



# Annual Report

2023-2024



## Luton Council of Faiths

Luton Council of Faiths (LCoF) began with a group of people from different faiths during 1994-1995, as part of the Grassroots Programme.

On 10<sup>th</sup> July 1997, the Luton Interfaith Forum was launched and then in 2000 the name 'Luton Council of Faiths' was adopted.

LCoF then achieved independent charitable status in 2001.

Since then LCoF has continued to work as a partner with the Grassroots Programme and Luton Borough Council, whilst also networking with many other organisations within and beyond Luton's borders.

### Visit Our Website:

[www.lutonfaiths.org](http://www.lutonfaiths.org)

### Email Us:

[info@lutonfaiths.org](mailto:info@lutonfaiths.org)

### Call Us:

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Luton Council of Faiths  
C/O Grassroots Programme  
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Charity no: 1089850

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[www.twitter.com/LutonFaiths](https://www.twitter.com/LutonFaiths)

### Front Cover Image:

*LCOF Members at the Peace Garden Cheering for the  
Luton Town Football Club*

## Funders, Partners and Volunteers

### Core Funder

- Bedfordshire & Luton Community Fund (BLCF) as part of Luton Rising – Community Investment Fund

### Projects Funder

- Near Neighbours Fund
- Hysacc's Foundation

### Key Partners

- Grassroots Programme
- Luton Council
- Bedfordshire Police
- Near Neighbours Programme

### Key Supporters – Faith & Voluntary Organisations

- Churches Together in Luton
- Sunni Council of Mosques
- Luton Council of Mosques
- Guru Nanak Gurdwara
- Shri Guru Ravi Dass Sangat
- Shree Sanatan Seva Samaj Hindu Temple
- BAPS Swami Narayan Hindu Temple
- Bedfordshire Progressive Synagogue
- Luton United Synagogue
- Luton Bahai Community
- Luton Quakers
- Luton Sathya Sai Service Organisation
- LanTern Luton
- OM Group
- Our Minds Matter (OMM)
- Centre for Youth and Community Development (CYCD)
- St Mary's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation
- Faiths Against Child Sexual Exploitation (FACES)
- Luton Polish School
- Luton Polonia
- Luton Irish Forum
- University of Bedfordshire & Treehouse Chaplaincy
- Ghar se Ghar
- The Luton News and Herald & Post
- Khayaal Theatre Company
- Luton SACRE

Along with the names above, we would also like to thank all the individuals who volunteer with Luton Council of Faiths (LCoF), offering their time, experience and expertise for the work we do!

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## Message from the Chair



On 27th May 2023 Luton Town made History! Wembley was lit in orange! What an incredible experience it was to compete against the big boys in the Premier League on a modest budget!

Hats off to Gary Sweet, Mick Harford, Rob Edwards and the directors who have been working hard behind the historic success! Above all, we witnessed a unified town! People from all walks of life united in their cheering for a town that, with all of its hardworking citizens and charitable donors, deserves the best. This will live on in the town's collective memory for many generations. We can only hope the speedy development of the football stadium as the club does so much for the town especially in supporting Luton's young talent.

However, in our multicultural town, there are many social, health, and economic challenges. Our work therefore in collaboration with local faith groups—including Christians, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists, and Baha'is—continues to make a significant voluntary contribution to the general well-being of the town. Our volunteers are on the frontline of many projects.

We saw the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foodbank. Being the 6<sup>th</sup> richest country in the world we should not be proud of commemorating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foodbank. It is a sad reflection of years of government policies that have driven the working people into poverty, but we must acknowledge and recognise the generosity of our Town and its people. All places of worship collect food donations. Many faiths serve hot meals in the Town centre such as Discover Islam Centre's Curry Kitchen, Soup Kitchens by the Sikh community and Hindu Community's Go Dharmic organisation, and Noah and the Salvation Army helping the most destitute. It is fitting therefore that Luton is recognised as the third most generous town in the country despite its high deprivation. This acclaimed generous status of the town epitomises the giving spirit of our 235,000 plus people.

On the other hand, community relations have unavoidably been impacted by both the conflict in the Holy Land and the divisive politics at home. Regardless of the difference of opinions, Luton communities remain gravely concerned about the loss of life, misery and destitution that have befallen the people of Gaza, and Israel. We long for a peaceful solution which does justice to all.

Earlier this year, we also witnessed the unfortunate closure of the National Interfaith Network, a key national forum that made immense contribution across interfaith arena in the country. It was an important conduit between the government and the local faith bodies for cohesive communities and harmonious community relations in contemporary British society.

To end conflict and discord that results from social disconnect, deprivation, poverty, climate change, and racial inequalities, we must strive to work together for peace and harmony.

We are therefore proud to partner with others in supporting initiatives like the Peace Garden Initiative, in which we mobilised communities to plant over 800 trees, remembering those who passed away during the Covid-19. We also saw the Luton in Bloom project developing and getting more people into gardening in our town. Our Annual Peace Walk and Inter Faith Week events brought together people of all ages, and from all sections of our communities. Our support has encouraged multi faith representation and participation at many civic and commemorative events.

In recognising the depth and breadth of LCOF's work, reflected in this annual report, we would also like to acknowledge a variety of positive work happening across Luton's different faith communities. Let's continue working together for the common good and strive to fulfil the aspirations of all in our town for a better life, as it is also aspired in Luton Council's 2040 plans. We remain grateful to the Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation for its support, which continues to enable us to build the much needed peace and reconciliation in our town.

**Professor Zafar**

## Overall Year in numbers!

**Over 55  
activities  
with 30 as a  
key and  
direct  
partner**

**Over 50  
Community  
meetings  
and  
mediation**

**Over 200  
promotional  
events of  
various faith  
communities  
and partners**

**Over 4000  
young people  
engaged at  
school and local  
community  
projects**

**300 volunteers  
engaging on  
various projects  
with 75 ongoing  
active  
volunteers**

**Over 48  
published news  
articles in Luton  
News and  
Herald and Post  
and over 300  
social media  
posts**

#COYH





## Peace Garden Initiative (Year 3)

### A Tree for Every Life



BBC Politics did a piece on the Town highlighting the impact of the pandemic and the 3 years of lockdown, but it also featured Peace Gardens and Luton's Peace Garden Initiative visiting Wigmore Park Orchard, where the project was launched in December 2021.

With over 800 lives lost during the pandemic, the Peace Garden Initiative captured people's imagination and won hearts. Over the last 3 years around 819 trees have been planted with 229 trees planted during April 2023 – March 2024. The project engaged over 300 people volunteering, with regular volunteers coming for all the 15 days of tree planting, excluding maintenance days.

We also launched the Peace Garden Guardians at Downside Primary School with an assembly of about 300 children. We followed it up with an afternoon of action mulching the trees. This was supported by the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire with the aim to nurture the next generation of tree planters and carers. It was befitting that the project was awarded the Tree of Trees for the Queen's Green Canopy.

We are really proud of this collective initiative. It is founded and led by a local Muslim volunteer, Sujel Miah and supported all along by the LCoF's Head of Communities and Relations Development Officer Ryad Khodabocus. LCoF volunteers from across all faith communities (as seen in the pictures in the following pages) made tremendous contributions to this project. We acknowledge the financial contribution from many places of worship including our Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Sikh and Hindu communities and several individuals without whom this project would not have been a success.

## Environment, Ecology and Human Connectedness

The faith sector partnership with the Luton Council, Luton Rising, schools, parks, volunteers and community hubs of all faiths and none, has proved yet again that we can work together for the common good.

We would like to pay tribute to late Scott Stalham from Friends of Wigmore who supported the project from day one with his colleagues, planting the first set of trees at Wigmore Park, which is the biggest tree orchard in area.

Below is the final update on the total number of trees planted:

2021	Wigmore Park	71 Orchard trees, 170 whips	241
2022	Wardown Park	23 x semi mature beech and field maple	13
2022	Pope's Meadow	10 x Scot's pine, 10 x beech whips	20
2022	People's Park	7 additional orchard trees	7
2022	Mayne Avenue	90 beech whips	90
	Stopsley Common		26
2022		50 x semi mature	
2023	Wardown Park	1 x field maple (tree of trees)	1
2023	Chaul End	25 x orchard, 25 x semi mature, 100 whips	100
2023	Riddy Lane	50 x semi mature	50
2023	Lewsey Park	50 x semi mature	40
		5 Native oak, 5 holm oak, 5 lime, 5 hornbeam, 32 hazel, 40 hawthorn, 12 sweet chestnut	
2023	Stockwood Park		104
2023	Leagrave Park	17 Ornamental hawthorn, 3 Malus 'Golden Hornet', 20 birch	40
		23 Ornamental hawthorn, 3 Malus 'Golden Hornet', 8 local variety apple trees	
2024	Kingsway Park		35
	Stopsley Common		
2024		10 Elm 'Wanoux', 5 hornbeam, 10 rowan, 10 guelder rose, 15 birch	50

Total planted: 817

However, the project lost the 90 beech trees at Mayne Avenue and a few at the Lewsey Park, which still need replacing while the trees lost to vandalism in the Stopsley area have already been replaced.



A bench was stalled with friends and families for Scott Stalham at the Wigmore Peace Garden.. 'Too soon he left but in this window of life he is remembered with such love and his legacy for generations to come'.

# Environment, Ecology and Human Connectedness

## Stockwood Park



## Environmental Ecology and Human Connectedness

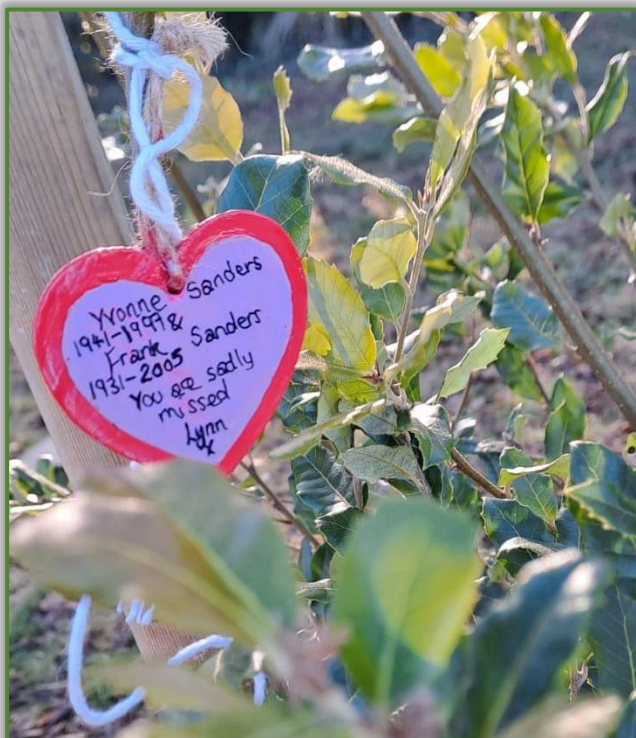
### Our Young People Environmentally Concious



## Environmental Ecology and Human Connectedness



'The Soul never dies'



# Environmental Ecology and Human Connectedness



## Legrave Park



## The Peace Garden Guardians



**PEDOWNSIDE**

@pedownside



The eco team were busy today checking on the Peace Garden trees, adding new canes and tidying up the area.

[@PeaceGardenIni1](#)

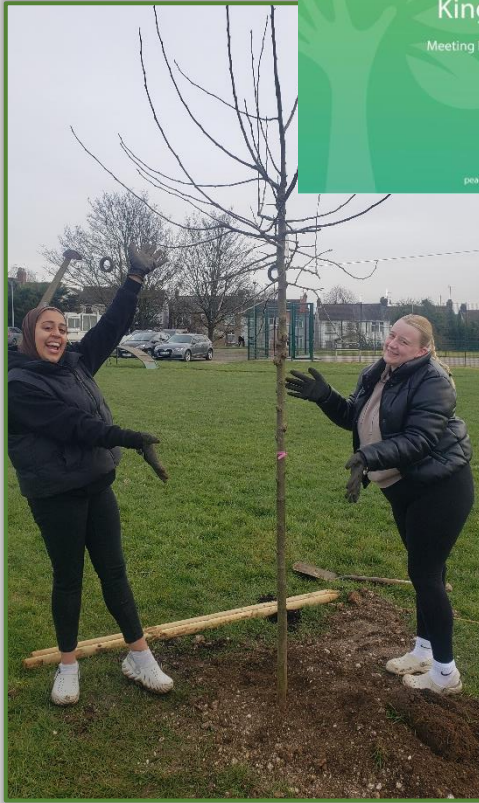


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# Environmental Ecology and Human Connectedness



## Kingsway Park



## Environmental Ecology and Human Connectedness



### Stopsley Common- Last planting event



*End of an Era*

## Fairtrade Ramadan and Eid with Discover Islam Centre

During the month of Ramadan, we engaged with Luton's Discover Islam Centre, calling it a Fairtrade Ramadan and Fairtrade Eid, and supported and promoted the use of Fairtrade ethical products.

An amount of over £10,000 was spent by the local community to support this initiative.

Over 20 volunteers worked hard to support this initiative and helped in preparing Fairtrade Gift Hampers using the compostable packaging to further add the environmental consciousness. The project was done in partnership with Grassroots Programme.



## Health and Wellness

### Wellness Guided Walk

Our Wellness campaign continues to work in partnership with the Community Interest Luton, Luton Lions, Inspire FM and Total Well-Being Luton.

We held 8 guided walks in total and the areas we covered, included: Inspire Sports Village, Dunstable Downs, Warden Hill, Sharpenhoe Clappers, Putteridge New Year's Walk, 2xRamadan Wellness Walks called Iftar Under the Stars, and a Wellness Walk to the Someries Castle.

Despite the rain, mud or heat, over 500 people participated in these walks from across all sections of Luton's diverse communities, including the young and the elderly with various health challenges, making it a huge success.



## Health & Wellness

### Luton in Bloom

‘Luton in Bloom’ is a community-driven initiative aimed at uplifting Luton’s spirits through the power and shared interest of gardening. Ever since its launch in May, the project has been encouraging communities to grow items, learn life skills and meet new people.

The project also aims to improve the overall look and feel of the town. It is also about tackling isolation bringing the community together in a useful and meaningful way.

The project founder is Sujel Miah representing Luton Council of Mosques in the Luton Council of Faiths. His vision is about transforming communities through connecting people and plants, especially those from most deprived parts of our town. The project is also about supporting people’s physical and mental wellbeing and creating a sense of pride in communities, neighbourhoods and the town. It is about residents contributing to the way their street and neighbourhood looks and feel, through fun and healthy competition.

Over 50 entries for a gardening competition were submitted in 4 different categories. Loana Frigura won the Best Residential Front Display, Lullington Neighbours won the Best Community Garden, Tahmina Ajmal won the Best Fruit and Veg patch and Woodlands Secondary School Best School Garden. Cash prizes were awarded to winners and runners-up, at the community farmers market held in the town centre where many community members could showcase what they had grown.

The project has been very much supported by Luton Rising, Community Interest Luton, Inspire FM, The Peace Garden Project, Luton Council of Faiths, and Luton Council. The Garden competition, farmers market and gardening workshops will also support Luton Council’s objectives around community development, cohesion, economic skills, public health outcomes and Luton Rising’s commitment to improve the local environment.



## Health & Wellness



## Community Tensions & Mediation

### Palestine and Israel

The world appears to have changed once again, as we all have been horrified by the sudden escalation of violence across Israel and Palestine causing unimaginable destruction and suffering.

The Holy Land for Jews, Christians & Muslims is witnessing the deadliest and bloodiest days in recent history.

All places of worship and people of faith worldwide are praying for the thousands of people who have been killed, injured, displaced, and those whose lives have been devastated.

In the midst of heightened anxieties, grief, bereavement, anger, and frustration on all sides, it is commendable that Luton's faith communities have demonstrated their concern for justice and peaceful co-existence, locally as well as globally.

Luton Community Action was set up by several volunteers to engage politicians into the matters of justice and fairness. Luton Councils of Mosques & Luton Palestine Solidarity Campaign, joined by hundreds of Muslims, Christians, and those of different or secular beliefs, stood outside Luton Town Hall to express their grief and pain followed by a peace vigil. They shared prayers for the loss of life in Israel and Palestine.

One life taken whether Jewish, Muslim, Christian or anyone in humanity is too much, speakers from different faiths & beliefs voiced out unanimously.

Leaders condemned both Islamophobia and Antisemitism and called upon shared human values and heritage among the children of Abraham.

Condemning terrorism and the disproportionate killing of innocent families, the defenseless, and the vulnerable, and the bombing of hospitals with mostly children dead, mourners demanded of local and national leaders across all political spectrums to call for an immediate ceasefire, release of the hostages and safe passage for the humanitarian aid for the victims.

As demonstrations are happening across the towns and cities, organisers asked everyone to stay within the framework of the law.

In a statement, the Luton Council of Faiths offered condolences and prayers for those who have faced death, injury and are suffering in other ways, and called everyone to unite in humanity and pray that reconciliation, peace, and justice prevail for everyone.



## Community Tensions & Mediation

### OPEN LETTER

To:  
**Rachel Hopkins MP**  
**Sarah Owen MP**



We write to you as a collective of community organisations, representing the interests of your constituents in Luton.

On the 17th of October 2023, Richard Burgon MP tabled the Early Day Motion (no. 1685): "Protecting Civilians in Gaza and Israel". This was signed by 95 members of parliament, including Imran Hussain (formerly Shadow Minister for the New Deal for Working People). Having fallen due to the prorogation of parliament, the EDM was re-tabled by Mr Burgon on the 7th of November. We call on you to add your signatures to this motion.

Our community has watched with deep horror at the recent events in Gaza and Israel. There must now be an urgent intervention in order to prevent further civilian casualties, end the siege on Gaza, and ensure that international humanitarian law is upheld. This is a view that is supported by the United Nations, alongside numerous charities and aid agencies, including Save the Children, Oxfam, Christian Aid and Islamic Relief.

You are no doubt aware of the strength of feeling in our communities about this ongoing crisis; and as our elected representative, you hold a critical role in addressing the concerns of your constituents. Support for this motion is a necessary step in ensuring that the voices of your constituents are represented in parliament.

#### Signed:

Aamar Mahmood, Luton Community Action  
 Tareq Khamis, Luton Palestine Solidarity Campaigner  
 Tony Thompson, Hope Church and Churches Together in Luton  
 The Rev'd Luke Larner, St Andrew's Church Luton  
 The Rev'd Anne Crosby, St Anne with St Christopher, Luton  
 Zafar Khan, Luton Council of Faiths  
 Muhammad Rayhan, Luton Council of Mosques  
 Faisal Hussain, Luton Sunni Council of Mosques  
 Sufian Sadiq, Discover Islam Luton

Amna Khan, Lantern - Muslim Womens' Voices  
 Dave Barnes, TSSA Union  
 Vanessa O'Driscoll, Enough is Enough (Luton)  
 Louise Brown, Luton Tribune Club  
 Taj Ali, Tribune Magazine  
 Glenn Jenkins, Marsh Farm Outreach  
 Jeff Hodges, Unite Regional Officer  
 Vincent Charles, Unison Beds Health Branch

## Community Tensions & Mediation

A spate of Quran burning in Sweden, Denmark and the rise of Finland's far-right party True Finns in the summer 2023 highlighted how globally, there appears to be a growing intolerance of both immigrants and Islam, particularly in the right-wing political discourses.

Majoritarianism backed by nationalism is becoming a threat to minorities everywhere globally.

It is therefore worth reviewing how and why the sacredness of freedom of speech of few, has come to take precedence over the sanctity of human dignity and the sacredness of religious texts. How and why the freedom of speech is allowed to propagate hate and desecrate what is held sacred and revered by millions & billions around the world?

At a meeting held recently at Central Mosque, Luton Council, Councillors and different faith leaders discussed the initiative to 'Protect All Spiritual Scriptures' (PASS).

At a meeting held at Central Mosque, Luton Council, Councillors and different faith leaders discussed the initiative to 'Protect All Spiritual Scriptures' (PASS).

The meeting requested Luton Council of Faiths (LCoF) to write to the UK's Prime Minister and to the Deputy Secretary General of the UN, to appeal for immediate action in response to the burning of the Holy Scriptures, an act that strikes at the core of religious tolerance, respect, and compassion.

Those present felt that there is a need for robust international laws and treaties to prevent acts of religious desecration and to safeguard the rights and beliefs of religious communities worldwide.



## Youth Mental Health Programme

Often people are disillusioned with Mental First Aid Training as its main focus is listening to someone in crisis and making a referral. This often feels theoretical. We wanted enhance the current MHFA training programme by adding value to what could be done practically, in addition to making a referral. A pilot training was done just after the lockdown, which the BBC Look East also took interest in and covered it. It was great to roll out this training once again for Luton's young people.

The topic of mental health has been discussed far and wide, especially in relation to the lasting effects of the coronavirus pandemic on young people.

Often people are disillusioned with Mental First Aid Training as its main focus is listening to someone in crisis and making a referral often more theoretical. We wanted to address that by enhancing the current MHFA training programme by adding value to what could be done. A pilot was done just after the lockdown with the BBC took an interest in.

Our enhanced MHFA training course covered key topics such as suicide, self-harm, PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder), phobias, anxiety and depression. It also discussed how to spot signs of these issues and how best to support individuals suffering from any of these.

We added Heart Math Solutions as the second day of training with some simple and effective hands-on breathwork and emotional regulation techniques using Heartfulness approach which can be used on-demand. The focus was on the most common mental health issues like Anxiety, Depression, Panic Attacks and Stress management. The day also was about to:

- 1) Create a safeguard for the mental first aider about how they manage their own stress and state when supporting someone.
- 2) Develop their listening skills better with Heart's presence.
- 3) Manage and transform emotions and energies to be in a better space to make informed decisions
- 4) Develop confidence with gut intuition supported by science.
- 5) Help someone to calm down within seconds in the moment of distress

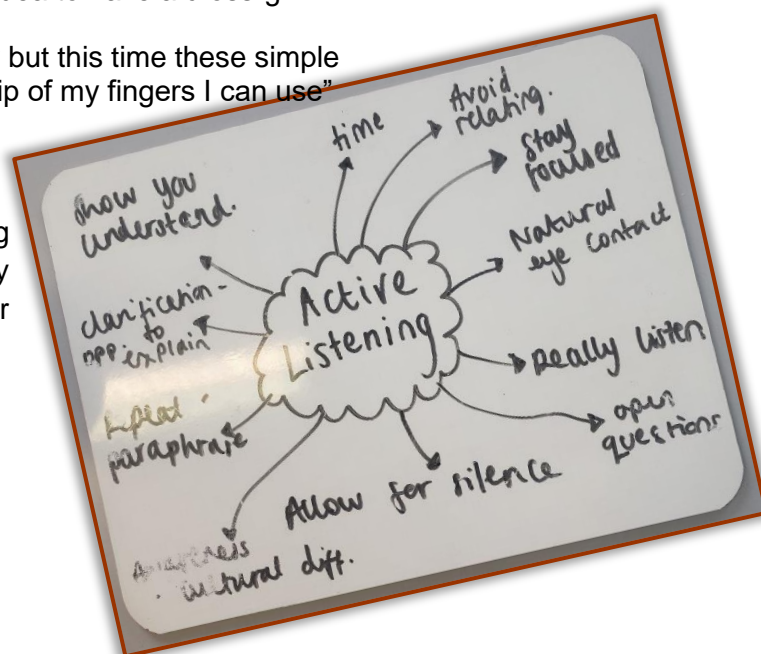
Some of the feedback:

"It was a specialist training to improve our understanding of mental health issues and how to identify, understand and help someone who may be affected by it. Additionally, we now know how to use HeartMath to promote personal resilience, boost positive wellbeing, and tackle stigma related to mental health."

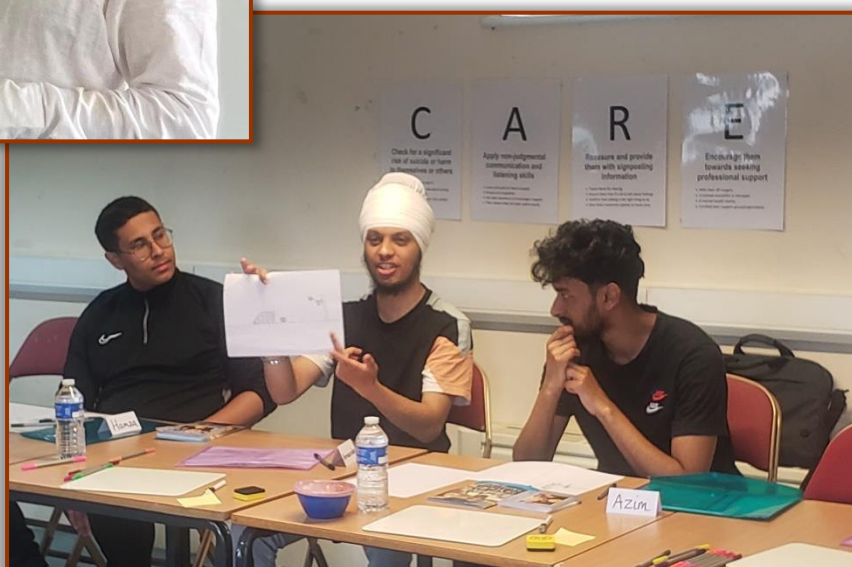
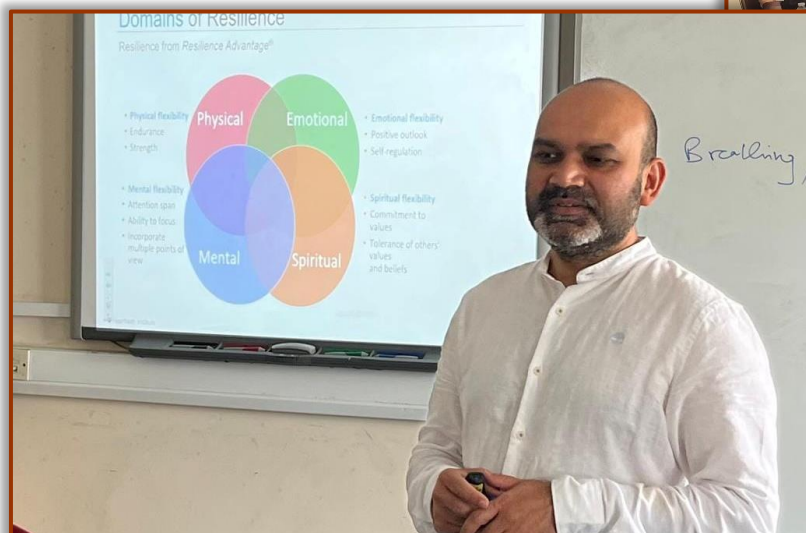
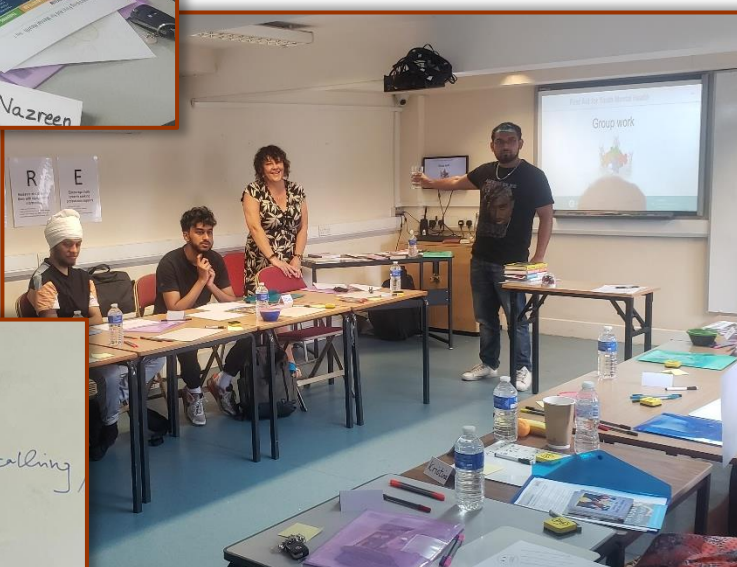
A community worker at The Feast youth engagement programme said, "Being on the same learning level as young people has been quite enlightening. It was a good idea to have a cross-generational discussion."

"I normally struggle when flying and have massive anxiety but this time these simple Techniques kept me calm. Now, I have something at the tip of my fingers I can use"

Thanks to Near Neighbours, the key sponsor of the training program and to the Centre for Youth & Community Development (CYCD) Luton for hosting this training at their premises on Leagrave Road.



## Mental Health with Young People Highlights



## Schools for Peace Building

### What will make our Town more Respectful with KS2 pupils

Seeing a local group of religiously and culturally diverse faith & community leaders coming together, creates a positive and lasting visual impact on young impressionable minds. Despite our religious differences, we demonstrated how we work together for the common good. This project is an annual on-demand 45 minutes school assembly highly appreciated in schools. It is more interesting to hear leaders talk about peace and harmony from a local perspective so that children can connect it to their town. Over 4000 children have had the opportunity to listen to what our leaders have to say according to their traditions and ask questions.



## School For Peace Building

### Character and Value based Education- Stories and Values and Virtues across Faiths



## Faiths, Cultural & Civic events

With our rich faith and cultural diversity, we have annual iconic events like the Holocaust Memorial, Big Iftar, Eid in the Park, Colours of Eid, Diwali, Nawruz. Vaisakhi, Easter, Christmas, and Chanukah to name a few. These events form part of the public cultural landscape of Luton celebrating the diversity of the town and bringing communities across all walks of life together.



Holocaust Memorial



Big Iftar- Ramadan



Diwali – Shree Sanatan Seva Samaj & OM Group

## Faiths, Cultural & Civic events



Colours of Eid



Lantern Ladies Iftar



Good Friday



Baha'i Nawruz

## Faiths, Cultural & Civic events



Carols by the Candle Light Event led by the University Chaplaincy called Tree House



Sikh Community Offering Iftar in Bury Park gracefully accpeted by local Muslims



Peace Light Service All Saints Church

## Peace Walk

In its 27<sup>th</sup> year, Luton's Annual Peace Walk continued to be one of the most popular multi-faith events in the town. While also commemorating the UN's International Day of Peace (IDP), it attracted people of all ages from Luton's diverse communities.

The hosts this year were Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Luton Christian Fellowship, Turkish Mosque & Community Centre, and Guru Ravidass Sangat Luton. Several dignitaries included the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire Susan Lousada, Mayor of Luton Cllr Yaqub Hanif, Luton MPs Sarah Owen & Rachel Hopkins, Bishop of Bedford Rt. Revd. Richard Atkinson and Cllrs. Javeria Hussain and Maria Lovell.

It was indeed a public demonstration of community solidarity and yet another step towards building a stronger Luton, when in view of the Churches burnt in Pakistan and Quran burning incidents in Scandinavian countries, Luton's different faith leaders called for stronger legislation to prevent such acts provoking communal discord. Calling upon the UK Prime Minister, the Deputy Secretary General of the UN, and also the UK High Commission of Pakistan, faith leaders demanded robust international laws and treaties to safeguard the rights and beliefs of the religious communities worldwide.

In a statement, they also reaffirmed their commitment to living in peace and harmony with one another and creating an inclusive society for all. Later, students and teachers from Ramridge, Chantry, Southfield, and Whitefield Primary Schools gave presentations about their work on climate change and environmental issues. They shared their commitment to being an Eco-School, litter picking and planting trees.

Young individuals who had completed the CATALYST Youth Leadership & Mental Health Training Programs, sponsored by Near Neighbors, were awarded certificates. They shared their aspirations for a better world and their resolve to combat poverty, deprivation, and other current problems in our town.

May all these hopes, aspirations, and commitments for a better world bear fruits!



## Peace Walk

### Highlights of the Peace Walk Journey



### Our Lady Help of Christians Church



### Luton Christian Fellowship

## Peace Walk



**Luton Christian Fellowship**



**Turkish Mosque & Community Centre**



**Guru Ravidass Sangat Luton**

## Peace Walk

### Moments



At Our Lady Help of Christians Church



At the Luton Christian Fellowship



At the Turkish Mosque & Community Centre



Langar at Guru Ravidass Sangat Luton



## Interfaith Week

Inter Faith Week is a time when the spotlight is on all the organisations like ours who work tirelessly for inter-faith understanding and cooperation in Luton and across the UK. Our work to build connections between people of different faiths and beliefs is enormously important.

In commemorating Inter Faith Week 2023 we held a multifaith storytelling event with stories of values and virtues across for the wider public at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in Stopsley. Stories are powerful and have a lasting impact on people. Using the 'lost art' of story-telling with the local Award-winning Khayaal Theatre. The storytelling aims to spell inter-faith and intercultural understanding and peacebuilding in the most creative way, especially to young audiences.

After the storytelling performance was over, the mixed audience of young and old, identified that values of kindness, generosity, patience, faith, courage, perseverance, and resilience were common in all the stories told from the Hindu, Jewish, Christian & Muslim backgrounds.



## Interfaith Week

### Swedish Guests

Despite the unfair negative portrayal and perception of Luton, we had the pleasure to host a multi-faith group of over thirty guests and visitors from Sweden, who chose to visit Luton.

Their visit was coordinated by The Church of Sweden Diocese of Linköping. They wanted to learn from Luton's experiences of inter-faith work, tackling far-right and how communities, government & Police, both locally and nationally, strive to work for strengthening community cohesion while also promoting unity in diversity. They were all ecstatic and thought visiting Luton had been worthwhile as it offered them a rich and inspirational experience.

They observed a meeting of Luton's faith leaders and were astounded to see religious leaders having an honest and open conversation on both local and global issues that affect life in Luton. They learnt a great deal during their field visits to Discover Islam Centre, Luton Council's Social Justice Unit, Bedfordshire Police Community Cohesion, The Feast, Grassroots & Near Neighbours Programmes.



### Visiting Town Hall



## Interfaith week



**At All Saints Church**



**At Discover Islam Centre**



**At Guru Nanak Gurudwara**

## Interfaith week



**At St Mary's Church**



**At Luton Central Mosque**



## Interfaith week

### Interfaith weeks moments at Central Mosque



## Local Heroes and Service to the Community



'Loving Legrave' initiative, St Luke's Church runs a weekly Community Café at Hockwell Ring Community Centre.

Volunteer Sandra Miller, Vicar & Luton Area Dean Revd Canon David Kesterton, and the Asst. Curate Revd Peter Farquhar at All Saints Refugees & Asylum Seekers Drop-in support



Luton Foodbank commemorating its 10<sup>th</sup> year with Takhoor Bhai as the Luton Council of Faith representative on the foodbank



Centenary Celebrations, the past and present Vicars of C of E All Saints Church Luton.



Luton's oldest Windrush Generation member, 103 years old Rose Allen joined by Mayor of Luton, Beds Police Crime Commissioner, Bishop of Bedford, and Pas Vincent Cox, at a special Windrush Civic Service



## Awards & Recognition- Our Volunteers



Peter Adams awarded the Hubert Walter award for Reconciliation and Interfaith Cooperation by the Archbishop of Canterbury

Jasbir Singh awarded the 'Make an Impact Award' at the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Big Iftar



Sujel Miah winner of the Luton's Best Award in the 'Most Outstanding Citizen' category

Maqsood Anwar, was presented with a Post Office 30 Years' Long Service Award



# Accounts

## Luton Council of Faiths

### Statement of Financial Activities For the Period Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted income funds 2024	Endowment Funds 2024	Total funds 2024	Total funds 2023
<b>Incoming resources</b>						
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>						
- Donations and legacies		4,786	-	-	<b>4,786</b>	5,000
- Investments		-	-	-	-	-
- Charitable activities	6	47,423	-		<b>47,423</b>	72,100
- Other Income		-	-		-	3,360
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b><u>52,209</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>52,209</u></b>	<b><u>80,460</u></b>
<b>Resources expended</b>						
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	4-10					
Raising funds		-	-	-	-	-
Costs of generating voluntary income		-	-	-	-	-
Fundraising trading costs		-	-	-	-	-
Investment management costs		-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		6,470	-	-	<b>6,470</b>	4,499
Governance and support costs		51,317	-	-	<b>51,317</b>	67,238
Other expenditure		198	-	-	<b>198</b>	3,590
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b><u>57,985</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>57,985</u></b>	<b><u>75,327</u></b>
<b>Net Movement in Funds</b>		<b><u>(5,776)</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>(5,766)</u></b>	<b><u>5,133</u></b>
<b>Reconciliation of Funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward		<b><u>44,692</u></b>	<b><u>(13,389)</u></b>	-	<b><u>31,103</u></b>	<b><u>26,170</u></b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b><u>38,916</u></b>	<b><u>(13,389)</u></b>	-	<b><u>25,527</u></b>	<b><u>31,303</u></b>

## Accounts

### Luton Council of Faiths Balance Sheet As at 31<sup>ST</sup> March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted income funds 2024	Endowment Funds 2024	Total this year 2024	Total this year 2023
<b><u>Fixed Assets</u></b>						
Tangible Assets		-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>		-	-	-	-	-
<b><u>Current Assets</u></b>						
Debtors	11		-	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand		27,521		-	27,521	33,297
<b>Total current assets</b>		27,521		-	27,521	33,297
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(1,994)	-	-	(1,994)	(1,994)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>25,527</u>	=	-	<u>25,527</u>	<u>31,303</u>
<b><u>Funds of the Charity</u></b>						
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>		<u>38,916</u>			<u>38,916</u>	<u>44,692</u>
<u>Restricted Income funds</u>			<u>(13,389)</u>		<u>(13,389)</u>	<u>(13,389)</u>
<u>Endowment funds</u>				-	-	-
<b>Total funds</b>		<u>38,916</u>	<u>(13,389)</u>		<u>25,527</u>	<u>31,303</u>



*And when we win everyone wins!*

**Peace Walk 2023**

Registered charity number: 1089850

1.	Charity Information
2-7	Trustees' Report
8.	Statement of Financial Activities
9.	Balance Sheet
10-13	Notes to the Financial Statements
14.	Independent Examiner's Report

**LUTON COUNCIL OF FAITHS  
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2024**

**Luton Council of Faiths**  
**Period Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**  
**Contents**

Registered charity number: 1089820

1. Charity Information
- 2-7 Trustees' Report
8. Statement of Financial Activities
9. Balance Sheet
- 10-13. Notes to the Financial Statements
14. Independent Examiner's Report

LUTON COUNCIL OF FAITHS  
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2024

**Luton Council of Faiths**  
**Charity Information as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

**Charity name**  
Luton Council of Faiths

**Charity number**  
1089850

**Principal address**  
47 High Town Road  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU2 0BW

**Trustees**  
Mr Zafar Khan – Chairperson  
Mrs Gulie Butcher – Vice Chair  
Mr Kishore Kaler – Treasurer  
Mr Dhansukh Panchal  
Mr Yogesh Mistry

**Bankers**  
The Co-operative Bank  
Alma Street  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU1 2PL

Lloyds TBS Bank Plc  
60 George Street  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU1 2BB

**Independent examiner**  
I. Hussain & Co Limited  
Chartered Accountants and Business advisors  
11 George Street West  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU1 2BJ

### History, objectives and activities of the Charity

On constitution it was believed the multicultural cohesion of the religious and cultural communities in Luton required addressing. The charity began with an initial grant. Both the initial grant and subsequent grants since have been under the terms which allow the trustees to either retain the amounts as capital or to spend them.

The objectives of the charity include;

- a) To bring together members of the different faith communities in Luton for deeper dialogue and co-operation
- b) To increase understanding and trust between different faiths, building on common ground between them yet respecting the unique contribution which each brings
- c) To work towards greater social cohesion and community integration in Luton
- d) To see inter faith co-operation as linking into global co-operation between faiths and cultures for the creation of a better world

### Management and Governance arrangements

The constitution provides for a minimum of five trustees. Where there is a requirement for new trustees, these would be identified and appointed by the remaining trustees, subject to the approval by AGM. The chair of the trustees is responsible for the induction of any new trustee which involves awareness of a trustee's responsibility, the governing document, administrative procedures, the history and philosophical approach of the charity. The trustees have taken steps to identify major risks to which the charity is exposed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks.

### Achievements and Performance of the Charity

#### **Annual Report Summary April 2023 – March 2024**

On 27th May 2023 Luton Town made History! Wembley was lit in orange! What an incredible experience it was to compete against the big boys in the Premier League on a modest budget!

Hats off to Gary Sweet, Mick Harford, Rob Edwards and the directors who have been working hard behind the historic success! Above all, we witnessed a unified town! People from all walks of life united in their cheering for a town that, with all of its hardworking citizens and charitable donors, deserves the best. This will live on in the town's collective memory for many generations. We can only hope the speedy development of the football stadium as the club does so much for the town especially in supporting Luton's young talent.

However, in our multicultural town, there are many social, health, and economic challenges. Our work therefore in collaboration with local faith groups—including Christians, Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists, and Baha'is—continues to make a significant voluntary contribution to the general well-being of the town. Our volunteers are on the frontline of many projects.

We saw the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foodbank. Being the 6<sup>th</sup> richest country in the world we should not be proud of commemorating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foodbank. It is a sad reflection of years of government policies that have driven the working people into poverty, but we must acknowledge and recognise the generosity of our Town and its people. All places of worship collect food donations. Many faiths serve hot meals in the Town centre such as Discover Islam Centre's Curry Kitchen, Soup Kitchens by the Sikh community and Hindu Community's Go Dharmic organisation, and Noah and the Salvation Army helping the most destitute. It is fitting therefore that Luton is recognised as the third most generous town in the country despite its high deprivation. This acclaimed generous status of the town epitomises the giving spirit of our 235,000 plus people.

On the other hand, community relations have unavoidably been impacted by both the conflict in the Holy Land and the divisive politics at home. Regardless of the difference of opinions, Luton communities remain gravely concerned about the loss of life, misery and destitution that have befallen the people of Gaza, and Israel. We long for a peaceful solution which does justice to all.

Earlier this year, we also witnessed the unfortunate closure of the National Interfaith Network, a key national forum that made immense contribution across interfaith arena in the country. It was an important conduit between the government and the local faith bodies for cohesive communities and harmonious community relations in contemporary British society.

To end conflict and discord that results from social disconnect, deprivation, poverty, climate change, and racial inequalities, we must strive to work together for peace and harmony.

We are therefore proud to partner with others in supporting initiatives like the Peace Garden Initiative, in which we mobilised communities to plant over 800 trees, remembering those who passed away during the Covid-19. We also saw the Luton in Bloom project developing and getting more people into gardening in our town. Our Annual Peace Walk and Inter Faith Week events brought together people of all ages, and from all sections of our communities. Our support has encouraged multi faith representation and participation at many civic and commemorative events.

In recognising the depth and breadth of LCOF's work, reflected in our annual report, we would also like to acknowledge a variety of positive work happening across Luton's different faith communities. Let's continue working together for the common good and strive to fulfil the aspirations of all in our town for a better life, as it is also aspired in Luton Council's 2040 plans. We remain grateful to the Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation for its support, which continues to enable us to build the much-needed peace and reconciliation in our town.

### **Key Highlights**

Over 55 activities have been held, 30 of these events and activities have been delivered by us as the key and direct partner

Over 50 community meetings and mediation sessions have been held during the year

Over 200 promotional events of various faith communities have been supported by us

Over 4000 young people engaged at school and local community projects

300 volunteers engaged on various projects with 75 ongoing active volunteers

Over 48 news articles have been published in Luton News and over 300 social media posts have also been published

### **Peace Garden Initiative (Year 3) – A Tree for Every Life**

BBC did a news piece on the Town with the impact of the pandemic following 3 years after the lockdown featuring Peace Gardens and the Peace Garden Initiative visiting Wigmore Park Orchard. With about 800 lives lost during the lockdown, the Peace Garden Initiative captured people's imagination and winning hearts. Over the last 3 years around 819 trees have been planted with 229 trees planted only last April – March 2024. The project engaged over 300 people volunteering with regular volunteers coming for all the 15 days of tree planting excluding maintenance days. We also launched the Peace Garden Guardians at Downside Primary School with an assembly of about 300 children following up with an afternoon of action mulching the trees supported by the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire with the aim to nurture the next generation of tree planters and carers as the project was rightly awarded the Tree of Trees for the Queen's Green Canopy. (More details are recorded in the full Annual Report).

### **Fairtrade Ramadan and Eid at Discover Islam Centre**

We supported Discover Islam Centre during the month of Ramadan to support Fairtrade Products. Over £10,000 was spent by the local community to support this initiative. Over 20 volunteers joined the initiative to support the project making Fairtrade Hampers using compostable packaging to further add the environmental consciousness. The project was done in partnership with Grassroots Programme.

### **Wellness Guided Walk**

In partnership with Community Interest Luton, Luton Lions, Inspire FM & Total Well-Being, we had 8 guided walks in different parts of the town, in which over 500 people participated from across all walks of life, young and elderly with various health challenges.

### **Luton in Bloom**

'Luton in Bloom' is a community-driven initiative aimed at uplifting Luton's spirits through the power and shared interest of gardening. Ever since its launch in May, the project has been encouraging communities to grow items, learn life skills and meet new people. The project founder is Sujel Miah says it is about transforming communities through connecting people and plants, especially those from most deprived parts of our town. The project is also about supporting people's physical and mental wellbeing and creating a sense of pride in communities, neighbourhoods and the town. It is about residents contributing to the way their street and neighbourhood looks and feel, through fun and healthy competition. Over 50 entries for a gardening competition were submitted in 4 different categories. Cash prizes were awarded to winners and runners-up, at a community farmers market. The project has been supported by Luton Rising, Community Interest Luton, Inspire FM, The Peace Garden Project, Luton Council of Faiths, Luton Council.

### **Community Mediation**

All have been horrified by the sudden escalation of violence across Israel and Palestine with unimaginable destruction and suffering. The Holy Land for Jews, Christians & Muslims is witnessing the deadliest and bloodiest days in recent history. All places of worship and people of faith worldwide are praying for the thousands of people who have been killed, injured, displaced, and those whose lives have been devastated. In the midst of heightened anxieties, grief, bereavement, anger, and frustration on all sides, it is commendable that Luton's faith communities have demonstrated their concern for justice and peaceful co-existence, locally as well as globally. Prayer and Peace Vigils have been held sharing concern for the loss of life in Israel and Palestine. In a statement, the Luton Council of Faiths called everyone to unite in praying that reconciliation, peace, and justice may prevail for everyone. We carry on offering a space to listen to all parties and offering the mediation in confidence, where necessary.

### **Community Tensions & Mediation**

A spate of Quran burning in Sweden, Denmark and the rise of Finland's far-right party True Finns highlighted how globally, there appears to be a growing intolerance of both immigrants and Islam, particularly in the right-wing political discourses. Majoritarianism backed by nationalism is becoming a threat to minorities everywhere globally. At a meeting held at Central Mosque, Luton Council, Councillors and different faith leaders discussed the initiative to 'Protect All Spiritual Scriptures' (PASS). The meeting acknowledged that the deliberate burning of any sacred Scripture is an egregious violation of human rights, freedom of religion, and fundamental principles for the diversity of faiths. We live in an interconnected world. It is essential that we work collectively to foster an environment of understanding and mutual respect for all religious and non-religious, beliefs and values. The meeting requested Luton Council of Faiths (LCoF) to write to the UK's Prime Minister and to the Deputy Secretary General of the UN, to appeal for immediate action in response to the burning of the Holy Scriptures, an act that strikes at the core of religious tolerance, respect, and compassion.

### **Youth Mental Health Programme**

After completing 5 days of Youth Leadership Training in Luton, 12 young people from Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, and no faith backgrounds followed it up with a 2-day Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training programme as they felt this was an important area for themselves and supporting those around them. The MHFA training course covered key topics such as suicide, self-harm, PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder), phobias, anxiety and depression. It also discussed how to spot signs of these issues and how best to support individuals suffering from any of these. We added Heart Math Solutions as the second day of training with some simple and effective hands-on breath work and emotional regulation techniques using Heartfulness approach which can be used on-demand. Some of the feedback stated:

"It was a specialist training to improve our understanding of mental health issues and how to identify, understand and help someone who may be affected by it. Additionally, we now know how to use HeartMath to promote personal resilience, boost positive wellbeing, and tackle stigma related to mental health."

A community worker at The Feast youth engagement programme said, "Being on the same learning level as young people has been quite enlightening. It was a good idea to have a cross-generational discussion."

"I normally struggle when flying and have massive anxiety but this time these simple Techniques kept me calm. Now, I have something at the tip of my fingers I can use"

Thanks to the Centre for Youth & Community Development (CYCD) Luton for hosting this training at their premises on Leagrave Road. Thanks to Luton Council of Faiths, Grassroots, The Feast Programme and Att10tive Luton for their support. Together we all share the vision of mentoring youngsters, helping them grow into responsible citizens and leaders for a better world.

### **Schools for Peace Building – What will make our Town more Respectful with KS2 Pupils**

Seeing a local group of religiously and culturally diverse faith & community leaders coming together, creates a positive and lasting visual impact on young impressionable minds. Despite our religious differences, we demonstrated how we work together for the common good. This project is an annual on-demand 45 minutes school assembly highly appreciated in schools. It is more interesting to hear leaders talk about peace and harmony from a local perspective so that children can connect it to their town. Over 4000 children have had the opportunity to listen to what our leaders have to say according to their religious traditions and ask questions.

### **School For Peace Building – Multi Faith Educational Stories of Values & Virtues**

Stories are powerful and have a lasting impact on people, especially on young people. Using the 'lost art' of story-telling with the local Award-winning Khayaal Theatre, the multi faith storytelling aims to spell inter-faith and intercultural understanding and peacebuilding in the most creative way, to young audiences.

### **Faiths, Cultural & Civic events**

With Luton's rich faith and cultural diversity, we have supported annual iconic events like the Holocaust Memorial, Big Iftar, Eid in the Park, Colours of Eid, Diwali, Nawruz. Vaisakhi, Easter and Christmas to name a few. These events form part of the public cultural landscape of Luton celebrating the diversity of the town and bringing communities across all walks of life together.

### **Peace Walk**

In its 27th year, Luton's Annual Peace Walk continued to be one of the most popular multi-faith events in the town. While also commemorating the UN's International Day of Peace (IDP), it attracted people of all ages from Luton's diverse communities. The hosts were Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Luton Christian Fellowship, Turkish Mosque & Community Centre, and Guru Ravidass Sangat Luton. Several dignitaries included the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire Susan Lousada, Mayor of Luton Cllr Yaqub Hanif, Luton MPs Sarah Owen & Rachel Hopkins, Bishop of Bedford Rt. Revd. Richard Atkinson and Cllrs. Javeria Hussain and Maria Lovell. It was indeed a public demonstration of community solidarity and yet another step towards building a stronger Luton. Students and teachers from Ramridge, Chantry, Southfield, and Whitefield Primary Schools gave presentations about their work on climate change and environmental issues. Young individuals who had completed the CATALYST Youth Leadership & Mental Health Training Programs, sponsored by Near Neighbours, were awarded certificates.

### **Inter Faith Week**

Inter Faith Week is a time when the spotlight is on all the organisations like ours who work tirelessly for inter-faith understanding and cooperation in Luton and across the UK. Our work to build connections between people of different faiths and beliefs is enormously important. In commemorating Inter Faith Week 2023, we held a multifaith storytelling event with stories of values and virtues across for the wider public at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in Stopsley. After the storytelling performance, the mixed audience of young and old, identified that values of kindness, generosity, patience, faith, courage, perseverance, and resilience were common in all the stories told from the Hindu, Jewish, Christian & Muslim backgrounds.

### **Swedish Guests**

We had the pleasure to host a multi-faith group of over thirty guests and visitors from Sweden who chose to visit Luton. They wanted to learn from Luton's experiences of inter-faith work, tackling far-right and how communities, government & Police, both locally and nationally, strive to work for strengthening community cohesion while also promoting unity in diversity. They were all ecstatic and thought visiting Luton had been worthwhile as it offered them a rich and inspirational experience. They observed a meeting of Luton's faith leaders and were astounded to see religious leaders having an honest and open conversation on both local and global issues that affect life in Luton. They learnt a great deal during their field visits to Discover Islam Centre, Luton Council's Social Justice Unit, Bedfordshire Police Community Cohesion, The Feast, Grassroots & Near Neighbours Programmes.

## Financial review and reserves

The net incoming resources for the year was a deficit of £5,689 (2023 – surplus of 5,133). At the end of the financial year the reserves were £39,003 (2023 - £44,692) of unrestricted funds and a deficit of £13,389 (2023 – deficit of £13,389) of restricted funds. The adequacy of the reserves policy is reviewed annually. The trustees are satisfied that reserves are presently more than adequate to meet future expenditure. The Trustees have a policy of aiming to retain reserves equivalent to six months' average expenditure. This is due to the uncertain nature of funding received. The total reserve funds at the year-end were £25,614.

## Future plans

The trustees intend to continue provide relief in a similar manner as before.

## Statement of trustees' responsibilities

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare the financial statements for each financial year which show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and its financial activities for that year. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

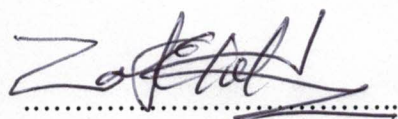
- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operational existence.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## Independent examiner

The trustees intend to ask the existing accountants to undertake the independent examination of the trust in the following year.

Signed on behalf of the trustees



Mr Zafar Khan – Chairperson

15/07/2024



Mr Kishore Kaler – Treasurer

Date: 15.07.2024

# Luton Council of Faiths

## Statement of Financial Activities For the Period Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted income funds 2024	Endowment Funds 2024	Total funds 2024	Total funds 2023
<b>Incoming resources</b>						
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>						
- Donations and legacies		4,786	-	-	4,786	5,000
- Investments		-	-	-	-	-
- Charitable activities	6	47,423	-	-	47,423	72,100
- Other Income		-	-	-	-	3,360
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>52,209</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>52,209</b>	<b>80,460</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>						
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	4-10					
Raising funds		-	-	-	-	-
Costs of generating voluntary income		-	-	-	-	-
Fundraising trading costs		-	-	-	-	-
Investment management costs		-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		6,470	-	-	6,470	4,499
Governance and support costs		51,230	-	-	51,230	67,238
Other expenditure		198	-	-	198	3,590
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>57,898</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57,898</b>	<b>75,327</b>
<b>Net Movement in Funds</b>		<b>(5,689)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(5,689)</b>	<b>5,133</b>
<b>Reconciliation of Funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward		44,692	(13,389)	-	31,103	26,170
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>39,003</b>	<b>(13,389)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>25,614</b>	<b>31,303</b>

The notes on pages 10 to 13 form part of these accounts.

# Luton Council of Faiths

## Balance Sheet

As at 31<sup>ST</sup> March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted income funds 2024	Endowment Funds 2024	Total this year 2024	Total this year 2023
<b>Fixed Assets</b>						
Tangible Assets		-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>		-	-	-	-	-
<b>Current Assets</b>						
Debtors	11	-	-	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand		27,521		-	27,521	33,297
<b>Total current assets</b>		27,521		-	27,521	33,297
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(1,907)	-	-	(1,907)	(1,994)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>25,614</u>	=	-	<u>25,614</u>	<u>31,303</u>
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>						
Unrestricted funds		39,003			39,003	44,692
Restricted Income funds			(13,389)		(13,389)	(13,389)
Endowment funds				-	-	-
<b>Total funds</b>		<u>39,003</u>	<u>(13,389)</u>		<u>25,614</u>	<u>31,303</u>

Approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:



Mr Zafar Khan - Chairperson

Date: 15/07/2024



Mr Kishore Kaler - Treasurer

Date: 15.07.2024

**Luton Council of Faiths**  
**Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

1. Accounting policies

- a) The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Charities Act 2011.
- b) Recognition of Income – there are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity becomes entitled to the resources and monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.
- c) Investment income is recorded when receivable
- d) All expenditure is included in the accounts on an accrual basis. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the SOFA as incurred.
- e) The restricted funds of the charity are expendable funds which is regularly increased or retained as capital at the trustees' discretion.
- f) All capital related expenditure costing more than £750 is capitalised. Depreciation on fixtures and fittings is charged on a straight line basis over 5 years.

2. Taxation

Luton Council of Faiths is a registered charity and accordingly is exempt from taxation on its income and gains where they apply to charitable purposes.

3. Restricted

The restricted donations in the current year and the previous year represent income mainly from Grants but also from donations to the Luton Council of Faiths restricted funds only.

4. Analysis of employees costs

		2024	2023
		£	£
Salaries and PAYE		30,000	29,761
Employers Pension		-	2,340
Total		30,000	32,101

The number of full-time employees during the year was one and there were no average part time members of staff.

5. Related Party transactions

None of the trustees were paid any remuneration or expenses by the charity during the year (2023 £nil)

## 6. Analysis of Income from Charitable activities

	2024 Unrestricted	2024 Restricted	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation and the Luton Rising-Community Investment Fund	47,423	-	47,423	49,700
Other donations	4,786	-	4,786	5,000
Haysac Foundation	-	-	-	4,900
National Lottery fund	-	-	-	10,000
The Steel Charitable Trust	-	-	-	7,500
Total	<u>52,209</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>52,209</u>	<u>77,100</u>

## 7. Analysis of Other income

	2024 Unrestricted	2024 Restricted	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Church Urban Fund – Near Neighbours	-	-	-	3,360
Total	-	-	-	<u>3,360</u>

## 8. Analysis of Charitable expenditure

The charity has undertaken direct activity to meet its charitable purposes. The following is the analysis of the charity's direct expenditure:

	2024 Unrestricted	2024 Restricted	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
Books Resources	-	-	-	117
Other Events, Programmes and items	6,470	-	6,470	4,382
Total	6,470	-	6,470	4,499

9. The resources expended by the charity include:

	2024	2023
Independent examiner's fee	600	600
Total	<u>600</u>	<u>600</u>

10. Other resources expended by the charity include:

	2024 Unrestricted	2024 Restricted	2024 Total	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
Near Neighbours	-	-	-	3,360
Charitable giving and donations	198	-	198	230
<u>Total</u>	<u>198</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>198</u>	<u>3,590</u>

11. Governance and Support costs

Support costs, consisting of the rent and rates and staff salaries are split between charitable activity and governance on an actual or equal estimated basis. This is because it is difficult to estimate the expense attributable to each activity. Support costs apportioned to the different aims of the charity are shown in the note below.

	Basis of Apportionment	2024 £	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted
					ed
Office costs	Actual	2,001	-	2,001	1,125
Subscriptions	Actual	80	-	80	50
Travelling and general expenditure	Actual	655	-	655	374
Equipment	Actual	1,684	-	1,684	599
Salaries and staff costs	Actual	30,000	-	30,087	30,103
Pensions	Actual	2,100	-	2,100	2,340
Grass roots	Actual	12,000	-	12,000	12,000
Insurance	Actual	724	-	724	646
Telephone	Actual	660	-	660	980
Professional	Actual	772	-	772	772
Advertising and publicity	Actual	216	-	216	216
Volunteering	Actual	338	-	338	533
Grassroots (Oaks Consultancy)	Actual	-	-	-	17,500
Total		<u>51,230</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>51,230</u>	<u>67,238</u>

## Tangible Fixed Assets

There were no movements or any tangible fixed assets currently held by the Charity during the year.

## 12. Analysis of Debtors.

	2024		2023
Restricted funds	-		-
Total	-		-

## 13. Analysis of Creditors

	2024		2023
Independent examiner's fee	600		600
PAYE	1,307		1,394
Total	1,907		1,994

## Independent examiner's Report to the Trustees of Luton Council of Faiths

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 which are set out on pages 8 to 15.

### Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### Basis of the independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true or fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### Independent examiner's statement

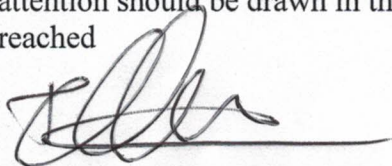
In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:

- to keep proper accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the account to be reached.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached



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