of the local community events (eg the Mela), the faith communities had a very prominent presence and were an integral part of those activities.
- 7.20 Research conducted in 2004 on Social Action by Faith Communities in the Region¹⁷ shows that there is a significant level of locally based, locally focussed, low cost or no cost social action, community support taking place which is initiated and delivered by the faith communities (see Appendix 1).
- 7.21 The challenge for the Redcar & Cleveland Partnership will be to use this information to somehow strengthen the network of faith groups, the sharing of ideas and the pulling together of this information, with the permission of each group, to contribute to the picture that can be presented of what is happening in Redcar and Cleveland.

Development Recommendation 3

There needs to be careful consideration given to some critical questions of engagement:

- Why – for what purpose?
- What are the expectations?
- What will be the benefits for the local authority and the faith communities?

¹⁷ Faith in the North East: Social Action by Faith Communities in the Region: Kath Smith: Churches' Regional Commission 2004

8 Where do we want to be?

- 8.1 In common with Local Authorities and other statutory agencies throughout England, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council is facing an uncertain future with the only certainty being that incoming resources to fund and support the work of the local authority and partner agencies are going to reduce.
- 8.2 Amidst this change and uncertainty, the question of 'why engage with faith communities?' needs to be addressed.
- 8.3 In common with all other authorities, there are political initiatives in which there is an expectation that local authorities will develop strategies that enable them to fulfil the expectations of central government. One such expectation is that the faith communities will be more fully engaged in social and civic life, with more becoming involved in the delivery of 'social' services through new contracting and service purchasing opportunities that are being developed. The recent letter from John Denham, former Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to Chief Executives of Local Authorities, which is referred to earlier (see paragraph 2:2), emphasises the key role that the voluntary and community sector (including faith based communities) can play in the future delivery of high quality, innovative services that bring added value to the work of front line staff. His letter includes a 'myth buster' to address the misconceptions about the ability of faith based organisations to deliver services.
- 8.4 However, dictat should not be the only imperative - there are other good reasons for the local authorities and partner agencies to seek to develop closer links with and include faith communities in all developments.
- 8.5 In the report 'Face to Face and Side by Side'¹⁸ some key points are made that apply to the potential outcome of this study. The report states that - 'Faith communities create many opportunities for participation in society and they have been a force for positive social change.....where faith communities are

¹⁸ Face to Face and Side by Side. A framework for partnership in our multi faith society. Communities and Local Government 2008.

an integral part of the community in this way, there is a dual benefit. They provide additional resources for dealing with social problems and, where they work across faith divides, they contribute to creating a greater sense of a shared purpose and inhibit the emergence of a ‘them’ and ‘us’.

- 8.6 Furthermore, a publication by the Churches’ Regional Commission¹⁹ suggests that - ‘The understanding which faith organisations have of their community, developed through long-term engagement, is a rich resource for statutory bodies who wish to engage with the community.’
- 8.7 The report goes on to say that - ‘Faith communities and their representatives can bring particular spiritual, moral and theological perspectives to decision making processes – this can motivate imaginative responses and approaches to questions of social justice and needs.’
- 8.8 The key structures, in which the faith communities can be most effectively engaged, are within the Redcar and Cleveland Partnership.
- 8.9 Appendix 6 outlines the vision of the Redcar and Cleveland Partnership by 2021, and the part that the Community Cohesion Partnership will play in the achievement of this vision.
- 8.10 It is within this framework that the engagement of the faith communities sits most coherently and where there are opportunities for the Borough and its partnerships to develop ways of working with faith groups, bringing them together to engage in the debate and to offer their views and support.

Development Recommendation 4

There is a need for some capacity building work to be done both in the faith communities relating to engagement with the Partnership and the value of this, as well as with local authority officers and other partner agency staff around the whole issue of engaging with the faith communities.

¹⁹ Faith in North East Regeneration: Some key lessons: Churches’ Regional Commission (2006)

9 Engaging with Faith Groups in Redcar and Cleveland

- 9.1 There are a number of issues which need to be addressed for any significant work to be carried out that will improve the engagement of the faith communities in Borough-wide policy development.
- 9.2 The most significant issues that arose from the discussions held with faith leaders focussed on:
- How will representatives be chosen?
 - To whom will they report and what mechanisms will there be for reporting?
 - What will be the purpose of engagement and any consultation that ensues?
- 9.3 The question of how representatives are chosen and in what forums they will represent the faith communities, always presents challenges. It is not an uncommon controversy within the voluntary and community sector as a whole when Partnerships are seeking a representation on particular forums. The issue is: 'By what authority does an individual get there? Whom do they represent and what is their decision-making authority and report- back procedures? There is always a danger of 'cherry picking': recognising that an individual plays a significant part in the community and inviting them to be a faith representative. Whilst this is an issue for the faith communities to work out, the Partnership will need to support some capacity building to reach a position where representation can be agreed.
- 9.4 Allied to the point above is the question of accountability. Does one faith representative speak for all faith groups and how can they then gather views and feedback both to the faith groups and to the local authority structure? This is another example of a capacity building requirement.
- 9.5 The third point is more difficult to respond to. However, it was a key point made by people who were interviewed during this process. One person, in particular, expressed disillusionment with the engagement process because,

as they perceived it, nothing ever happened or changed. Examples were cited of time given to engage with local structures, local politicians and Members of Parliament, but no outcomes could be identified from the time invested. This has led to some cynicism about the process and unwillingness to participate in the future.

- 9.6 Careful thought will need to be given to the structure and processes of engagement so that representatives of faith communities can see that there is a value in investing their own time; that they are not just there to 'tick the local authority boxes' and that they have the authority to represent their community. Trust will need to be built for this to occur.
- 9.7 In another situation, of which the researcher has experience, the issue of identifying appropriate people was encompassed in a debate about whether one individual could represent a whole constituency of community groups, or whether they were around the table to offer a perspective from that group or faith community. This issue is felt very keenly and will need some sensitive treatment if the Borough wants to develop faith community engagement at a level beyond that which there is now.

Development Recommendation 5

In the short term, the Partnership could host an event, to which members of the faith communities (including volunteers) are invited, to set the scene for the 'Engagement with Faith Groups' and to gauge responses. This would provide an indicator of the level of response to future initiatives.

Development Recommendation 6

The Partnership could use the Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency to set up the event and to use their expertise to identify groups and individuals who should be invited. The Churches' Regional Commission will also be able to help identify probable participants and support the strategy for the development of this work.

Development Recommendation 7

In the longer term, the Partnership needs to identify external funding that could contribute to building its own and the faith communities' capacity through the appointment of an individual(s) who could work at a grass roots level to gather intelligence and create the conditions that will lead to greater engagement.

Development Recommendation 8

Investigate, with the faith communities, the feasibility of a Borough-wide faith network.

10 Development Recommendations

- 10.1 The Community Cohesion Partnership should re-visit the 2003 research report 'Faith in Community' to evaluate the progress made in each of the recommendations and to consider how they can take developments forward.
- 10.2 As part of the development process of the engagement of faith communities in the civic and social life of the Borough, some work needs to be done across the Partnership to identify and map in detail the extent to which engagement with the faith communities exists. For example, the Children's and Young People's services youth work staff engage with faith groups on a regular basis where there are specific projects based in localities (eg Guisborough and Saltburn).
- 10.3 There needs to be careful consideration given to some critical questions of engagement:
- Why – for what purpose?
 - What are the expectations?
 - What will be the benefits for the local authority and the faith communities?
- 10.4 There is a need for some capacity building work to be done both in the faith communities relating to engagement with the Partnership and the value of this, as well as with Partnership officers around the whole issue of engaging with the faith communities.
- 10.5 In the short term, the Partnership could host an event, to which members of the faith communities (including volunteers) are invited, to set the scene for the 'Engagement with Faith Groups' and to gauge responses. This would provide an indicator of the level of response to future initiatives.
- 10.6 The Partnership could use the Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency and Tees Valley Rural Community Council to set up the event and to use their expertise to identify groups and individuals who should be invited. The Churches' Regional Commission will also be able to help identify

probable participants and support for the strategy for the development of this work.

- 10.7 In the longer term, the Partnership needs to identify external funding that could contribute to building its and the faith communities' capacity through the appointment of an individual(s) who could work at a grass roots level to gather intelligence and create the conditions that will lead to greater engagement.
- 10.8 Investigate, with the faith communities, the feasibility of Borough-wide faith network.

11 Action Plan and Strategy

Further to discussions with the Stronger Communities Officer of the Community Cohesion Partnership, the Community Cohesion Support Officer and the Churches' Regional Commission, the researchers would like to offer the following joint action plan and strategy to the Community Cohesion Partnership to help it achieve its objective of bringing the faith communities more into the strategic development arena, whilst also recognising the immense contribution they already make to local community development.

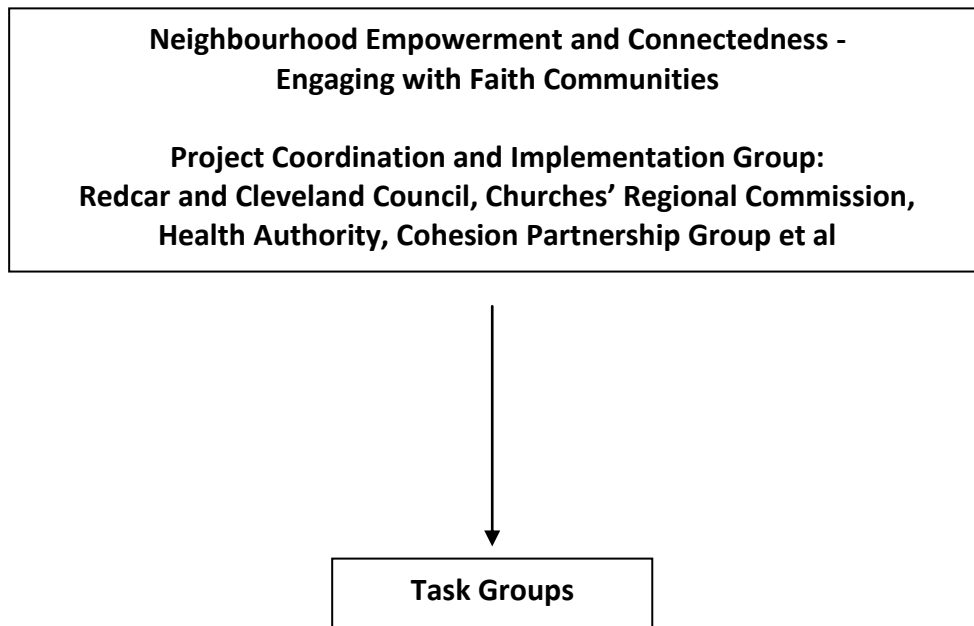
- 11.1 Gather further intelligence and information about faith communities' involvement and engagement in Place Agenda pilot areas.
- 11.2 Develop and support the emerging faith forums and interfaith links across the Borough areas: undertake this work in cooperation and partnership with existing Churches Together groups in, for example, Redcar, Guisborough and other locations.
- 11.3 Explore ways of increasing and enhancing the Faith Community involvement in the new neighbourhood management structures. Where appropriate, undertake capacity building with local faith organisations and groups to increase capability and confidence to engage with civic structures.
- 11.4 Consult with the Community Development Foundation to ensure faith engagement and involvement in planning and decision making in their proposed project in selected areas.
- 11.5 Develop a work plan for Redcar and Cleveland to contribute to and play a key role in the emerging Tees Valley Interfaith Infrastructure Organisation. Provide informed Redcar and Cleveland Intelligence relating to cross regional faith community concerns such as community cohesion, community safety, economic development, educational curriculum, the total place agenda etc.
- 11.6 Consult with Local Authority Departments and sections to consider 'Faith Engagement' in mainstream public service delivery systems: Education, Housing, Youth Service and Social Care Services. Contribute to planning and

decision making regarding Religion and Belief elements of single equality schemes and emerging Local Authority Impact Assessment Systems.

11.7 Faith Engagement in Health Services and Public Health Developments: Enhance Faith community involvement in 'Links Programme', Faith community contribution to Public Health initiatives and Wellbeing agenda concerns. Inject Faith Community information and intelligence relating to current performance measured against indicators.

11.8 Faith Engagement with Community and Voluntary Sector Developments: faith community involvement in Borough-wide VCS consortia, faith community access to training and learning support systems and resources.

Action Plan Coordination and Implementation Group



Action Plan Summary - Coordination and Implementation

- Task 1 Gather further Intelligence and Information - Place Agenda Pilot Areas
- Task 2 Develop and Support Faith Forums and Interfaith Links
- Task 3 Faith Involvement in Neighbourhood management structures and systems
- Task 4 Faith engagement in Community Development Foundation project
- Task 5 Redcar and Cleveland Council contribution to Tees Valley Interfaith Infrastructure organisation
- Task 6 Faith Engagement in Mainstream public service delivery systems: Education, Housing, Youth Service etc.
- Task 7 Faith engagement in Health Services and Public Health Developments: Links schemes etc
- Task 8 Faith engagement with Community and Voluntary Sector, Developments agencies and consortia

For Further information about this report and follow up contact The Churches' Regional Commission, Ushaw College, Durham. DH7 9RH Tel: 0191 3735453

Appendix 1

Contributors to the research and sources of information used to support the preparation of this report.

The researchers would like to thank those individuals who gave their time to participate in interviews that have informed this research; the researchers also accessed a wide variety of documents, both hard copy and on-line from which information and statistics were gained.

Rev. John Weetman (Rural Dean – Redcar and Cleveland)

Rev Chris Eddy (Superintendent Minister, Cleveland and Danby Circuit of the Methodist Church)

Mr Uddan (Imam: Middlesbrough Road Mosque)

Mr Khalid (Imam: South Bank Mosque)

Satnam Singh (Diversity Officer, Stockton Borough Council)

Barbir Noor (Community Cohesion Officer, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council)

Valerie Mitchell (Stronger Communities Officer, Community Cohesion Partnership)

Rev. Catey Morrison (East Cleveland District: United Reformed Church)

Mr Paul Southgate (Chief Officer, Churches' Regional Commission)

Ms. Karen McGarrity (Community Development Officer, Redcar and Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency)

Key Documents

Faith in Community: Kath Smith & Christopher Stevens (2003)

Faith in the North East: Social action by faith communities in the region. A report by Kath Smith on behalf of the Churches' Regional Commission

Face to Face and Side by Side: A framework for partnership in our multi faith society- Communities and Neighbourhoods (2008)

Churches' Regional Commission: Annual Report 2008 – 2009

Department for Communities and Local Government: Letter from John Denham (February 2010)

The contribution of faith communities to health improvement in Redcar and Cleveland

Redcar and Cleveland Health Improvement Strategy

Websites:

The Website of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council

Redcar and Cleveland Local Strategic Partnership

Tees Valley Unlimited

Northern Echo

Office of National Statistics

Regional Development Agency

The Anglican Diocese of York

The Catholic Diocese of Middlesbrough

The East Cleveland United Reformed Church Partnership

The Churches' Regional Commission

Appendix 2

Social Action by faith communities in Redcar and Cleveland

Redcar and Cleveland										
Ward Name	Community			Employment /		Families		Other		
	Campaigning	Children	Support	Elderly	Social Enterprise	(inc parenting)	Youth	Youth	Other	Other
Brotton	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Coatham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dormanstown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eston	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	0
Grangetown	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Guisborough	1	0	2	0	0	2	1	1	1	1
Hutton	1	0	3	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
Kirkleatham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lockwood	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loftus	0	2	4	0	0	1	2	2	2	2
Longbeck	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Newcomen	1	1	3	0	2	1	0	1	0	1
Normanby	1	3	5	1	0	3	3	0	0	0
Ormesby	0	0	5	0	1	2	1	1	1	1
St Germain's	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saltburn	1	0	3	0	0	1	2	1	1	1
Skelton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Bank	2	3	12	3	0	6	6	0	0	0
Teesville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
West Dyke	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Westworth	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Zetland	0	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
Totals	9	11	46	6	3	20	21	8	8	8

Faith in the North East: Social Action by faith communities (Churches' Regional Commission 2004)

Appendix 3

Population Statistics from the 2001 census

Redcar and Cleveland

All people	139,132
Males	67,095
Females	72,037
Christian (as a percentage)	82%
Buddhist	0.070%
Hindu	0.050%
Jewish	0.030%
Muslim	0.45%
Sikh	0.040%
Other religions	0.150%
No religion	9.8%
Religion not stated	7.37%

APPENDIX 4

Places of worship in Redcar and Cleveland by faith group and denomination

(Some not located in Redcar and Cleveland but with Parishioners from the Borough)

Muslim: South Bank Mosque
Middlesbrough Road Mosque

Christian:

Methodist

Zetland Park,	Brotton
Marske	Carlin Howe
Newcomen	Skinningrove
New Marske	Hinderwell
Guisborough	Danby
Upleatham	Castleton
Sleights Court	Westerdale (Local Ecumenical Project)
Saltburn	Glaisdale Head
Skelton	Leaholm
Moorsholm	

United Reformed Church

Guisborough URC
Lingdale URC
Redcar URC

Anglican

All Saints-Skelton	All Saints – Easington
ChristChurch–Coatham	St. Helen’s – Carlin How
Emmanuel Church – Saltburn	St. Hilda’s – Liverton Mines
St. Aidan’s Church – Boosbeck	St. Hilda’s – Redcar
St. Chad’s – Lingdale	St. Hilda’s – Grange Town
St. Cuthbert’s – Ormesby	St. Leonard – Loftus
St. Mary’s – Moorsholm	St Mark’s -Marske
St.Nicholas’–Guisborough	St Thomas’-New Marske
St. Peter’s – Redcar	St Margaret’s-Brotton
St. Michael’s – Liverton	St Cuthbert’s -Wilton
St James – South Bank	St George’s- Warrenby
Christ Church – Eston	St. Cuthbert’s – Kirkleatham

Baptist

East Cleveland Baptist Church -Redcar
Marske Leisure Centre
South Bank Baptist Church – South Bank

Assemblies of God

Jackson Hotel - Redcar
Pentecostal Church –Loftus

Catholic

Our Lady of Lourdes – Saltburn	St. Bede - Marske
Sacred Heart – Redcar	St. Bernadette – Gypsy Lane
SS Joseph & Cuthbert – Loftus	St. Gabriel – Ormesby
St. Alban – Redcar	St. Gregory – Normanby
St. Andrew – Teesville	St. Paulinus – Guisborough
St. Anne’s – Whale Hill	St. Peter’s – South Bank
St. Anthony’s of Padua – Brotton	St. William – Dormanstown
St. Augustine – Redcar	

Pentecostal

Elim Pentecostal (Grangetown Community Church)

Mormon

Mormon Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints – Redcar

Religious Society of Friends

Stumps Cross Community Centre – Guisborough

Salvation Army

Guisborough Corps - Guisborough

Guisborough Community Church

Gospel Hall, Redcar

Jehovah’s Witness

Skelton Green
Redcar

Appendix 5

Faith based schools

		Capacity	Roll 2008
Church of England:			
St. Peter's Coatham C of E	East Cleveland Redcar & Marske		
	<u>Total</u>	496	392
Roman Catholic:			
<u>Primary</u>			
St. Alban's			
St. Andrew's			
St. Bede's			
St. Dominic's			
St. Gabriel's			
St. Joseph's			
St. Mary's			
St. Peter's			
St. Paulinus			
	<u>Total</u>	1799	1407
<u>Secondary</u>			
Sacred Heart			
St. Peter's			
	<u>Total</u>	1360	1218

Appendix 6

The Vision of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The statements below describe the vision of both partnership groups, which are made up of representatives from the private, public, independent, voluntary and statutory sectors. The LSP's vision is that:

'In 2021 we want Redcar & Cleveland to be the place to be...

- *a great place for families to live,*
- *a great place to visit, shop and have fun*
- *and a clean green place to work and invest*

This will be achieved by:

The LSP bringing together public sector agencies (such as local authority, police, health trust) and other stakeholders (voluntary and community groups, businesses and local people) to 'set out the vision of an area and coordinate and drive the delivery of local services leading to improved outcomes that go beyond the remit of one partner, promoting and guiding the social, economic and environmental enhancement of the Borough'.

The Partnership, currently with over 80 member organisations, is therefore committed to improving the services delivered in our area and the quality of life for citizens, particularly those facing problems of disadvantage and discrimination. The Partnership has an explicit community leadership role to achieve a better quality of life for all and recognises that this cannot be delivered in isolation.

Two of the principal roles of the Partnership are to:

- *Drive the delivery of the Borough's Local Area Agreement*
- *Co-ordinate and deliver the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy*

In 2008 the Partnership, with the Council, is developing the Borough's first Sustainable Community Strategy. The set of priorities, objectives and outcomes agreed following considerable consultation during the development of the Local Area Agreement forms the basis of the

*strategy together with the Borough's first set of Area Profiles published in May 2007 as part of the evidence for actions.'*²⁰

Part of the LSP is the Community Cohesion Partnership, a policy area of the Redcar & Cleveland Partnership Stronger Communities Partnership thematic block, which is charged with developing initiatives within the Borough that will lead to an improved society. The Partnership states that its framework for operating is encapsulated from the working definition which is:

'that a Cohesive Community is one where:

- 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.*

In essence Community Cohesion goes beyond race and social inclusion. Numerous other factors have to be addressed if fragmentation is to be avoided such as economic deprivation and relations with young people'.

The Partnership will achieve this by adopting the following strategy:

'The Community Cohesion Partnership brings together Key stakeholders from the Statutory, Private, Voluntary and Community sector to promote Community Cohesion throughout the Redcar and Cleveland area and to:

- Co-ordinate Community Cohesion activities between partner agencies and communities, sharing learning, knowledge and good practice.*
- Create opportunities for training and awareness, raising Community Cohesion issues through a programme of activities, publicity and marketing.*
- Prepare quarterly reports to the Stronger Communities Partnership summarising Community Cohesion activity within the Redcar & Cleveland Area.'*²¹

²⁰ Redcar and Cleveland LSP website

²¹ Redcar and Cleveland LSP website.