

TOGETHER IN ACTION TRUST
CHRAITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 1186531
ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2021 / MARCH 2022

1: Overview

The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative, supported by the National Lottery for one year of piloting, testing and development, required total commitment of available time of the organisation and its consultants and friends. Some additional work "consultancy" required commissioning work to external sources.

Therefore, The TiA Trust Annual Report for 2021 / March 2022 primarily reflects completed work for the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative.

A: The Coventry Initiative has produced the following outcomes:

A1: A comprehensive database of the BAME community and voluntary organisations in Coventry with 'Coventry in Focus' branding.

<https://coventryinfocus.org.uk/Home.aspx>

We invite and continue to invite people from the community, voluntary sector, and other organisations to join for events and registration on the database. We are compliant with confidentiality and GDPR.

A2: A detailed Action plan for the further development of the 'Coventry Sacred Space Initiative' including proposals for working with the business sector in the city.

We plan to ensure that the Development Plan uses the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time based) principles. There are five key initiatives:

- a. **Neighbourhood Watch for Places of Worship** – A possible new model for the rest of Places of Worship to ensure a greater level of security for themselves and others, including residents/community.
- b. **Swanswell Park** - We have completed two cleaning activities with the local community: Eden Girls schools and volunteers from Places of worship. Our vision is to help transform the Park/Pool into an amenity that attracts day and night activity concerning the surrounding nature and the environment. It needs to be attractive to families with easy accessibility.
- c. **Mental and Physical Wellbeing** – As we emerge out of the pandemic, the manifestation of physical and mental issues/challenges is becoming evident. We

have taken basic steps in providing temporary solutions such as family activity bags and fit for summer bags for local communities.

d. Capacity Building – Places of Worship are keen to build their capacity to:

- Use their precious resource of volunteers significantly better and meaningfully. This will ensure volunteers feel valued and respected for their time and efforts. This could then lead to attracting more volunteers. There has been a shortfall due to the pandemic, and volunteers' numbers and time need to be effectively managed.
- By sharing resources, we can better use the existing building facilities for sports, workshops, and activities such as coffee morning, elderly care, children's nursery, employment, and education.

e. Activities – Organization of activities between groups, including:

- Management and congregations of diverse Places of Worship
- Local residences/communities
- Families that build and maintain cohesion and promote a sense of joy and celebration. Doing so help remove negative attitude and behaviour, thus reducing crime and criminal behaviour.

A3: Creating an Advisory Committee to reflect the whole BAME community and with other key stakeholders

We want to ensure that the initiative is locked into crucial decision making and policy formation platforms and processes. There is a need to establish an Advisory Committee that brings leaders from local authorities, Coventry University, the Cathedral, and other like-minded organisations.

The BAME communities are reflected well with three Members (rotation) of the Reference Committee included in the Meeting of the Advisory Group. A 'Term of Reference' was developed collectively with Members of the Advisory Committee and the Reference Group. Please see attached appendix.

A4: A fundraising strategy to secure funding from diverse sources

The strategy is being developed on the following basis:

- The Reference Group has agreed to develop key areas such as identifying funding possibilities and establishing working groups to submit funding applications.
- A new national Baobab Foundation plans to allocate funds to support the infrastructure organisations from the 'African Black Heritage' and other BAME community-based organisations. Members of the Initiative have supported the Foundation establishment and are honoured to be on the Board.

A5: A group of 5 volunteers from diverse backgrounds and experiences will focus on the further development of the 'Coventry Sacred Space Initiative.'

We have established the 'Reference Committee', which reflects people/communities from all backgrounds, beliefs, and no beliefs. A Terms of Reference helps members understand and value their role in making decisions, acting, and anchoring the initiative's development.

We have established a Working Group with more than five active members. This Group is leading the work to take the initiative forward. Members of the Working Group are people with a proven commitment to the initiative.

A6: A website that reflects TiA's work fully and supports BAME organisations to deliver their work better.

The TiA.org website is built on the WordPress platform, one of the most popular and flexible content management systems for websites. This, together with a Divi theme, makes the maintenance of the website much easier whilst allowing much creativity. The website is hosted by GoDaddy, which gives us technical support and ongoing maintenance.

The Sacred Space Initiative is currently within the Tia.org website, and for now, it is perhaps better to keep it here. However, the Sacred Space section can easily be separated into a stand-alone website in the future.

B: The Initiative has developed the following strands of work.

B1: Neighbourhood Watch for Places of Worship

With the support of John Hayward-Cripps, CEO of Neighbourhood Watch Network, and Officers of the Local Police and Violence Reduction Unit, Local Authority, we have developed Neighbourhood Watch for Places of Worship.

This would be a new model of cooperation between diverse faith-based organisations with a building(s) and with the Faith-Based organisations and key police and crime reduction agencies.

This learning and development of the model can be shared nationally. This model can help reduce crime, act as a sanctuary for young people, and promote cooperation and action between local diverse faith groups with training and support.

B2: Health and Wellbeing

The coronavirus pandemic displayed the work of faith-based organisations. Local places of worship provided and continue to provide essential services such foodbank, emotional support and immediate support for people and families in great need.

The initiative's work helped bridge communications between the diverse faith and BAME communities and with activities such as the Family Activity packs (disseminated 1200 packs with a range of equipment to promote physical fitness and reduce stress to combat issues like domestic violence).

This work led to developing a health and well-being strand, to 'social prescribing. Collectively, we designed and developed a project and prepared an application for funding. After research, consultation, and networking, we established that we should become a Partner in an application submitted by a consortium.

B3: Building Capacity

It is essential to build the capacity of volunteers, Trustees and Management/Activists of Places of Worship, faith (including the Humanist, Pagan, and other people with no religion) and BAME based community organisations.

This will ensure human, financial, assets and experience are used well, to the maximum benefit. Also, it is necessary to ensure the mental and physical wellbeing of those engaged, especially volunteers.

To ensure people and organisations operate to their maximum best, a diverse range of training and awareness-raising activities are required, and resources are made available.

B4: Faiths Compact

Coventry City Council is leading on work to agree on A 'Faiths Compact' - an agreement of understanding between faith and other communities and the Local Authority and other key stakeholders.

This work is a result of the

- Members of the initiative's activities and actions, and the quality relationships between different layers of Officers and elected Members.
- The work of faith communities/organisations during the coronavirus pandemic showcased the strength and ability of faith-based organisations to mobilize volunteers and coordinate and deliver a variety of services effectively.

The potential to work together (Local Authority and the Faith-based organisations) effectively and the subsequent positive results that could be achieved is the bases of the Faiths Compact

B5: Unity in Diversity and Action: Everyone working together for social cohesion, promoting understanding, and celebrating 'diversity.'

By identifying gaps in design and initiating dialogue, we can move forward by:

- Helping to plan topics that address issues such as the environment and nature.
- Issues that cut across different communities such as substance misuse,
- Deliver and build capacity to address educational and health inequities.
- Help build trust in and between BAME communities and beliefs and no belief.

B6: Coventry Multi-Faith Forum

The Coventry Multi-Faith Forum (CMFF) is in its 30th year. It came into being following a series of meetings initiated by the (Late) Bishop Simon Barrington-Ward in the late 1980s.

With the development of the city centre on a large scale as part of the millennium efforts, mainly from European funding, creating a dedicated Multi-Faith space was crystallised, and the city council attracted funding to construct such a facility. Coventry Cathedral made available an area near the cathedral ruins, and Coventry City Council engaged representatives of diverse faith community organisations to contribute to the design and layout of the intended building. Upon completion, this became the physical base for the administration and delivery of inter-faith activities in the city centre in conjunction with places of worship across the city and beyond.

CMFF has created opportunities for people, communities, and organisations from diverse faiths and no faith traditions to design and deliver activities. These promote harmony, help address social issues of concern, and engage with other stakeholders to ensure that they effectively deliver services and programmes. Many active members of the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative are also Members of the Coventry Multi-faith Forum.

The Coronavirus damaged organisational ability in ways the nation had never anticipated. CMFF's ability to operate fully was also impacted, and sadly, many stalwarts of inter-faith engagement and empowerment are no longer with us.

However, their legacy is still current and serves as a source of inspiration that energises people of faith and secularism to continue engaging and empowering communities to be cohesive and supportive in addressing societal challenges.

Due to the combined passion and commitment of CMFF Member organisations, the renewed efforts of the voluntary and community sector, as well as the experience and strong track record of collaborative working over the years and the successful delivery of past and most recent TIA activities.

CMFF is well placed to recover quickly from impacts of the pandemic and be proactive in delivering projects of community benefit in partnership with key institutions and individuals. Therefore, CMFF is suitable to act as an anchor to lead the next stage of development of the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative.

To ensure a smooth transfer:

- a) Members of the Initiative and the Coventry Multi-Faith Forum have, after consultation, accepted that this would be productive.

- b) The development plan and its strategies are being discussed; after referencing with critical stakeholders, including the Local Authority, plans and actions will be mutually agreed.
- c) Efforts to secure funding for this transition will be sought from the Lottery and other sources.
- d) A transition group has been established for this purpose; Together in Action Trust will support the Group meet its goal.

C: Working Collaboratively

TiA collaborates with a broad group of people and organisations, including the CMFF, whom we prefer to continue the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative.

There are too many members to mention in this report, but to give you some recent examples. We have Manjit Kaur, a co-chair of the Coventry and Warwickshire SACRE, an active member of the Advisory Group. Manjit and other Members of the SACRE ensure the work remains on track and is connected to further developments and opportunities in the city.

Our project with Coventry University's Centre for Peace, Trust and Reconciliation, working closely with Dr Sariya Cheruvallil-Contractor on a four-year interfaith research project.

Cllr Abdul Khan, chair of the Advisory Committee for the initiative, has ensured the industry is connected to the life of Coventry City Council. As always supported the industry by providing strategic advice and attending meetings, taking part in information and awareness-raising films and projects,

Voluntary Action (Coventry) Sue, Chief Executive as a member of the Advisory Group, has provided advice on the development of the initiative and supported the initiative to participate in meetings of the Advisory Group. The initiative has benefitted from Ruth Burdett's experience and skills in developing a quality tool for the initiative.

With the networks we have built, we provided faith leaders from different communities for the Coventry Cathedral's Community event to thank COVID heroes.

Concluding Summary

TiA is honoured to have worked on the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative and will continue to support it with CMFF, who will lead the next stage of development.

In addition, TiA will continue to support the development of a Coventry BAME Hub and explore the possibility of developing an interfaith heritage project. Our work with Coventry University continues and Coventry Faiths Compact (B4).

We want to thank all our supporters and friends.

3: HUMAN RESOURCES & PARTNERSHIPS:

- a) Mr Deepak Naik (MBE, FRSA, PDip) is the Executive Director on a part-time and casual basis. Costs relating to TiA base, administration, travel and communication are recompensed.
- b) Core services from organisations such as Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, annually, Over ten people from different backgrounds, abilities and professions volunteer to help with the delivery of projects and the operation of TiA.
- c) TiA secures support from known, respected organisations such as Faith in Society and other experienced professionals who help develop and or deliver projects; they often give time and energy but are paid for core work at discounted fee rates.

4: RISK MANAGEMENT: TiA's key risks are:

- a) The delivery of the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative resulted in a lack of attention to other areas of work and interest.

5: STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT:

- a) The Board has four members and has held three meetings via telephone and online. To make progress, Board Members have actively contributed considerable time, skills, and experience to help deliver projects, raise funds, and provide administrative support.

6: FINANCE

- a) Consultancy fees and grant applications remained an excellent source of TiA's income during the year. Statutory bodies and agencies value the experience, skills and knowledge of the TiA, e.g. research and development work for Active Black Country. Consultancy income is unrestricted and therefore used to support otherwise unfunded work.
- b) Four Partnership funding applications were submitted, two were declined, and one application was approved. The remainder is approved; however, TiA Trust will not receive income.

7: INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS

Expenditure		
Number	Area	Amount
1	Activity costs	12,482.88
2	TiA Trust Office	4,000.00
3	Consultancy	11,469.11
4	Administration & Equipment	120.00
5	Salary	17,943.58
6	Tax & National Insurance	8,944.40
	Total Funds expended in 2021 – 2022	54,959.97
Income		
Number	Source	Amount
1	Earned Income	18,862.50
2	Grants	50,000
3	Gift Aid - claim from previous years	0
	Total Funds Generated in 2020 – 2021	68,862.50
Balance		
Number		Amount
1	Carry forward 2021 – 2022	26,866.78
2	Income Generated 2021 – 2022	68,862.50
	Total	95,729.28

In-kind Support

- Volunteers (directly and via supporting organizations) contributed over 17,500 hours
- Voluntary services from professionals provided over 3500 hours of service
- The value of volunteer services is £26,500

Notes:

- TiA Trusts Trustees made no claims and were not remunerated.
- Costs of TiA Office reflected the increased costs of working from home.
- Reserves of the Trusts ensured delivery of activities, obligations at hand and its planned functions.
- TiA Trust provided financial and other support to the United Religions Initiative (UK).

8: INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION

INTRODUCTION

This is an independent voluntary review of the TIA accounts. It was undertaken by myself [Steve Stewart]. Whilst I am not a fully qualified accountant, I have significant knowledge and experience in accounts and business.

COMMENT

- All income is accounted for, and sources of income are identified.
- Expenditure is accounted for, and receipts from suppliers are provided.
- Staff wages and costs are clearly explained.

SUMMARY

I am satisfied with the accounts and have not identified any issues of significance that need further action.

Steve Stewart OBE

9: TiA TRUST BACKGROUND:

A group conceived TiA of friends/young adults from different countries of Europe coming together in Coventry in 2016. Collectively throughout the evening, while sharing food, the Group sensed the need for people, families, and communities to be welcoming towards others in need of shelter, peace and opportunity.

The Group committed to working together, combining their resources of time, skills, experience, and knowledge, and applying these to establish an organisation. This would proactively work across diverse communities and areas of interest. Together create the means and methods that instil and assure fairness, promote a sense of belonging and citizenship, and enthuse a life of hope for all.

TiA Trust Charitable Purpose

Charitable Category Human rights/ Religious & racial harmony/ Equality & diversity

- (a) The elimination of discrimination on race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- (b) Advancing education and raising awareness of equality and diversity, including in different religious beliefs
- (c) Promoting activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds, including promoting knowledge and mutual understanding and respect of different religious faiths and other racial groups.
- (d) Cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity

10: CONTACT DETAILS

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