

TOGETHER IN ACTION TRUST
CHRAITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 1186531

ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2024 / MARCH 2025

1: Overview

In a year when astronauts were stranded in space, elections took place in India, the world's largest democracy, and in the United States of America, the world's richest and most powerful country, a year marked by two major conflicts, the repercussions were naturally observed, experienced, and felt in the UK, the West Midlands, and Coventry, where Together in Action Trust (TiA) is based.

In the UK, the conflict in the Middle East led to a series of marches, acts of civil disobedience, and riots, followed in summer by similar 'clashes' with the 'far right' and tensions between Hindu and Muslim communities. In a year marked by such tensions, stress, and disharmony, the closure of the Interfaith Network for the United Kingdom after 35 years of service was and remains difficult to accept and understand.

However, with hope, friendship and deep sense of duty TiA Trust with its activists' volunteers, in partnership with other organisation's delivered range of projects that sort to be bring joy, learning and hope for diverse (e.g. religious, age, gender, backgrounds) range of people and communities, locally and nationally.

Activities: Examples of areas of work

Coventry Interfaith Pioneers

A series of six films celebrating and honouring the pioneers of interfaith work in Coventry since the 1960s. These films archive their courage, hope, and vision for a society where everyone can live in harmony, service, and mutual respect. These pioneers laid the foundations for communication, trust, and cooperation that future generations would build upon. The films document how people of different religious traditions in Coventry supported and collaborated, highlighting similar interfaith initiatives across the United Kingdom.

Coventry has a long and rich history of interfaith dialogue and cooperation. Its motto, "*Peace and Reconciliation*", reflects the city's commitment to building bridges between faiths and communities.

Several factors have contributed to Coventry's thriving interfaith movement. One key factor is the city's diverse population, which includes people of various faiths such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism. This diversity has naturally fostered an interest in interfaith dialogue and mutual understanding.

The *Coventry Interfaith Pioneers* films serve as valuable educational resources and can be used in schools, colleges, places of worship, and community centres, including madrassas and Sunday schools. Additionally, they provide researchers and academics with essential historical documentation alongside other reports and records, helping to further their studies on interfaith cooperation.

Windrush

The Windrush Compensation Scheme was created to address injustices faced by the 'Windrush Generation'—Caribbean migrants who arrived in the UK between 1948 and 1973, often without proper citizenship documentation. Though the 'Windrush Scandal' mainly affected Black Caribbean communities, many South Asian families faced similar issues. Concerns arose that their experiences were being overlooked in the compensation process.

A grant enabled TiA Trust to run a pilot project, hosting an online meeting with community leaders from the Bangladeshi, Indian, and Pakistani communities in Coventry. The event aimed to:

- a) Gather 15-20 key individuals for awareness-raising and training on the Scheme.
- b) Equip participants to support applicants using insights from the Home Office's African and Caribbean liaison group.
- b) Prepare a report on the low awareness and uptake of services in South Asian communities.
- c) Foster relationships between Home Office staff and community leaders from the South Asian community.
- d) Ensure responsible use of resources.

A report with research findings, recommendations, and engagement strategies was submitted to the Home Office.

Having Faith in the Swanswell Park and Pool project

The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative is an umbrella title for supporting various activities, including the latest, "Having Faith in Swanswell Park and Pool." The project's aims and objectives were:

1. Enhancing Community Engagement
 - Foster collaboration among Coventry's diverse religious communities.
 - Engage volunteers from different faiths to strengthen interfaith relationships.
2. Promoting Cultural and Spiritual Understanding
 - Develop a Faith Trail showcasing Coventry's religious landmarks.
 - Celebrate the city's diverse beliefs and traditions.
3. Revitalising Swanswell Park and Pool
 - Create a welcoming and inclusive space that reflects community pride and cohesion.
 - Enhance residents' well-being by fostering connections and a sense of belonging.

4. Building Volunteer Capacity

- Recruit and support 20 volunteers from diverse faith backgrounds.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for skill development and community contribution.

5. Strengthening Community Pride

- Foster a sense of ownership and shared purpose.
- Promote broader community wellbeing and cohesion.

These objectives guided the project's success in enhancing the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative and creating a lasting positive impact. There were many new and challenging elements to the project. Two examples were to work with the same cohort of new arrivals into Coventry, their level of commitment and possibility to engage meaningfully, also the need to gain written permission for completing cleaning and small planting work in public park.

Our collaboration with the Severn Trent Community Fund team was a rewarding experience. Their professionalism and support were invaluable. However, we were unable to meet all expectations and, as a result, returned some funds—our first experience of such a request. This process provided valuable insights, helping us improve our delivery, reporting, and service. Lastly, for relatively small charity has always been difficult, however in the current climate – it is becoming much more challenging.

The Phoenix Way

In late November 2024, TiA Trust was commissioned by The Phoenix Way to complete research.

Challenges Facing Voluntary and Charitable Organizations in Coventry and Warwickshire, primarily in funding, sustainability, and capacity. Many rely on short-term public grants, leading to instability and competition. Smaller grassroots groups often struggle with access to resources and decision-making power. Skill gaps further hinder their ability to secure funding and collaborate effectively.

Opportunities and Concerns:

- Fair funding distribution: Ensuring smaller groups receive adequate support.
- Engagement and inclusion: Enabling grassroots involvement in decision-making.
- Capacity building: Enhancing skills and confidence for funding access.
- Systemic change: Addressing racial equity and social justice at regional and national levels.

By addressing these challenges and leveraging initiatives like the Phoenix Way, the sector can move towards a more equitable, sustainable, and effective future in serving communities.

2: PARTNERSHIPS:

Together in Action Trust & URI UK: Strengthening Interfaith Collaboration

Together in Action Trust partnered with United Religions Initiative UK (URI UK) to host an international delegation focused on interfaith engagement and cooperation. Key aspects of the

visit included attending places of worship, observing religious ceremonies, exploring exhibitions, and participating in five thematic conferences addressing religion-motivated violence, peacebuilding, and sustainable interfaith work.

Speakers, including interfaith leaders, clergy, policymakers, and academics, shared insights on fostering social cohesion and tackling societal challenges. Through discussions and shared meals, the programme encouraged meaningful connections and innovative approaches to interfaith engagement.

The visit reinforced TiA Trust commitment to interfaith collaboration, providing opportunities to advance partnerships, promote violence prevention strategies, and support lasting community initiatives.

3: HUMAN RESOURCES &

- a) Mr Deepak Naik (MBE, FRSA, PDip) is the Executive Director. Costs relating to TiA base, administration, travel and communication are recompensed. To ensure financial security of TiA Trust, Deepak Naik salary was reduced to less than half.
- b) Core services from organisations such as Birmingham Voluntary Services Council, annually, over six 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) Lack of capacity to raise funds resulted in reduced number of applications for funding for projects. Naturally, our effort during the first 3 months of 2025 - 2026 is reserved for the purpose converting ideas for projects into applications for funding.
- b) In late 2024, TiA Trust contacted the Charity Commission to inquire why its annual reports were marked as "late" on the Commission's website. This prompted the Commission to review TiA Trust's filings since its registration as a charity in 2019.

Following their review, the Commission concluded that TiA Trust's annual reports had been misfiled internally under the incorrect reporting year since its inception. This administrative error persisted in subsequent years, resulting in the first report appearing to be several hundred days overdue. While this is inaccurate, TiA Trust must reluctantly accept the Commission's position.

Despite the limitations of the Commission's system, TiA Trust acknowledges that it is ultimately responsible for ensuring its annual reports are correctly submitted. It is worth noting that TiA Trust has contacted the Commission each year to seek assistance with the filing process.

Unfortunately, due to the “late filing” status displayed on the Charity Commission website, a potential funding body has declined to consider TiA Trust’s application any further.

We respectfully ask other funding bodies to consider the full context and substance of our work, rather than rely solely on administrative records that may not accurately reflect our compliance or commitment.

5: STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT:

- a) The Board has four members and has held two 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 remained an excellent source of TiA's income during the year. Statutory bodies and agencies value the experience, skills and knowledge of the TiA,
- b) 3 Funding applications were submitted, two were declined, and no application where approved. However, 3 applications for projects/funding are likely to result in approval. Our work as gained interest from a donor, this may provide financial stability into the future.

7: INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS

Number	Expenditure	
1	Area	Amount
2	Activity costs	2,897.00
3	TiA Trusts Office	6,000.00
4	Consultancy	15,637.00
5	Administration & Equipment	1,070.00
6	Salary	6000.00
7	Tax and National Insurance	750.00
8	Total Funds expended in 2024 - 2025	32,354.00
	Income	
1	Earned Income	14,144.00
2	Grants	4,333.00
	Total Funds Generated in 2024 - 2025	18,477.00
	Balance	
1	Carry Forward from 2023 - 2024	29,517.00
2	Income Generated in 2024 -2025	18,477.00
	Grand Total	47,994.00
	Expenditure 2024 - 2025	32,354.00
	Carry Forward 2025 - 2026	15,640.00

Note:

- a) An overpayment of National Insurance by TiA Trust is likely to result in a recovery of approximately £500.00.

In-kind Support

- a) Volunteers (directly and via supporting organisations) contributed over 16,500 hours
- b) Voluntary services from professionals provided over 1700 hours of service
- c) The value of volunteer services is £22,500

Notes:

- A: TiA Trusts Trustees made no claims and were not remunerated.

- B: Reserves of the Trusts ensured delivery of activities, obligations at hand and its planned functions.

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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