

TOGETHER IN ACTION TRUST
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 1186531
ANNUAL REPORT
2023 -2024

The Together in Action Trust emerged from a powerful recognition that everyone longs to live in hope and happiness. Challenges are not feared but embraced because trust, respect and a sense of fairness are real.

TiA Trust, with its people of volunteers, partnerships, and management team, works to create innovative and meaningful actions that help create a safe space for inspiring and enquiring words and actions. It enables people from all backgrounds to connect and, with encouragement and support, design, plan, and deliver activity, interfaith, community cohesion, and social justice projects in Coventry, West Midlands and building partnerships nationally.

TiA normally run four to five projects a year, with anything between a dozen and several hundred participants. Our purpose is to deliver and support action that enables people, groups, and communities to live and progress together in a way that honours community differences and the natural environment.

Our network includes people from all key faiths and people without religious beliefs: we are not a proselytising organisation, and our activities do not include religious worship.

1: OVERVIEW

2023/2024 was characterised by unexpected events, challenges addressed, and positive results secured. It was a period where we collectively navigated through various experiences. Early in the year, we focused on developing projects, drafting action plans, and submitting funding applications. In the second half of the year, we secured funding and began delivery. Subsequently, the financial stability of TiA Trust. Examples of some projects in the year include:

- a. The 'Coventry Faiths Covenant/Partnership' was pre-launched in January 2024 due to collective efforts and later formally launched on Tuesday, 14th March 2024, with the support of Faith Action. Deputy Leader Cllr Abdul Khan had launched the Coventry Faiths Covenant/Compact, while Rt Hon Stephen Timms, Chair of Faith Covenant Forum, welcomed Coventry to the Forum. Cllr Abdul Khan expressed gratitude to Together in Action Trust for its initiative and ongoing effort via Coventry Sacred Space Initiative to aid in developing the process for the Coventry Faiths Covenant/Compact.
- b. Baobab Foundation TiA Trust was selected to join the Baobab Foundation Steering Group, a new initiative aimed at exploring and addressing issues related to colonisation.
- c. Call for Evidence: 10-Year Mental Health Plan In response, TiA Trust produced a Faith and Beliefs Perspective Report, reflecting the views of

individuals from minority faiths and belief backgrounds. Approximately 30 individuals with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds were engaged in the process, with the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative's work on 'Social Prescribing' being presented and welcomed. The report was submitted to the NHS.

- d. Places of Worship Efforts were made to utilise volunteers' resources better to ensure their value and attract more volunteers. Sharing resources to utilise existing building facilities for various activities was encouraged.
- e. Health and Wellbeing Faith-based organisations were crucial during the pandemic, providing essential services such as food banks and emotional support. Initiatives were developed to bridge communications between diverse communities and address health and well-being needs.

2: HELPING BUILD CAPACITY

TiA Trust supported the Coventry Gidra Group for the first time. It helped plan, design and deliver the event. The event was initially planned to honour and celebrate International Women's Day (8th March 2023). However, due to rain – it was postponed to May 20.

Along with health, fitness and well-being workshops and activities, including the production of a short film to promote the above, with particular attention to meeting the needs of physical and mental health and well-being of women.

Consultation with the Hindu, Sikh and Asian Churches and Faith communities identified the need and agreed collectively to plan, design, and manage the event and possibly repeat the activity in the future. Therefore, establishing sustainability was conceived as people and communities working together from diverse faiths and beliefs.

The event was the first multicultural, multifaith, outdoor Ladies' Festival in Bedworth and the first in this country. Three hundred local people, mainly women, attended. The event began by calling the audience using the 'Dhol'. The Christian and Sikh Punjabi Communities performed this.

Our Christian Indian Group provided the "blessing" in keeping with Indian tradition, wishing all artists and the audience spiritual and mental well-being as part of the performance.

Some "Spinoffs"

- Five women from the Islamic community have considered becoming lifeguards at Bedworth Leisure Centre to run women-only swimming sessions.
- Introduction of modesty swimming costumes
- Mainstream sports organisation increases their awareness of the range of minority groups in their area and the differing ways to engage with them.
- Over 60 years made aware that Passport to Leisure activities is free or at a very reduced price.
- Networking and a range of contacts established for use in future events.

3: NEW PROJECTS (developed in 2023, to be delivered in. 2024/2025)

a) Windrush

To increase knowledge of the Windrush Scheme and Windrush Compensation Scheme among communities of Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi ethnicity across the West and East Midlands regions and London.

It is based on the principle that these communities will not grow in awareness of these Schemes, and take-up will only increase if respected and effective religious/community leaders and activists champion them. The Windrush Compensation Scheme is available to people of all ages and nationalities, including those from African, Asian and Caribbean backgrounds.

b) Seven Trent

The project aims to foster collaboration among diverse groups to enhance a green space central to the community, promoting environmental conservation through grassroots interventions. This initiative strengthens bonds of fellowship and cooperation and fosters respect for differences and resilience against extremist messaging. The symbolic value of individuals from various faiths improving the natural surroundings of different places of worship underscores the project's inclusive ethos.

The proposal aims to revitalise the green spaces surrounding Swanswell Pool, a prominent feature in Coventry City Centre, through enhancements such as tidying waterside signage, installing flower beds and shrubs, and addressing issues like litter and graffiti. By restoring the pool's appeal, the project seeks to provide enjoyment for city residents and attract visitors, thereby contributing to the local economy.

This effort aligns with the broader Coventry Sacred Space initiative, developed in collaboration with the City Council and other partners, to foster community cohesion and well-being.

c) Coventry Interfaith Pioneers

After many years of development, the Coventry Interfaith Pioneers project will be developed and delivered, supported by the Heritage Lottery. This project aims to celebrate the trailblazers of interfaith work in Coventry since the Second World War, inspiring young people and adults to participate actively in interfaith dialogue.

The project entails creating a series of five short films, each running between 10 to 12 minutes, and collectively forming a one-hour documentary.

- Episode 1: Rebuilding Coventry - 'Father Forgive'

- Episode 2: Communities at Prayer – Transforming Old Buildings into New Places of Worship
- Episode 3: Unity in Diversity – Tracing Footsteps to Friendship
- Episode 4: Coventry's Interfaith Success - From Words to Actions
- Episode 5: Interfaith – Exploring What's New

These films aim to promote understanding, unity, and community cohesion. They can be utilised for educational purposes, such as classroom lessons, workshop sessions, or online platforms like YouTube, to showcase the story of Coventry Interfaith Pioneers and their impactful journey.

The project also involves training young individuals in media skills, enabling them to conduct interviews with the Pioneers and assist in the film editing process.

d) Let's talk about Long Covid

Long COVID, also known as post-COVID-19 syndrome, refers to the lingering symptoms experienced by some individuals even after they have recovered from the acute phase of COVID-19. While many people recover within a few weeks, some continue to experience symptoms that can persist for months.

These symptoms can vary widely and may affect different parts of the body, including the respiratory, cardiovascular, neurological, and others. The exact cause of long COVID is still under investigation. Still, it involves a combination of factors, including the body's immune response to the virus, inflammation, and possible damage to organs and tissues.

Some individuals who experience severe acute COVID-19 illness are at a higher risk of developing long COVID, but it can also occur in people with mild or asymptomatic cases.

It's essential for individuals experiencing persistent symptoms after COVID-19 to seek medical attention and support.

- We produced six awareness-raising films in ethnic languages with community members to encourage people from the Sikh and Hindu communities to talk with.
- We designed posters/illustrations to promote the films and encouraged Places of Worship to watch the films.
- To assemble a small group of people to help us deliver the project and help us ensure its continuing mission to raise awareness and encourage action to understand Long Covid and how it can be addressed.

e) International Interfaith Events (United Religions Initiative)

During the weekend of March 1st to 4th, 2024, Together in Action Trust (a Co-operation's circle of URI), in collaboration with the United Religions Initiative (URI Europe and International), is hosting five international interfaith conferences in London, Leicester, Coventry, Sandwell, Birmingham.

The purpose of this visit by URI representatives to the UK is to address global challenges by promoting cooperation among diverse religious and spiritual communities. These conferences will serve as platforms to explore innovative ideas and tools for interfaith engagement, drawing from impactful examples worldwide.

Additionally, URI representatives will introduce a health approach model to prevent violence and showcase key figures such as Preeta Bansal, Chair of Global Council, Jerry White, URI Executive Director, and Alice Swett, Director of Global Programs, to the UK interfaith community.

These initiatives are aligned with URI's Purpose of fostering enduring interfaith cooperation, ending religiously motivated violence, and nurturing cultures of peace, justice, and healing for all living beings.

4: COMMUNICATION

Together in Action Trust (TIA) uses its website as its primary media outlet to share information about its charity projects. While TIA also uses social media platforms like YouTube, its website is where you can find the most in-depth information about its work.

This includes text, videos, and photographs. Recent projects include Let's Talk about Long COVID, where videos were produced in ethnic languages to get people to understand and take better care of themselves. Other projects with vital media-led elements have included the Swanswell Festival and Sacred Music Festival, amongst others.

In addition to producing its content, TIA collaborates with other organisations to provide media expertise and advice. For example, TIA has worked with community leaders and other charities to help them develop effective media strategies. This includes working with community leaders needing media advice and other charities like the United Religions Initiative.

Overall, TIA uses media to empower communities and improve lives. However, it avoids getting lost in the noise of social media competition, preferring to use its website as a central hub for all its important information.

5: HUMAN RESOURCES & PARTNERSHIPS:

a) Mr. Deepak Naik (MBE, FRSA, PDip) was the part-time Executive Director. Deepak Naik's salary was reduced by half to ensure good financial management.

b) Core services were provided by organisations such as the Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, with over ten volunteers from diverse backgrounds assisting in project delivery and operations.

c) TiA secured support from respected organisations and professionals, often receiving discounted fee rates for their Consultancy work. This included helping to develop projects, draft plans, and write papers to ensure good communication.

6: RISK MANAGEMENT:

- a) Focusing excessively on the delivery of specific initiatives, resulting in neglect of other areas of work and interests,
- b) Needs a broader base of financial resourcing, people, and leadership.
- c) It is dependent on its Executive Director working part time.

7: STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT:

- a) The Board, comprising four members, held two meetings via telephone and online, actively contributing time, skills, and experience to project delivery, fundraising, and administrative tasks.
- b) The Board met informally to plan projects, complete management duties, and imagine the future role and vision of the Trust.

Overall, it was believed that the coming decade would see the country facing new social needs and tough challenges, demanding fresh approaches and resources to address public health, social care, education, employment support, and community inclusion issues.

These challenges necessitated identifying new resources, including unlocking the potential of every segment of society to contribute towards solutions. Supporting faith-based organisations to collaborate constructively and effectively with local authorities as part of civil society was seen as an important resource.

- c) The recovery of TiA Trust Secretary Marcus Lau resulted in the drafting of minutes and participating in TiA Trust and other activities.

8: FINANCE:

- a) During the 2023/2023, 12 funding applications were submitted, 5 applications were successful. Funds from these were obtained in late 2023. Therefore, TiA Trust will deliver projects during 2024 - 2025.

Expenditure		
	Area	Amount
1	Activity costs	711.00
2	TiA Trust Office	6,291.00
3	Consultancy	13,143.00
4	Administration & Equipment	-
5	Salary	6,000.00
6	Tax & national Insurance	875.00
7	Operating costs	484.00
	Total Funds expended in 2022 - 2023	27,504.00
Income		
	Source	Amount
1	Earned Income	2,322.00
2	Grants	31,500.00
	Total Funds Generated in 2023 - 2024	33,822.00
	Balance	Amount
1	Carry forward from 2022 - 2023	23,200.00
2	Income Generated 2023 - 2024	33,822.00
	Total	57,022.00

	Expenditure - 2023 - 2024	27,505.0 0
	Carry Forward 2022/2023	29,517.0 0

Notes:

- 1: The carry forward sum represents mostly for delivering projects during 2024/2025
- 2: Activity costs may seem low; however, delivering projects/activities requires time, energy and experience/skills of 'consultancy'.
- 3: Office costs include use, e.g. room, storage, access to meeting space, communication, utilities
- 4: The Executive Officer provided a substantial number of hours of work, dedication, and leadership to TiA Trust

In-kind support of (1) professional unpaid work, (2) use of space and (3) materials, (4) volunteers time, and (5) refreshments would be valued at more than £15,000.