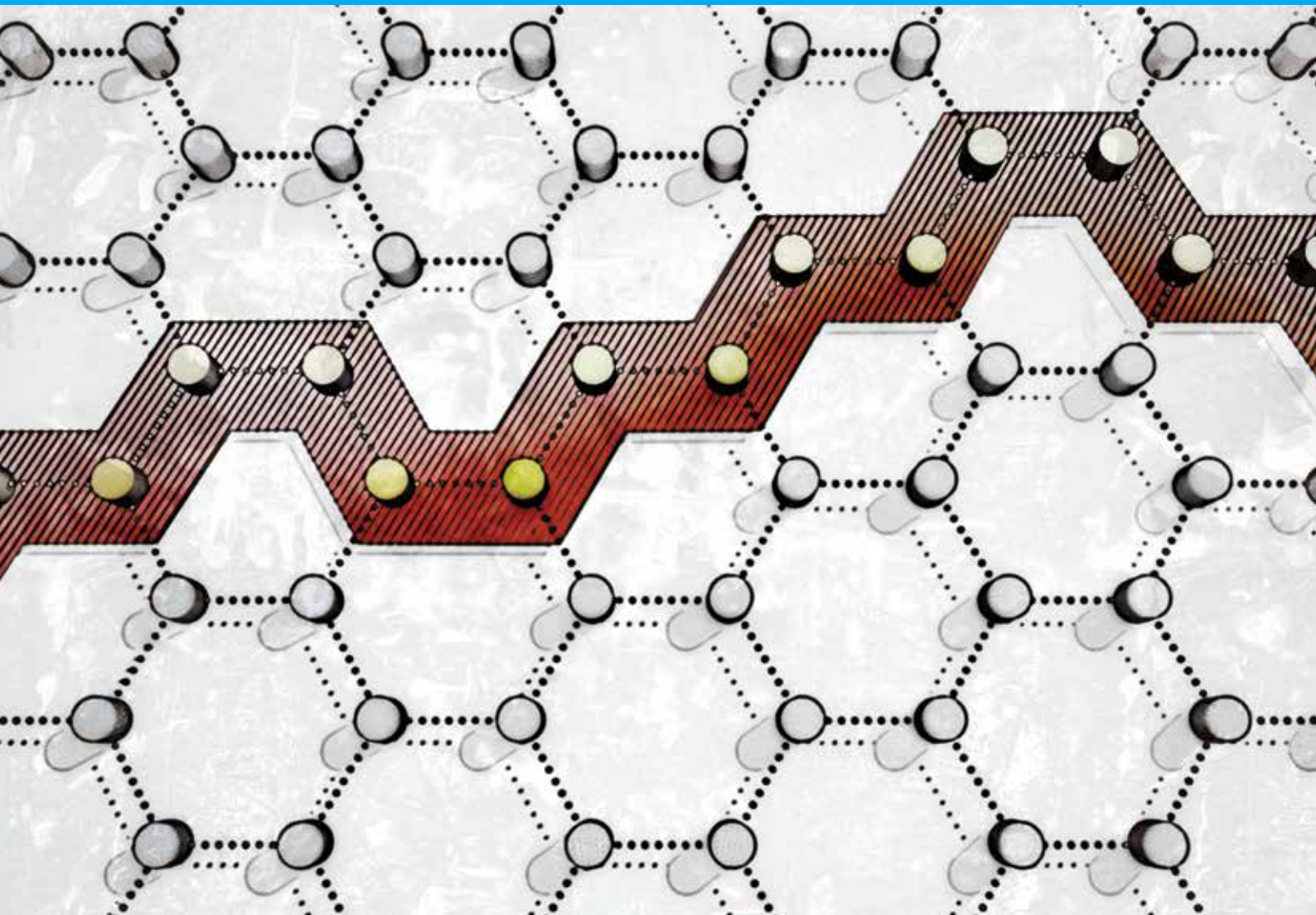


# Better off without them?



Report of a pilot study into the proportion of voluntary sector welfare projects organised by churches and other faiths.

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**Better off without them? Report of a pilot study into the proportion of voluntary sector welfare projects organised by churches and other faiths**

**By Elizabeth Simon  
May 2013**

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# Thanks & Acknowledgements

This survey has been a long-held ambition. It is the pilot for the full vision, which was to survey a representative sample of ten London boroughs so as to build up a picture of London as a whole and ultimately of other parts of the UK. We have not been able as yet to realise the full aim and we hope that others will be able to carry this forward. However we are grateful for all the support which has enabled us to achieve this pilot survey.

Our principal thanks go to Faithworks and the Big Lottery for funding the majority of this survey through the Faith to Engage project, for which London Church Leaders has been the London partner. We are also very grateful to the Faiths Forum for London for their partnership in funding the survey of faith bodies other than Christian.

We thank our research team:

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- Steve Miller, now Director of the Faith Based Regeneration Network, who led the research on other faith groups and has been a great support throughout;
- Research assistants Leah Mansfield, Andrew Hook and Josh Palfreman, and Suchitra Girish, whose much-valued work in chasing respondents enabled us to achieve such a strong response rate and who also interviewed selected respondents and wrote up the case studies.

We are most grateful to Sandra van den Freen and the London Voluntary Services Council research department and to Jo Lofgren from the Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency (now Lifetimes) who gave us valuable advice and support in engaging the cooperation of the wider voluntary sector in completing the questionnaire. The excellent WVSDA Report, *The State of the Sector 2010*, was a valuable source for us when developing our survey database of the voluntary and community sector in Wandsworth.

We are very grateful to Paul Regan, for his constant encouragement and support to Elizabeth in both the research stage and in the production and dissemination of the Report.

Finally and above all we thank all those who responded to the survey questionnaire. We know that many of them feel over-surveyed and under-supported and so particularly appreciate their generosity in responding to yet another survey. We hope that they will feel that this Report is a worthwhile outcome of their effort. We are hugely grateful to all of them.

Elizabeth Simon  
Executive Officer, London Church Leaders (to March 2013)

Terry Drummond  
Chair, London Churches Group for Social Action  
Bishop of Southwark's Adviser on Urban and Public Policy

**faithworks**

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**The National Lottery**<sup>®</sup>  
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# Introduction

This is the report of a pilot survey of what, if the resources can be found, is intended to be a groundbreaking survey across a representative selection of London boroughs to identify what proportion of welfare-oriented voluntary sector projects in London is inspired and run by faith-based bodies, and how, if at all, faith organised projects differ from their counterparts in the ‘secular’ voluntary sector.

Traditionally, the churches were the main providers of welfare services in the community. This changed with the establishment some sixty years ago of the welfare state, which it was assumed and expected would provide for the welfare needs of the community. However, the voluntary sector and not least its faith-based element have continued to play a role in the provision of welfare services, especially and importantly at the margins where the statutory services of the welfare state cannot or do not reach. This role has increasingly been recognised in recent years, as the limitations of the welfare state have become apparent. The voluntary sector has been increasingly courted by government, which in recent years has provided a much larger proportion of voluntary sector funding, both infrastructure funding to help the sector manage itself more effectively and direct grants to support services. Both the previous Labour and the Conservatives in the current Coalition government have suggested that the sector should play a bigger role in providing public services.

The voluntary and community sector (VCS) covers a wide range of organisations, large and small, ranging from organisations seeking to help people in need to sports clubs, choirs, neighbourhood watch schemes and residents associations. Most rely heavily on voluntary donations from people who support their aims, and on volunteers. We chose to focus on that element which represents the core of what people think of when they think of charities – bodies seeking to support directly people and needs in the community.

It is our perception that the voluntary sector in this country now perceives itself as largely secular in character. Such an understanding could affect the sector’s infrastructure bodies’ willingness and ability to identify non-secular bodies as needing or deserving support. There has been a variety of research which has concluded that this is indeed an issue.

At the same time a separate strand in current thinking has questioned the role that religion plays in society, including the assumption that religious teaching is an important stimulus to social welfare activity in the community.

The Faith to Engage project has provided the opportunity to address both these issues by collecting information on the characteristics of specifically welfare-oriented voluntary sector provision in the community. The findings of this pilot survey suggest that faith based welfare services form a sizeable proportion of the whole sector, particularly in their very local and personal focus. If these findings are supported by further research, they should prompt a major reappraisal by the voluntary sector of its own character and a better understanding of itself in relation to its very significant faith-based membership. This may encourage and enable it to represent and support its faith-based members more effectively. At the same time, we hope that our findings will contribute to a better appreciation by government and by wider society of just how significant is the role religious faith plays in inspiring and supporting welfare services in the community.

# Executive Summary

With a response rate of 48% ('secular' voluntary sector) and 47% (faith), we found that faith organisations were running 40% of all voluntary sector welfare projects in the borough (35% by Christians and 5% by other faiths). This is at least two or three times the number that might be expected based on, for example, regular church attendance / membership in the borough. An additional 7% of secular projects had been founded by a faith organisation.

On average, the projects run by faith-based organisations were significantly smaller than the non-faith based:

- Their average number of users was 127 compared with 522 for the non-faith sector
- Their average expenditure was £34,272 compared to £133,470 for the non-faith sector
- They relied much less on employed staff and more on volunteers to deliver the projects: average of 1 full-time and 1.3 part-time staff (faith) compared with 3.6 full-time and 2.5 part-time staff (non-faith).

The differences in size and staffing appear to be closely related to the amount of money the projects spent – perhaps had available to spend is more accurate, given one further key finding. While 56% of non faith organisations received some public funding for these community projects, only 36% of Christian and 25% of other faith organisations did. On average the non-faith voluntary sector organisations (we call them 'secular' in this report) received 38% of their project funding from the public sector, compared to the faith sector which received 16% (Christian) and 14% (other faiths) of funding per project from the public sector.

In March 2011 we sent a follow-up question only to respondents to ask what effect they expected the public expenditure cuts would have on their projects. This achieved a much lower response rate (10%). As might be expected from their lower dependence on public funding, none of the faith bodies expected to close and the majority did not expect to be affected by the cuts at all. By contrast, three of the voluntary sector bodies expected to close (11%) and fewer than one-third were unaffected.

## Chapter 1 – Background to the Research

### **The research challenge**

There has been a lot of work done in recent years mapping specifically the number of faith based social action projects in various areas of the country, both local and regional. Among these are *Regenerating London: Faith Communities and Social Action* (October 2002), which we produced with Greater London Enterprise and which surveyed 3,298 faith congregations and organisations in London and identified more than 2,000 projects being organised by the 30% of survey recipients who responded. Another major series of surveys was conducted in the Northwest Region: *Faith in England's Northwest: the contribution made by faith communities to civil society in the region* November 2003, *Faith in England's Northwest: Economic Impact Assessment*, February 2005 (based on the data collected for the 2003 survey), *Faith in England's Northwest: How Faith Communities Contribute to Social and Economic Wellbeing* October 2009. These have produced valuable results including evidence suggesting that on average each religious place of worship was running two welfare projects for the local community. However so far as we are aware there has been much less work done comparing directly secular with faith based welfare projects and no survey has tried to identify what proportion of all voluntary sector welfare-oriented (social action focussed) activity is organised by faith bodies.

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One very good reason for this is that it involves a comprehensive mapping of both the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and its specifically faith-based component before even attempting to narrow down the field to be surveyed to those parts which are focussed on meeting welfare need. To map the VCS with any degree of accuracy is time consuming and requires considerable resources. The voluntary and especially the community sector is a difficult sector to pin down. Although it includes many large and well-established bodies, taken as a whole a defining characteristic is its grassroots genesis, its informality, the constant shift of new groups forming and other groups disbanding. (To an extent, this is as true of the faith element as the whole VCS.) A healthy voluntary sector cannot be controlled or wholly defined and attempts to do so risk killing its life force.

Despite these inherent difficulties, there have been a variety of attempts in recent years to survey the full extent of the VCS. In London, boroughs have conducted mapping exercises – just three examples are those in Haringey, Bexley and Wandsworth. The Cabinet Office has conducted two National Surveys of Charities and Social Enterprises, the most recent in 2010. All are agreed that the often small, local, informal nature of the VCS means that any mapping, however rigorous, is going to understate the true numbers. For example, the Wandsworth survey,<sup>1</sup> which was an important data source for this pilot survey, identified 899 VCS groups and organisations in the borough but commented that this was likely to be an underestimate as, for example, it did not include the 450 recognised neighbourhood watch schemes. The Cabinet Office survey in 2010 identified 843 VCS organisations in Wandsworth.<sup>2</sup> Neither the Wandsworth nor the Cabinet Office surveys identified more than about half of the faith organisations which we, using our faith networks, could list. Research conducted by the University of Southampton with NCVO in Northern England<sup>3</sup> suggests that there may be 150 ‘below the radar’ (BTR) organisations (presumably including churches and other worship centres as noted above) for every 100 registered charities. Applying this to Wandsworth would increase the total number of VCS bodies to something like 1300. An earlier estimate of the extent of BTR bodies, in a different study by the same research team, suggested that there were some 3.66 BTR organisations per 1,000 population<sup>4</sup>. Applying this to Wandsworth would increase the total number of VCS bodies to some 2,000. Our initial list using all available sources identified approximately 1,000 VCS bodies, including faith bodies, in Wandsworth.

## **Why Wandsworth for the pilot?**

Wandsworth was chosen for the pilot survey for several reasons. Its local authority had recently surveyed its voluntary sector<sup>5</sup>, which gave us a base from which to attempt a more comprehensive survey. We had contacts and local knowledge in both the voluntary and faith sectors which facilitated achieving a high response rate. In terms of key geographic, demographic and social need indices Wandsworth featured in the broad middle range for London boroughs and so was a reasonably representative choice for a pilot survey. Wandsworth is an inner city borough but borders outer London areas to its south and west and has characteristics of both inner and outer London. In 2001, the most recent census for which we had results when we carried out this survey, Wandsworth ranked 11/33 for its ethnic diversity and between 14 and 24/33 for religious diversity (National Statistics Online – Census 2001 – Profiles – Wandsworth). In the most recent Indices of Deprivation (2010) for England, Wandsworth ranked 20/33 in London in terms of overall deprivation.<sup>6</sup>

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1 *The State of the Sector A report on voluntary and community activity in Wandsworth 2010* by Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency

2 Cabinet Office *National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises Overall Report – Wandsworth*

3 *Entering the lists: what can be learned from local listings of third sector organisations? Results from a study of Northern England* by John Mohan, David Kane, Julia Branson and Steve Barnard – see page 33

4 *Beyond ‘flat earth’ maps of the third sector - Enhancing our understanding of the contribution of ‘below the radar’ organisations* by John Mohan, University of Southampton, and others, February 2010 - see page 23

5 See above

6 Chart I pages 37-38 of *GLA Intelligence Briefing on English Indices of Deprivation 2010 – A London Perspective*.

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## **Methodology**

In order to compile a list of relevant organisations to survey, we consulted the WVSDA database, Charity Commission database, Guidestar, Careline, other local mapping reports and online directories. For the faith sector we used relevant denomination and other faith directories and contacts. Since the survey was geographically limited to Wandsworth borough, we excluded organisations based outside the borough. We included organisations/ groups with the main office outside the borough if they ran welfare projects from a physical location in Wandsworth.

The research focussed solely on community organisations and projects which appeared likely to be providing welfare services, which we defined as “projects/activities aimed at meeting individuals’ social needs as opposed to hobbies and activities for pure enjoyment”. As a result, when compiling our database of organisations to be surveyed, and projects to be covered, we excluded the following categories: campaigning bodies, schools/ PTAs, hospitals, care homes, housing associations, co-operatives, residents associations. We excluded projects focussed on the environment/conservation, human and animal rights, consumer and peace organisations, internationally focussed charities, umbrella organisations, helplines, arts and sports organisations (unless their main aim was meeting welfare needs), funding/grants, charity shops, credit unions, Neighbourhood Watch and volunteer centres. We have also excluded purely religious projects, e.g. prayers or music groups run by churches and other worship centres, which do not have community welfare as the primary focus.

From a full list of some 1,000 VCS bodies we identified 558 apparently non-faith bodies which fitted the criteria set out above and to whom we sent questionnaires asking whether they were organising any welfare oriented projects and, if so, asking for details. (We also asked whether they were faith based, because, unless they were churches etc, this would not necessarily be obvious from the databases.). Separately, we compiled a list of 217 faith organisations (195 Christian, 22 other faiths), mainly churches and other worship centres but including separate organisations, to whom we sent similar questionnaires. (For copies of Questionnaires see the Appendices.) Apart from asking specifically for details of welfare-focussed projects we also specifically excluded “purely religious activities such as prayer and music groups” (including church choirs). We excluded two organisations which were running welfare projects which were open only to the members of their congregation and six projects open only to members of the congregation.

## **Response rate**

The research was carried out in 2010. Questionnaires were emailed where possible and posted where we did not have an email address. An opportunity was given to complete the questionnaires online, by email return or by post. The initial mailing was completed in May. Reminders were sent in June and July. In the Autumn all non-responders were contacted by telephone. We eventually achieved an excellent response rate of 48% (secular sector) and 47% (faith), which was very encouraging for a survey based on the whole population and not just a statistical sample.

A follow-up question on the expected effects on their project of the Government’s expenditure cuts was asked in March 2011 of all respondents to the main survey. 26 secular sector and 10 faith bodies responded (10% response from each sector).

# Chapter 2 – Detailed Findings

We sent slightly different questionnaires to the secular and faith organisations and these are reproduced in two Appendices.

The initial response to this largely emailed survey was about 10%. With support and persistent effort we were able ultimately to achieve a very good response rate to give credibility to these findings.

**TABLE 1: Survey response rate**

	'SECULAR' VOLUNTARY SECTOR	'FAITH' SECTOR
Total questionnaires sent	558	217
Contacted/ Responded	267	102
Response rate	48%	47%
Did not have projects physically located in the borough of Wandsworth	104	37
Were not voluntary organisations	28	-
Did not have 'welfare' projects meeting our criteria	9	2 (not open to everyone)
Turned out to belong to 'faith' sector	-5	+5
Total not 'eligible' organisations	146	43
Total responses from 'eligible' organisations	121 (267-146)	68 (102-39+5)

## ORGANISATIONS BY TYPE

Organisations were asked to identify which categories best described them – they could tick more than one box. Most of the faith organisations described themselves as worshipping communities; other descriptions favoured included 'not for profit' and 'community group'. Secular organisations were more likely to select 'voluntary service organisation'. A high proportion (80%) of both Christian and secular bodies were registered charities and other faith bodies were not far behind at 73%. Interestingly, despite the recent policy focus on social enterprise, relatively few organisations classified themselves in this way; most of these were other faith bodies (18%), followed by secular bodies (13%) with virtually no interest from the Christian sector.

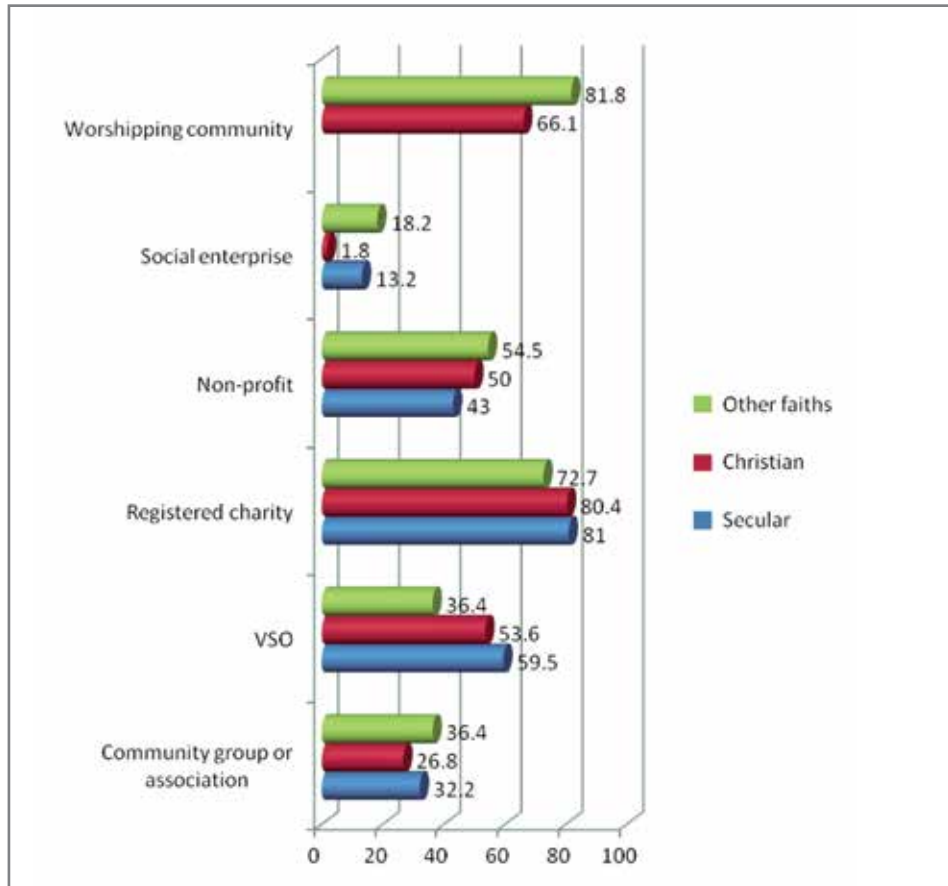
We also asked secular organisations whether they had any faith links. Several indicated that they had been founded by a faith body and slightly more were operating from faith premises. (Chart 16 shows that significantly fewer secular than faith projects have their own premises and hosting community groups is an important part of the service faith groups provide in their communities – see Chapter 3.)

## 6 Better off without them?

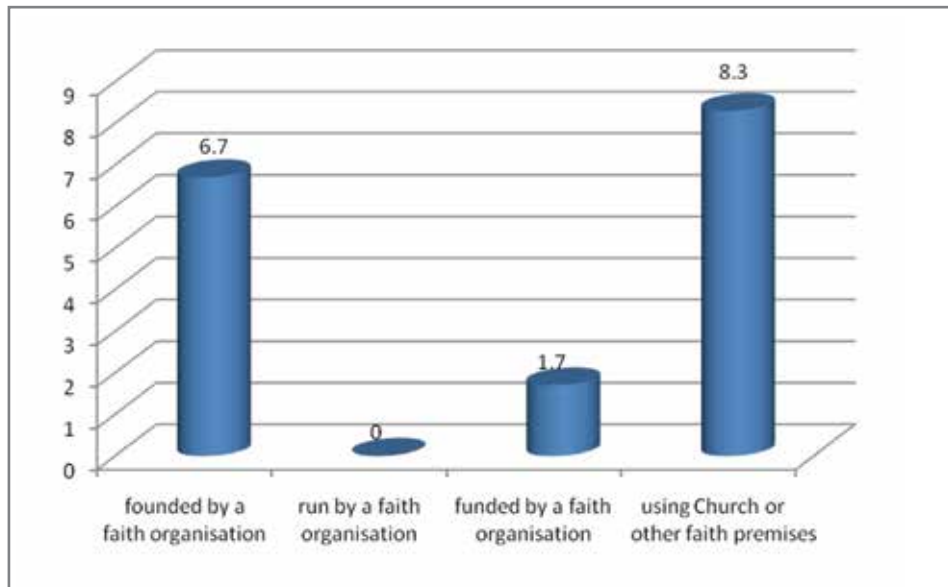
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**CHART 1: Organisations by type (% of organisations)** Responded: secular – 121, Christian – 56, other faiths – 11



**CHART 2: Faith links of secular organisations (% of organisations)**



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## FAITH RESPONDENTS BY FAITH AND DENOMINATION

Table 2 below shows the faiths and denominations of faith organisations who both responded to the survey and were running projects for the community (see Chapter 3 for a discussion on this). A significant percentage of Christian responders (16%) did not identify their denomination. Both they and churches which described themselves as ‘Christian’ were likely to be from the non-historic ‘independent’ church sector which now represents around a quarter of the churches in London.

**TABLE 2: Faiths and Denominations of faith responders included in survey (total 68)**

FAITH / DENOMINATION			NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	
<b>All faiths (LEAT)</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Christian</b>	Valid criteria	Baptist	6	12.8	
		Christian ( includes 4 organisations and 5 churches)	9	19.1	
		Church of England	17	36.1	
		Evangelical	2	4.3	
		Methodist	2	4.3	
		Pentecostal	2	4.3	
		Quakers	1	2.1	
		Roman Catholic	7	14.9	
		Salvation Army	1	2.1	
		<b>Total</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	Information not given	9			
<b>Total</b>		<b>56</b>			
<b>Other faiths</b>	Valid criteria	Buddhist	1	10.0	
		Hindu	3	30.0	
		Islam	4	40.0	
		Sikh	2	20.0	
		<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>100.0</b>
			Information not given	1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>11</b>			

## NUMBER OF WELFARE PROJECTS IDENTIFIED

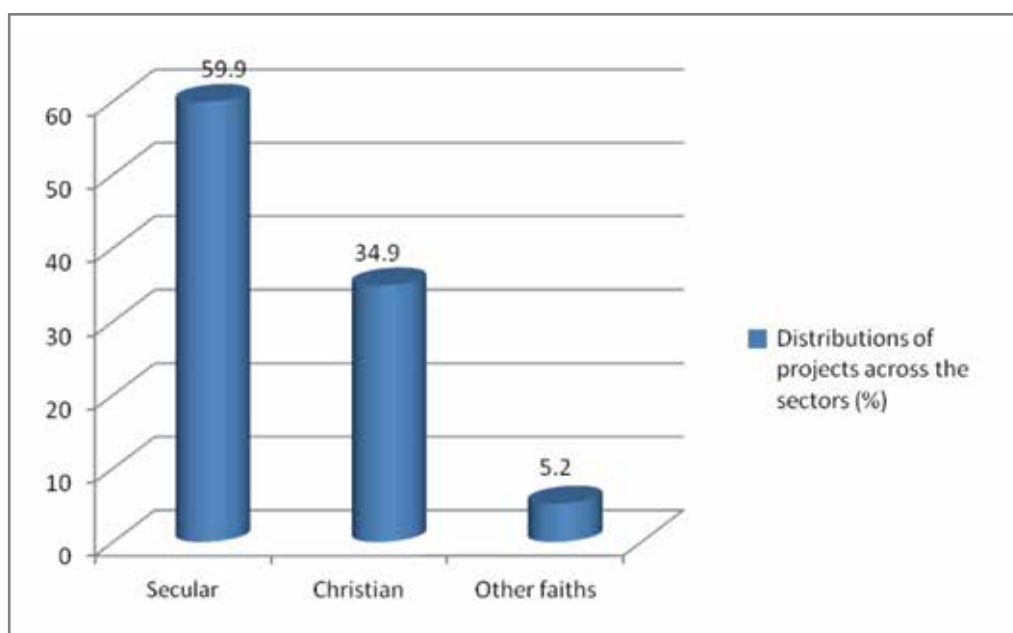
The survey concentrated on voluntary sector welfare projects which we defined as *projects/activities aimed at meeting individuals' social needs as opposed to hobbies and activities for pure enjoyment*. It excluded purely religious activities and faith projects not open to everyone.

**TABLE 3: The number of 'welfare' projects identified in the survey in the borough of Wandsworth**

	'SECULAR' VOLUNTARY SECTOR	'FAITH' SECTOR	TOTAL FOR BOTH SECTORS
Number of projects	151	102	253
Number of organisations	121	68	189
AVG projects per organisation	1.2*	1.5*	1.34

\* However the difference is not statistically significant.

**CHART 3: Distribution of projects across the sectors**



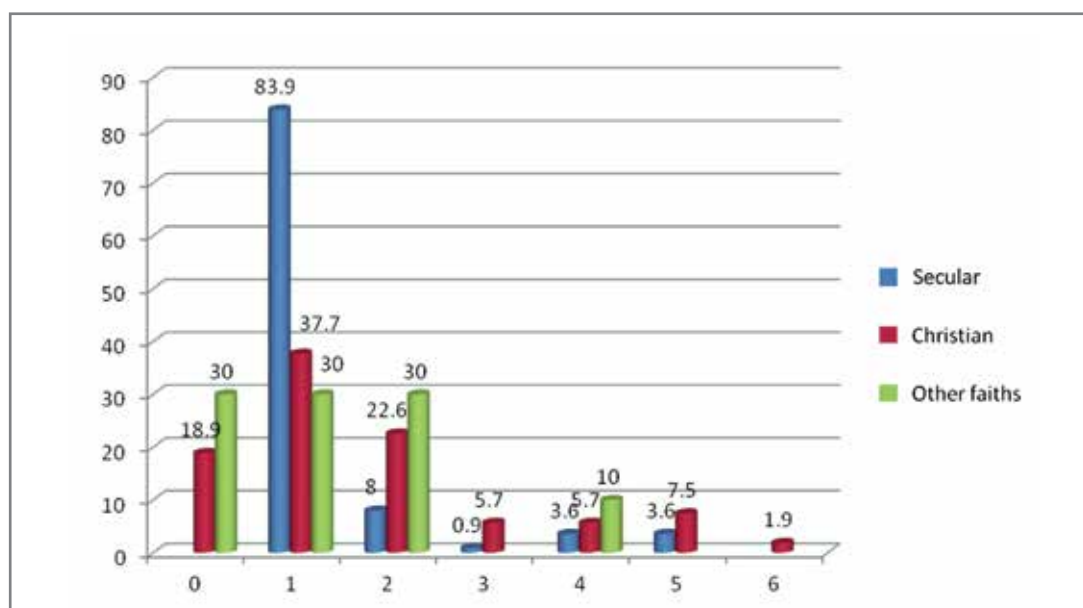
We found that 40% of welfare projects run by voluntary sector organisations in the borough of Wandsworth were run by faith bodies – 35% by Christian organisations and 5% by other faiths. This is a very significant contribution to the local community from a group of people who comprise at most somewhere between eight and sixteen per cent of the population.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See Demos Report 2012 *Faithful Citizens* by Jonathan Birdwell and Mark Littler, especially Appendix B page 60 where the European Values Study 2008 finding is that 13% of the UK population 'belongs to a religious organisation'.

## NUMBER OF PROJECTS RUN BY AN ORGANISATION

All the secular organisations were running at least one project and for the great majority (84%) there was just one project, with a few running more and four running up to five projects. The difference between secular organisations and faith bodies, where the spread was much wider, can probably be explained by the fact that with secular bodies in most cases the organisation was the project itself. With faith bodies, it was more likely to be a church or other worshipping community, which might run several projects. Thus nearly one fifth of Christian organisations ran no projects, 38% ran one, 23% two and small numbers of Christian organisations were running three, four, five and, in the case of one local church even six community projects. For other faiths, responses were more evenly divided: thirty per cent ran no qualifying projects, a similar percentage ran one project and another 30% ran two. One organisation was running four projects.

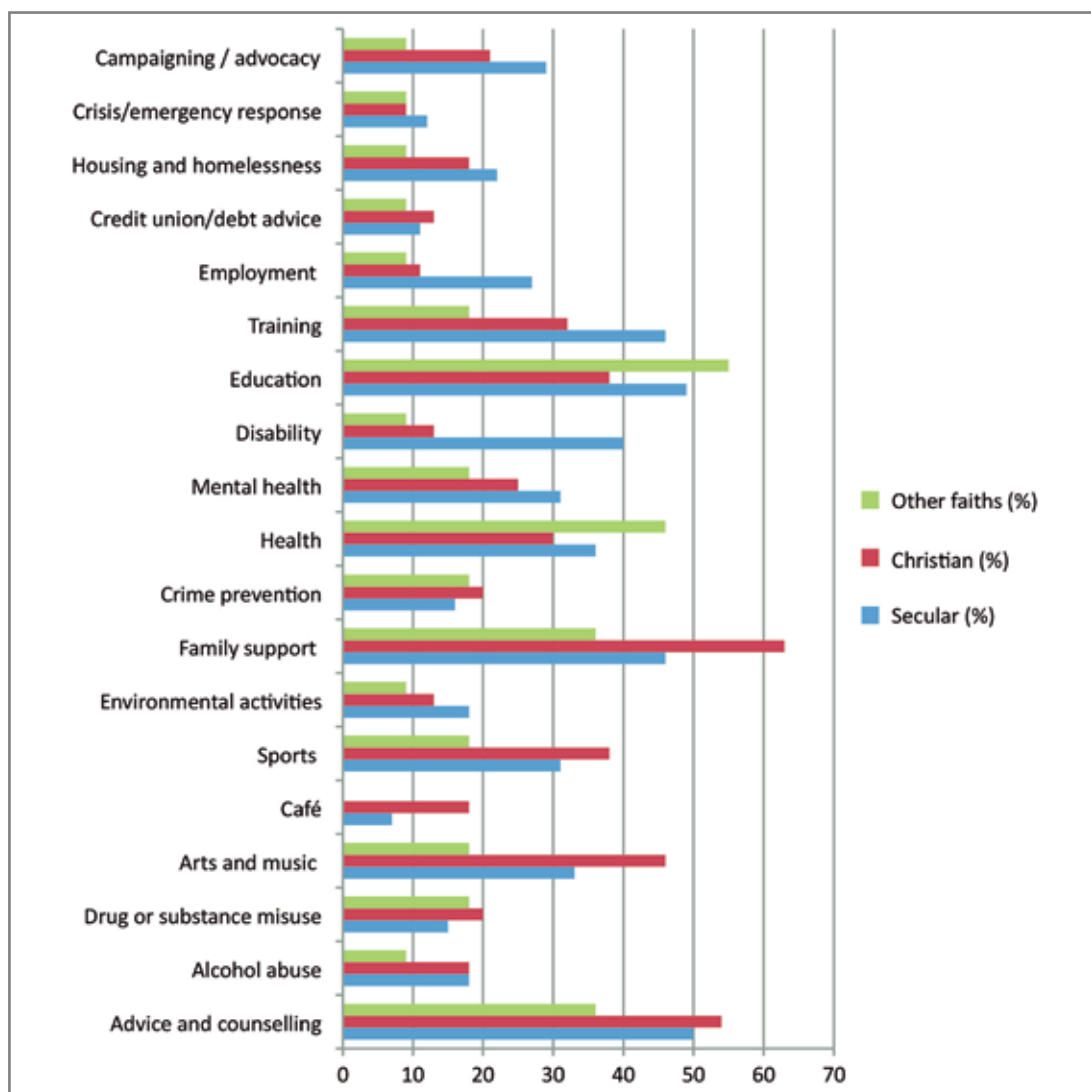
**CHART 4: Number of projects run by an organisation (% of organisations)** Responded: voluntary – 112, Christian – 53, other faiths – 10



## AREAS OF ACTIVITY AND FOCUS OF PROJECTS

As Charts 5 and 6 indicate, the organisations we surveyed offer a wide variety of welfare provision to a variety of target or user groups. The most popular types of provision were education (and training, especially for secular projects), health (especially for other faiths), family support (especially for Christian projects), advice and counselling and arts projects. Faith projects appear to be particularly likely to identify “family support” as a focus of their activity, though the difference between them and ‘secular’ projects was not statistically significant. As with the non-faith sector, faith project activity covered a wide range of subjects including employment support, disability needs, work with minority ethnic users and work with offenders and ex-offenders.

**CHART 5: Areas of activity (% of organisations)** Responded: voluntary – 121, Christian – 56, other faiths – 11



	SECULAR (%)	CHRISTIAN (%)	OTHER FAITHS (%)
Advice and counselling	50	54	36
Alcohol abuse	18	18	9
Drug or substance misuse	15	20	18
Arts and music	33	46	18
Café	7	18	
Sports	31	38	18
Environmental activities	18	13	9
Family support	46	63	36
Crime prevention	16	20	18
Health	36	30	46
Mental health	31	25	18

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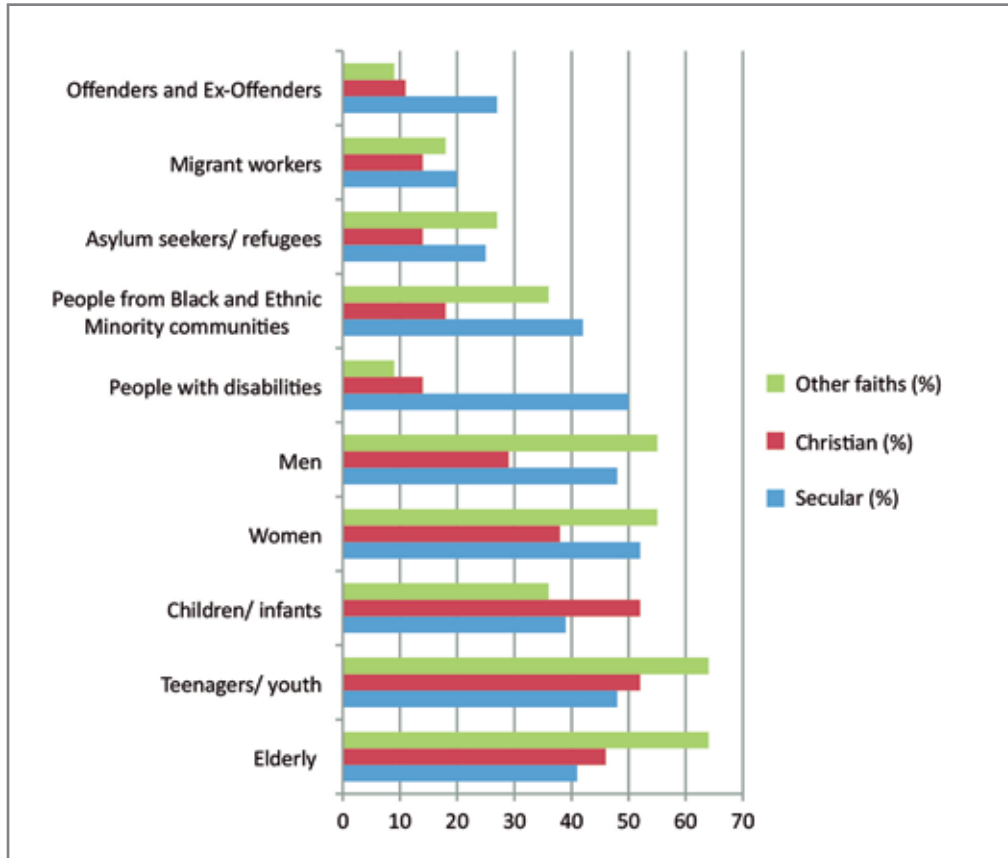
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Disability	40	13	9
Education	49	38	55
Training	46	32	18
Employment	27	11	9
Credit union/debt advice	11	13	9
Housing and homelessness	22	18	9
Crisis/emergency response	12	9	9
Campaigning / advocacy	29	21	9

## USER GROUPS

The majority of projects were aimed at general community needs rather than very specifically targeted groups. Thus more projects in all three categories said they were for the elderly, women, men, children and young people than described themselves as being for offenders, migrant workers, or asylum seekers. Secular organisations were more likely than the faith bodies to have projects focussing on people with disabilities, minority ethnic people and offenders – this may reflect the priorities of public funders. Other faith groups were significantly more likely than the Christian organisations to be working with people of minority ethnicities, which in many cases would include their own members. While both secular and faith bodies focussed on the elderly and youth, this was a particularly clear focus for other faith organisations.

**CHART 6: User groups (% of organisations)** Responded: voluntary – 121, Christian – 56, other faiths – 11



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	SECULAR (%)	CHRISTIAN (%)	OTHER FAITHS (%)
Elderly	41	46	64
Teenagers/ youth	48	52	64
Children/ infants	39	52	36
Women	52	38	55
Men	48	29	55
People with disabilities	50	14	9
People from Black and Ethnic Minority communities	42	18	36
Asylum seekers/ refugees	25	14	27
Migrant workers	20	14	18
Offenders and Ex-Offenders	27	11	9

## RESOURCES AND REACH OF WELFARE PROJECTS.

The majority of projects were operating with relatively few human and financial resources (tables 4 to 8 and charts 7 to 13). On average, secular projects were significantly larger than faith-based ones. They spent more, received more public funding, employed more staff and had more users. However even among secular projects over a quarter spent less than £10,000, over a third employed no staff, and over 40% received no support from public funds.

### FULL TIME STAFF

Over half the Christian-run projects employed no full time staff and nearly 60% employed no part time staff. Over 61% of other faith projects employed no full or part time staff. Very few faith projects employed more than three full time staff whereas a significant minority of secular bodies did have these resources.

**TABLE 4: Number of full time staff**

	NON- FAITH VOLUNTARY SECTOR	CHRISTIAN ORGS	OTHER FAITHS ORGS	"ALL FAITHS" (EXCLUDED FROM ANALYSIS)
Total number of FT staff	420	77	3	4
Number of projects*	117 (out of 151)	73 (out of 88)	9 (out of 13)	1
Mean	3.59	1.05	0.33	

\* excluding organisations with the missing data on the number of FT staff for the purpose of calculating the means and comparing them

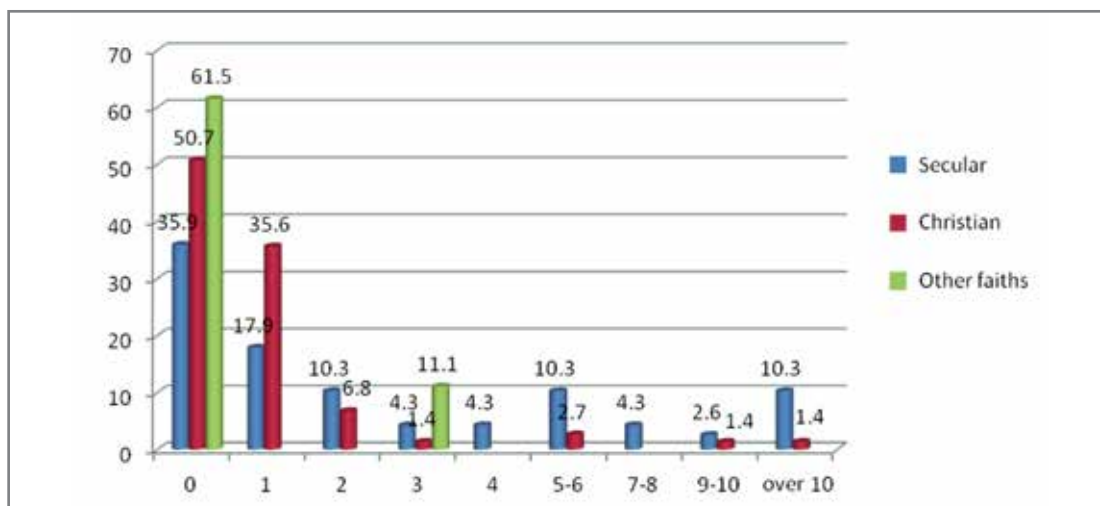
The survey identified a statistically significant difference in the distribution of full time staff across the three categories, with secular organisations employing most full time staff and other faiths bodies employing the least. (There is no statistical significance between the two faith categories.)

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**CHART 7: Full time staff per project (% of projects)** Number of projects data provided for: voluntary – 117, Christian – 73, other faiths – 9



### PART TIME STAFF

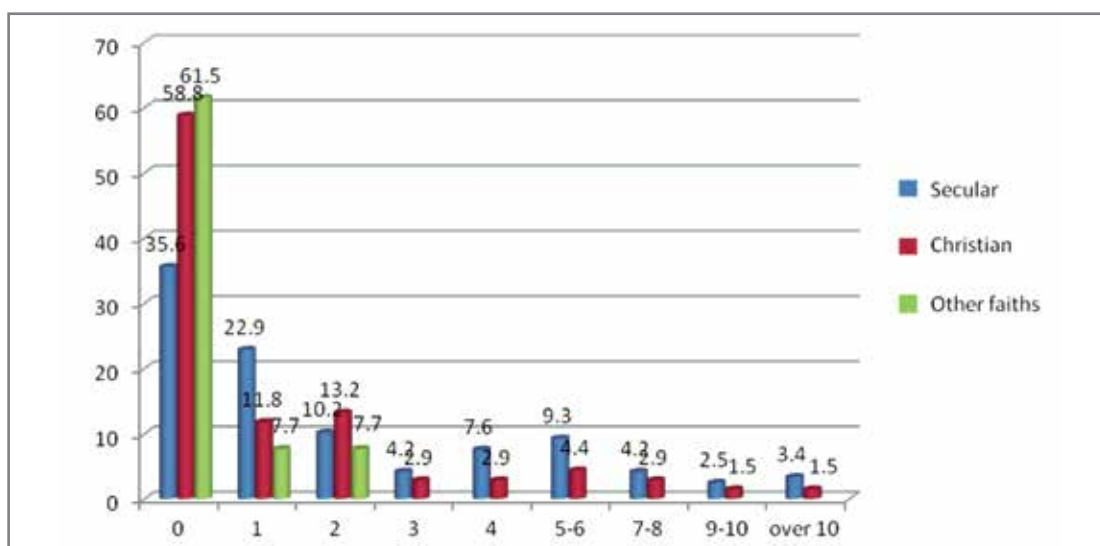
As with full time staff, other faith projects were least likely to employ part time staff. More Christian projects relied on at least part time staff, although very few had more than two.

**TABLE 5: Number of part time staff**

	NON- FAITH VOLUNTARY SECTOR	CHRISTIAN ORGS	OTHER FAITHS ORGS	“ALL FAITHS” (EXCLUDED FROM ANALYSIS)
Total number of PT staff	297	98	3	4
Number of projects*	118 (out of 151)	68 (out of 88)	10 (out of 13)	1
Mean	2.52	1.44	0.3	

\* excluding organisations with the missing data on the number of PT staff for the purpose of calculating the means and comparing them

**CHART 8: Part time staff per project (% of projects)** Number of projects data provided for: voluntary – 118, Christian – 68, other faiths – 10



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As with the finding above on full time staff, the survey identified a statistically significant difference in the distribution of part time staff across the three categories, with secular organisations employing more part time staff than the faiths bodies. (There is no statistical significance between the two faith categories.)

## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the life blood of the voluntary sector and the main staffing resource for faith sector projects. A very few secular and Christian projects used no volunteers but over 80% of Christian projects relied on up to 10 volunteers, as did over three quarters of other faith projects but just under half of secular projects. This is a further illustration of the fact that faith projects tend to be significantly smaller than secular projects. 17% of secular projects used between 11 and 20 volunteers and a few used over 60.

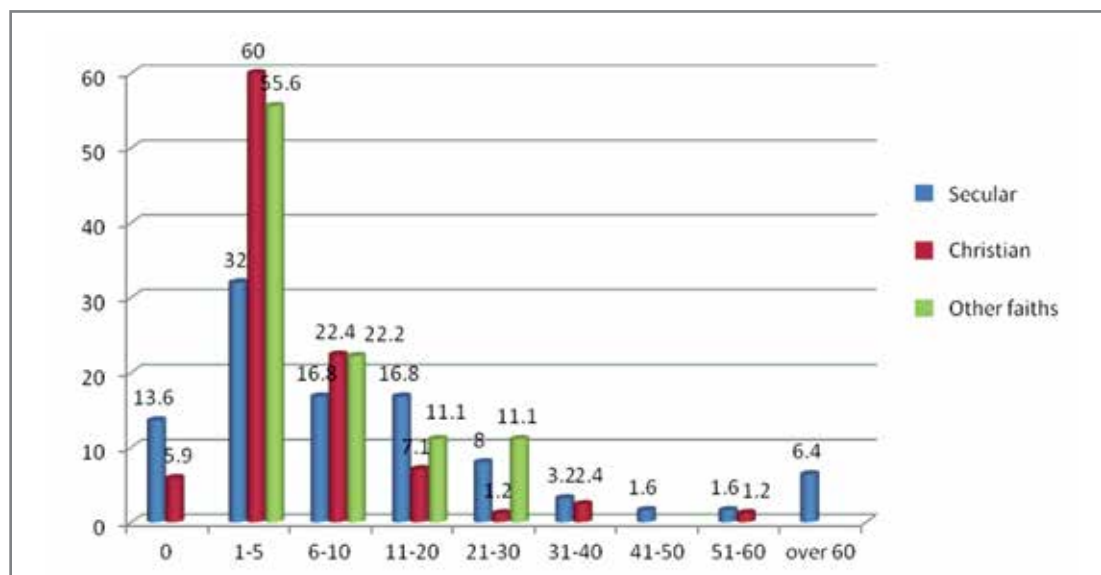
**TABLE 6: Number of Volunteers**

	NON- FAITH VOLUNTARY SECTOR	CHRISTIAN ORGS	OTHER FAITHS ORGS	"ALL FAITHS" (EXCLUDED FROM ANALYSIS)
Total number of volunteers	2,118	563	78	12
Number of projects*	125 (out of 151)	85 (out of 88)	9 (out of 13)	1
Mean	16.94**	6.62**	8.67**	

\* excluding organisations with the missing data on the number of volunteers for the purpose of calculating the means and comparing them

\*\* However the difference in the distribution of volunteers across the three categories is not statistically significant

**CHART 9 Number of volunteers per project (% of projects)** Number of projects data provided for: voluntary – 125, Christian – 85, other faiths – 9



## NUMBER OF PROJECT USERS

Although around 20% of projects across the three categories were very small in reach and had 25 or fewer users, the most typical projects for all three categories helped up to 125 users per year (78% of other faith projects, just over 50% of Christian projects and 36% of secular projects). However, over a quarter of secular projects helped over 300 people a year, compared to under 10% of faith bodies. 15% of secular projects had over 900 users a year, while no faith project had over 500 users.

## Better off without them?

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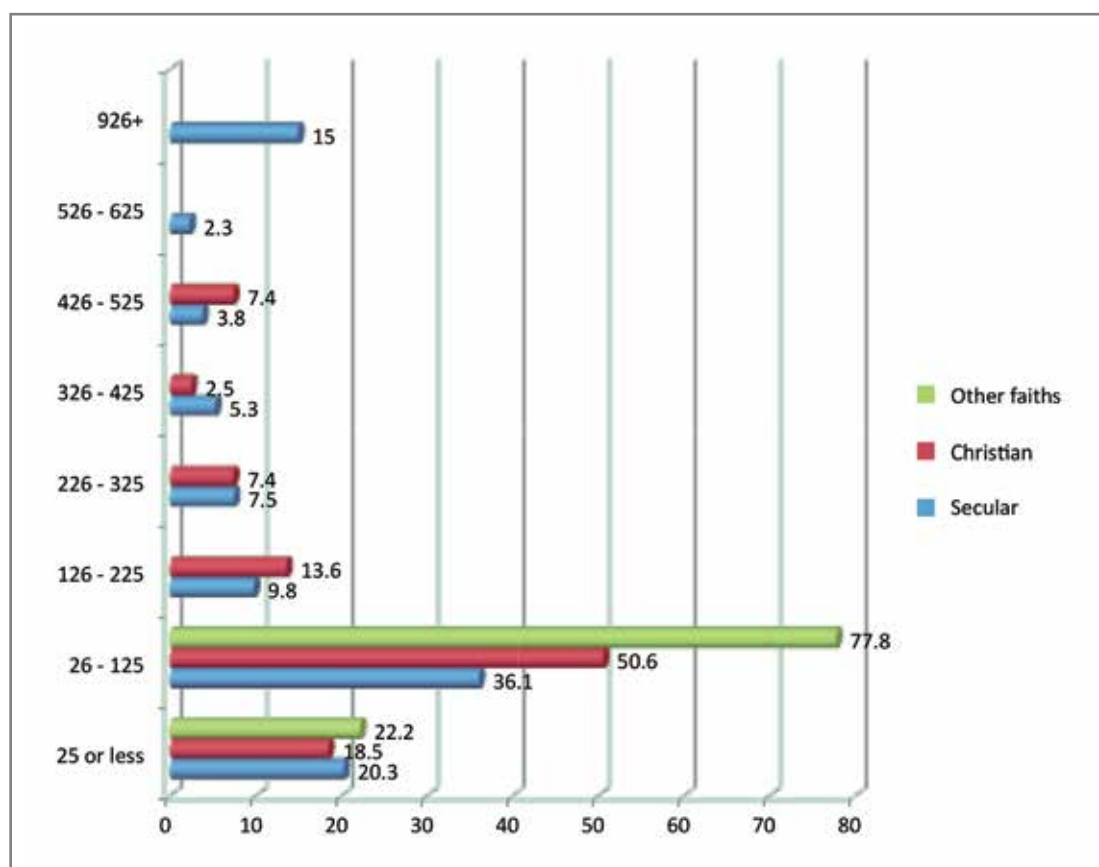
**TABLE 7: Number of Users per year**

	NON- FAITH VOLUNTARY SECTOR	CHRISTIAN ORGS	OTHER FAITHS ORGS	“ALL FAITHS” PROJECT (EXCLUDED FROM ANALYSIS)
Number of projects which gave figures on users	133 (from total of 151)	81 (from total of 88)	9 (from total of 13)	1
Total number of users	69,489	9,846	555**	150
Mean*	522.47	121.6	61.7**	

\* excludes organisations with the missing data on the number of users; NOTE the difference in the number of users across the three categories is not statistically significant

\*\* excludes 1,200 users of Ahmadiyya Muslim Association’s sports project as not clear whether these included separate individuals

**CHART 10: Number of users (% of projects) per year** Number of projects data provided for: voluntary – 133, Christian – 81, other faiths – 9

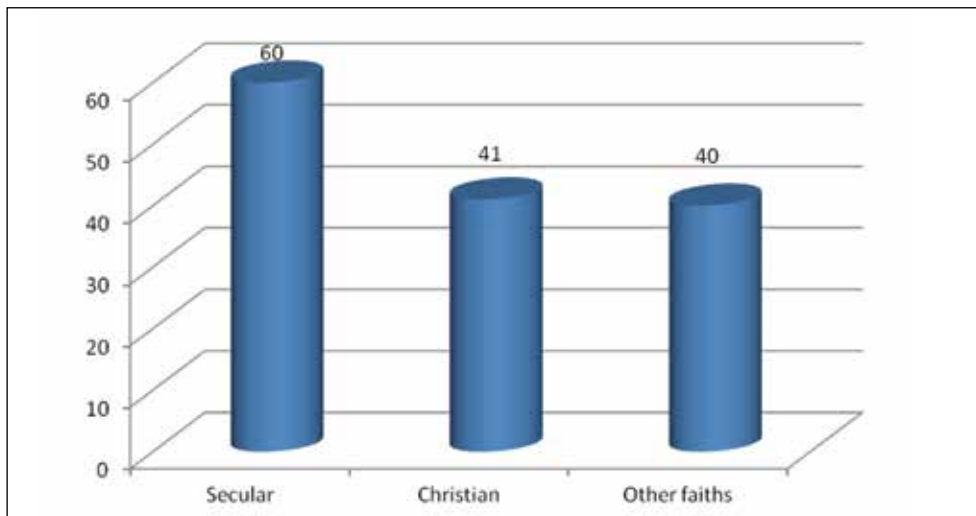


Not surprisingly, given that nowhere in the London Borough of Wandsworth is distant from a neighbouring borough, many projects had users who came from other boroughs. The fact that this was particularly true of secular projects may be a further demonstration that these were more likely to be large and so potentially draw their users from a larger catchment area. By the same token it may show the very local focus of many faith projects.

**16 Better off without them?**

*Report of a pilot study into the proportion of voluntary sector welfare projects organised by churches and other faiths*

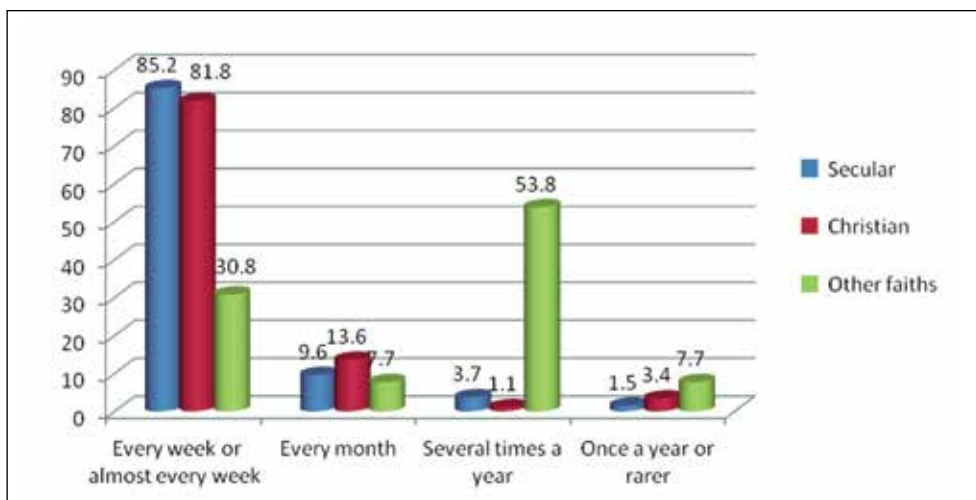
**CHART 11: Percentage of organisations with projects used also by people from boroughs other than Wandsworth** Responded: voluntary – 121, Christian – 54, other faiths – 10



## FREQUENCY OF PROJECT ACTIVITY

The great majority of secular and Christian projects (over 80%) operated every week or almost every week (on reflection, we ought to have included an option for every day or at least for every weekday). Over half of other faith projects operated rather less frequently – ‘several times a year’. These tended to be courses, run several times a year, on health issues, parenting and marriage, as well as extra tuition for children struggling with schoolwork.

**CHART 12: Frequency of project activities (% of projects)** Number of projects data provided for: voluntary – 135, Christian – 88, other faiths – 13



### Better off without them?

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**TABLE 8: Expenditure**

	NON- FAITH VOLUNTARY SECTOR	CHRISTIAN ORGS	OTHER FAITHS ORGS	“ALL FAITHS” (EXCLUDED FROM ANALYSIS)
Total Expenditure £	12,145,773	2,175,950	17,450	30,000
Number of projects*	91 (out of 151)	55 (out of 88)	9 (out of 13)	1
Mean £	133,470	36,563	1,938	

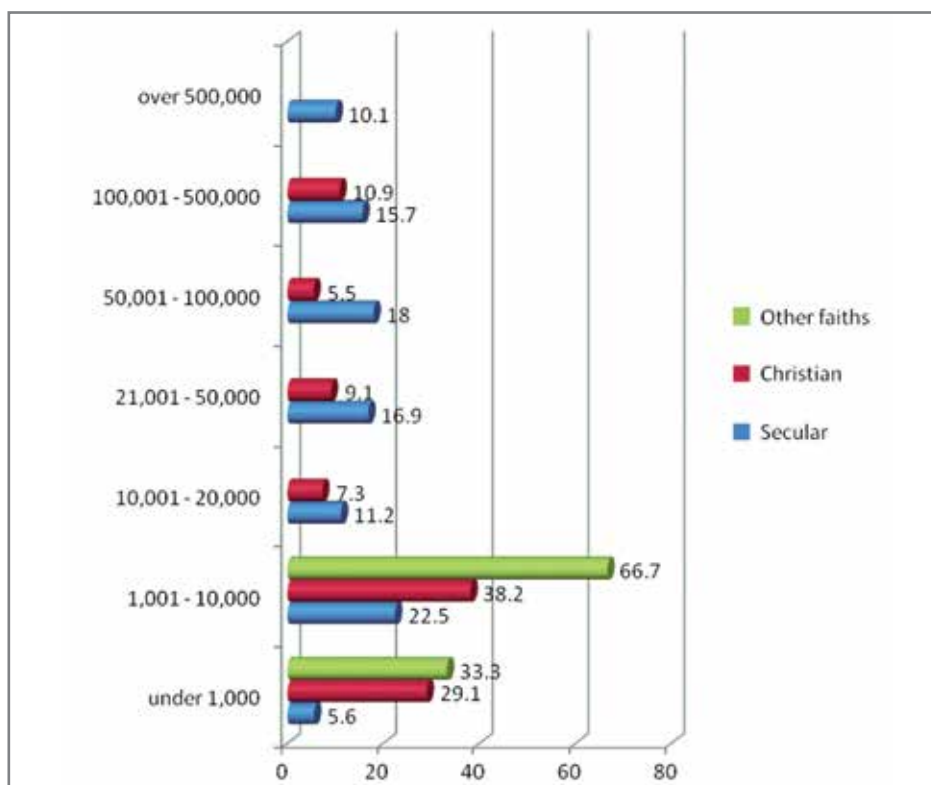
\* excluding organisations with the missing data on expenditure for the purpose of calculating the means and comparing them

The difference in the distribution of expenditure across three different categories is statistically significant, with voluntary organisations having the highest expenditure among the three categories. However, there is no statistically significant difference in the distribution of expenditure between Christian and other faiths bodies.

**EXPENDITURE**

The difference between the typical secular project and the faith projects is perhaps most pronounced when it comes to the money spent on projects. One third of other faith projects and nearly the same proportion of Christian projects spent less than £1,000, compared with under six per cent of secular projects. This may partly reflect the fact that fewer secular projects owned their own building so were likely to be paying rent and associated expenses whereas accommodation costs may not have been counted by faith projects using their own buildings. No other faith project spent more than ten thousand pounds a year and two thirds of Christian projects spent no more than this. By contrast over 70% of the secular projects spent more than £10,000 though the majority even of secular projects cost no more than £50,000 a year. Six Christian projects cost between £100,000 and £500,000 each and nine secular projects spent over £500,000 each. All these projects depended on public funding to cover the majority of their expenditure, apart from a faith-based neighbourhood centre and a social enterprise organisation.

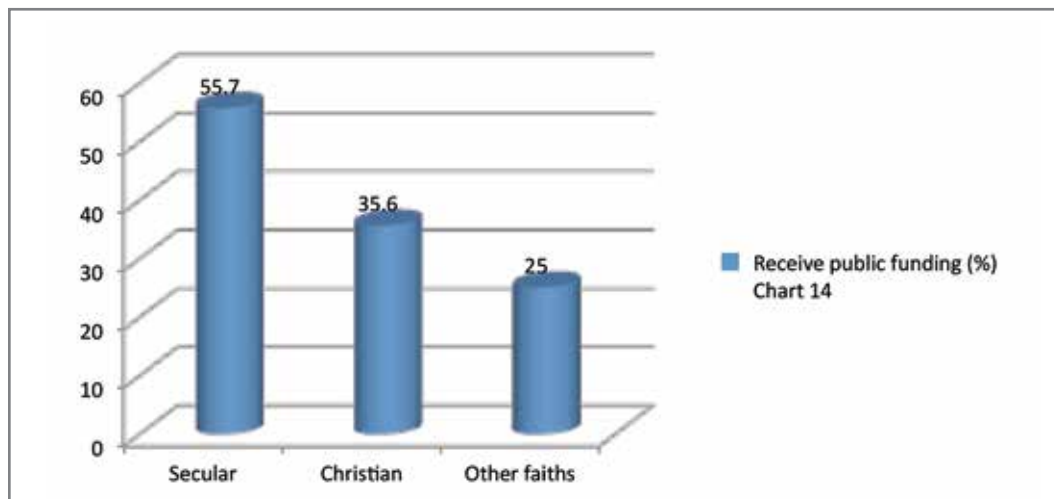
**CHART 13: Annual expenditure per project (% of projects)** Number of projects data provided for: voluntary – 89, Christian – 55, other faiths – 9



## AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC FUNDING

One obvious reason for the lower expenditure on projects by faith bodies was that they were significantly less likely to be receiving public funding as the chart below shows.

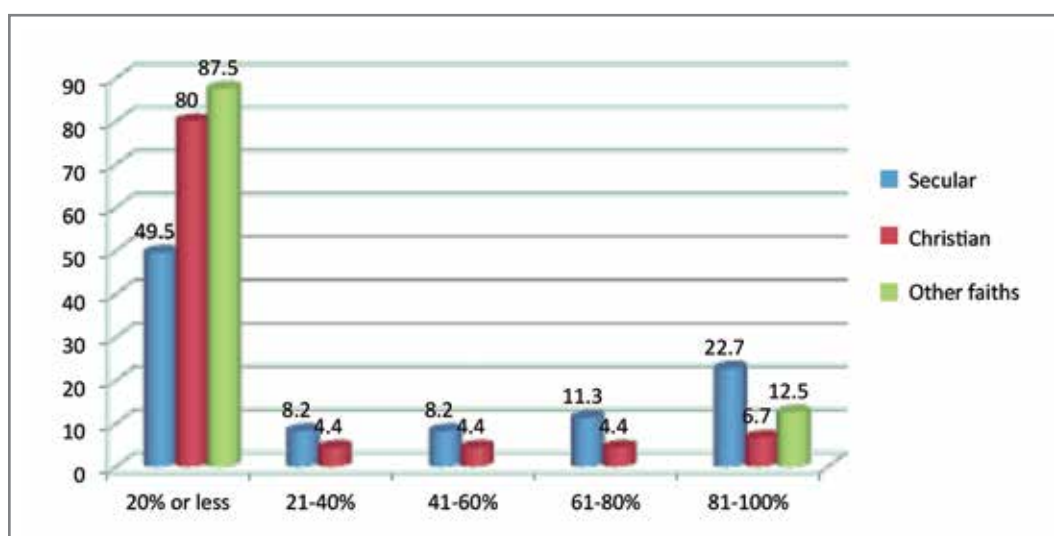
**CHART 14: Percentages of organisations by three categories receiving public funding for these projects** (Responded: secular – 97 (out of 121), Christian – 45, other faiths – 8 (together 53 out of 68 faith sector respondents))



There was a statistically significant difference in the distribution of public funding across the three different categories, with secular organisations receiving the most public funding and ‘other faiths’ organisations receiving the least. The key difference is between the voluntary and Christian organisations. There is no statistically significant difference in the distribution of public funding between Christian and other faiths bodies, and between voluntary organisations and other faiths bodies, possibly owing to the very small sample of other faiths bodies.

While public funding was a significant support, particularly to secular organisations, for some 80% of faith based projects and nearly half the secular projects less than 20% of their annual expenditure was covered by public funding. This demonstrates the very considerable independence of this part of the voluntary and community sector and its dependence on charitable giving to fund its welfare activities.

**CHART 15: Percentage of total annual expenditure covered by public funding**



### Better off without them?

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## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXPENDITURE, PUBLIC FUNDING AND THE NUMBER OF STAFF, NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS AND NUMBER OF USERS.

Our findings indicate that there is a correlation between an organisation's total expenditure on the surveyed projects and the percentage of public funding received. An organisation was more likely to be spending more if it was receiving public funding (in the case of other faiths this correlation was strong but not statistically significant, probably because of the low sample).

**For secular organisations** there was a strong positive correlation between the amount of money they spent and the number of full and part time staff they employed, and the number of users of their projects. In each case more money meant more staff and users. There was a medium correlation between the number of full time staff they employed and the number of part time staff. There was also a medium correlation between the number of volunteers they had and the number of users. Interestingly, there was only a weak correlation between the number of full time staff they employed and the number of users. This may be due to the labour intensive work of some projects which require highly qualified (paid) staff to work with a small number of particularly needy clients. Perhaps not surprisingly there was also a low correlation between the number of volunteers and the amount of money spent.

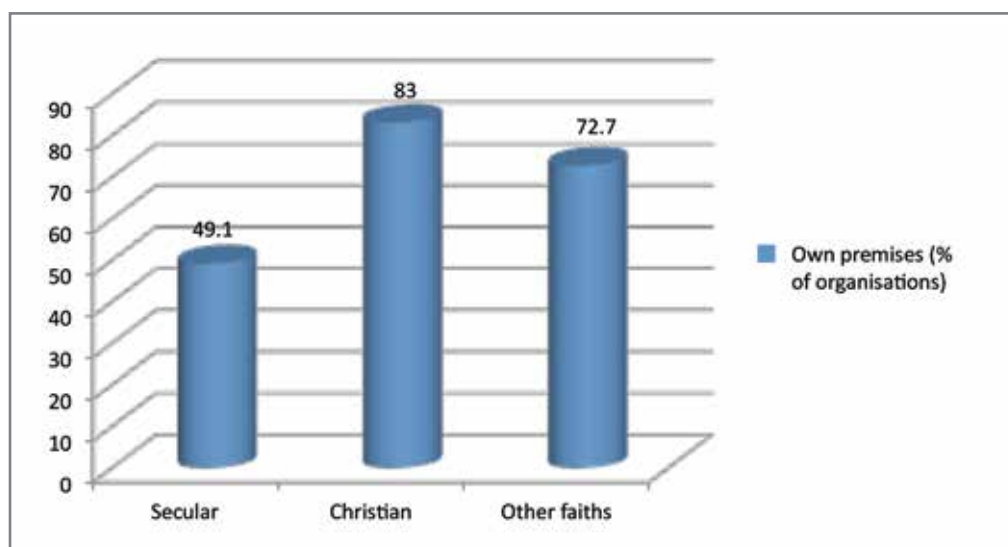
**For Christian organisations** there were also strong positive correlations between the amount of money they spent and the number of full and part time staff they employed. There was a medium correlation between the money spent and the number of users. There was also a correlation between the number of volunteers they had and the number of users. Again there was only a weak correlation between the number of full time staff they employed and the number of users, possibly for the reason suggested above.

**For other faith projects** there was a strong positive correlation between the number of users and the number of volunteers. Possibly owing to the small sample, no other statistically significant correlations could be drawn for other faith organisations.

## OWNERSHIP AND AVAILABILITY OF PREMISES

Faith organisations were significantly more likely to own their premises. This may mean that they under-report the cost of projects, if accommodation costs (including heating and lighting) are absorbed by the organisation rather than the project. It certainly gives them an opportunity to serve the community not only directly by running projects but by offering meeting and activity space for other groups.

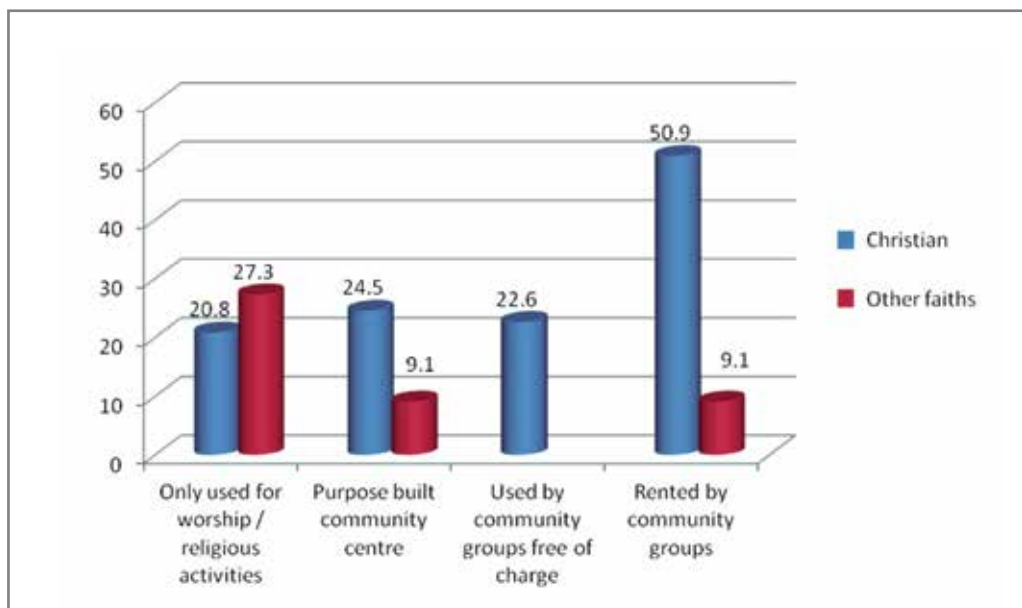
**CHART 16: Ownership of premises** Responded: secular – 114 (out of 121), Christian – 53 (out of 56), other faiths – 11





**CHART 17: Use of premises (% of organisations)** (this question was asked only of the faith sector)

Responded: Christian – 53 out of 56, other faiths – 11



- ▶ 27% of other faiths organisations use their premises only for worship and other religious activities, compared to 21% of Christian organisations.
- ▶ 25% of Christian organisations have a purpose built community centre, compared to 9% of other faiths organisations.
- ▶ 23% of Christian organisations allow other community groups to use their premises free of charge, compared to none among other faiths organisations.
- ▶ 51% of Christian organisations allow other community groups to rent their premises, compared to 9% of other faiths organisations.

# Chapter 3 – Key Issues

## UNDERSTANDING OF COMMUNITY

*“Some of the services provided by faith-based organisations are aimed specifically at people of a particular faith, others are targeted at the wider community”.*<sup>8</sup> On the face of it this distinction between the ‘wider community’ and ‘people of a particular faith’ seems obvious and unarguable and is often quoted as a reason why statutory services should think carefully about giving financial support to a faith-based organisation’s services. It is taken for granted that there is a special kind of selectivity in the focus of a faith based organisation’s welfare services which is not found in the welfare services offered by the wider (secular) voluntary sector. Because we wanted to be absolutely transparent in comparing like with like in this survey, which seeks to identify what proportion of welfare services provided to the local community are faith-based, we asked faith based organisations a specific question about each project surveyed: *is it open only to members of your congregation, only to members of your faith or open to everyone?* (We did not ask this question of secular bodies.) As a result we excluded from the analysis two organisations, and four Christian and two other faith projects, because the responses indicated that the projects were open only to members of their congregations.

In the case of the four Christian projects, it was fairly clear that these were church-based projects for children from the church congregation and did not meet our criteria. However, we felt there was much more of an issue where other faiths were concerned, both in excluding ‘congregation only’ projects and in excluding projects ‘only for faith’.

The chart below of our responses from faith based organisations illustrates this very clearly. While over 94% of Christian-based projects are said to be ‘for everyone’ and only a minuscule number are for congregation or faith only, for other faith projects the proportion of projects ‘for everyone’ falls to 64%, 14% are said to be only for the congregation and 21% only for the relevant faith group.

This is not because other faith groups are especially exclusive (though some may be, as may some churches) it can be because the concept of ‘congregation’ may mean something different and wider than the Christian meaning. This is certainly true of the Jewish community as illustrated in the case study. Typically, in a synagogue, the number of paying members is much greater than the number of regular weekly worshippers (the latter would be nearer to the Christian definition of congregation). The paying membership would include people who have a racial and cultural affinity to Judaism but who might not wish to take part in regular religious worship. And there may well be a third group, who neither regularly worship nor pay fees but who identify with the community and may engage at particular times and in particular ways.

### ***Wimbledon and District Synagogue Case Study based on interview with Helen Bramsted – Administrative Assistance***

*The Wimbledon and District Synagogue is primarily a worshipping community and has regular Friday night and Saturday morning services as well as celebrating all festivals in the Jewish calendar.*

*To become a member of the Synagogue, one has to pay an annual fee and this fee includes the burial rights as well depending on how long you have been a member. There is absolutely no public funding but, as the fee is quite substantial, it covers the cost of running most activities.*

*The regular activities that are conducted are the Sunday religious education classes for 5-13 year olds, the youth group and the Biblical Hebrew lessons for adults.*

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8 *Faith and Voluntary action – an overview of current evidence and debates* pub NCVO 2007 edited by Veronique Jochum, Belinda Pratten and Karl Wilding – page 23

*Over and above this, a Pilates class, a discussion group, an art and literature group and a “lunch and learn” with the Rabbi on a Wednesday are conducted. There is a small fee that you have to pay to attend and these activities are open to all members as well as the general public.*

*For the over 65s, there is a lunch and a discussion group that meets once a month and this is generally very popular.*

*All activities are advertised in the monthly magazine which is produced by the Synagogue; however they do not advertise externally as it becomes difficult from a community security perspective.*

*Most of the activities are run by volunteers and, until recently, even the youth group leader was a volunteer. However, this has changed and they now pay their youth group volunteer. The members of staff who are paid are the two part time Rabbis, three office administration staff, two caretakers and the teachers who run the Sunday school.*

*One of the biggest challenges facing this particular Synagogue is the affordability of membership. As the cost of membership is slightly on the expensive side (a family of four can pay up to £1000), they find that fewer people can afford to pay it. The other challenge is an ageing congregation as a lot of the members are now over 65. Finally, because of the cost of housing in the area, many members who probably attended the Synagogue as children then move away as adults and this means a loss for the Synagogue.*

*The Synagogue has a very active community because it is a place for people to come together and many of them have been part of the cultural side of Jewish life for over 50 years. The Synagogue is also involved with other faith based organisations in the area such as the Hindu Temple, the Ahmaddiya Mosque etc.*

*They also let out their premises to organisations like the NHS and, more recently, to organise two music concerts. There is also a nursery that is run from the same premises that the Synagogue is very proud of.*

*They have food restrictions on the premises and, as only vegetarian food can be served, this along with security issues sometimes makes it slightly more difficult for the Synagogue to offer its premises for various events.*

We did in fact exclude the Wimbledon and District Synagogue from our analysis because in their response they said their projects were ‘only for the congregation’ and it was clear from the case study that publicity was limited to the monthly magazine sent to members. However it is clear that this organisation is providing welfare services to young people and the elderly, in particular, which benefit the community at large by meeting needs which might otherwise fall to public provision.

The issue of publicity for services is itself not clear cut. In reality the ‘public’ nature of a service is not just about where formal publicity is placed. For many voluntary sector services and activities, perhaps the most common way of people hearing about them is word of mouth or personal outreach rather than formal publicity. So, saying that something is not publicised in certain kinds of ways does not necessarily mean that, in practice, it is more or less ‘open to the public’ than other services or activities.

The concept of ‘community’ needs to be similarly nuanced. Christianity in Britain is the established faith and majority culture and despite growing diversity still sees itself in that light – as there for the whole community; indeed the Church of England as the Established Church has specific legal responsibilities to all local residents whatever their faith or culture. If the worshipping community belongs to another faith, or is connected to a recent immigrant community, the faith organisation may have a special role in affirming their faith and cultural identity in a land where they are in a minority. This means that welfare services provided by minority communities while in principle open to everyone may in practice effectively cater to a particular faith or cultural community. (This may of course be the majority community in the neighbourhood.) This is well expressed in the Report by NCVO<sup>9</sup> *people entering a Gurdwara (Sikh place of worship) to make use of any*

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9 Ibid – page 46

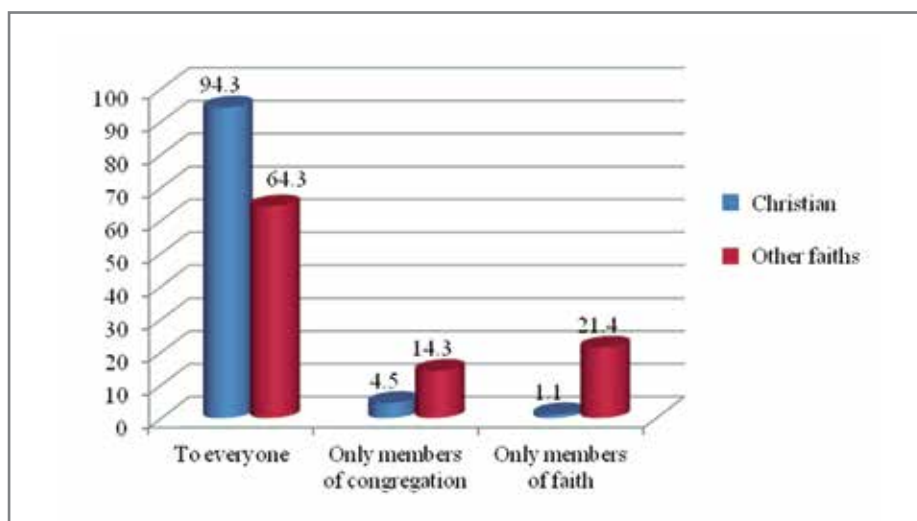
service . . . are under no illusion that their presence will be accepted only if they follow basic rules such as covering their heads and removing their shoes and that they must not be under the influence of any intoxicating substance – even smoking.<sup>10</sup> In practice, of course, a great many organisations in both the secular and faith voluntary sector provide services which effectively cater for a particular culture – this is as true of services provided by mainstream churches as it is of welfare services catering to, for example, a particular refugee group or members of the LGBT community.

Indeed even restricted services can be perceived as adding value to the wider community. In most cases no public funds are sought or received. These services add to the variety of provision and enable users with particular needs or interests to receive a service which meets their needs closely. A society which values freedom of choice should perhaps be encouraging more, not less, of these kinds of ‘niche’ services!

The general issue is well expressed in the NCVO overview: *Just because a service in practice is used only by members of a particular faith or culture does not mean that it is not contributing to and benefitting the whole community. In the first place [these] services can significantly reduce the need for public provision. Quiet care and comparatively informal activities can address people’s need in ways that make later – more significant – interventions unnecessary. The chance for older people, for example, to meet socially and take part in recreational activities can help to maintain them in good physical and mental health. Secondly they are providing activities and services which complement or extend what the state is prepared to make available.*<sup>11</sup>

We have therefore included in our analysis the 21% of other faith projects which said that they were open to ‘only members of your faith’ on the basis that this was a description of the reality rather than a stated bar.

**CHART 18: Project availability (% of projects)** number of projects data provided for: Christian – 88, other faiths – 14



Finally, we should note that in asking only faith organisations about the availability of their projects to members of the community, we were guilty ourselves of the assumption that barriers were not likely to be a feature of secular welfare projects. However a survey of welfare provision in North Hertfordshire in 2012<sup>12</sup>, which used a similar questionnaire to ours, did ask the same question of the secular projects and found that *the significant majority of projects (about 90%) of both faith-based and secular organisations were open to everyone. Interestingly, a slightly higher proportion of secular organisations noted that the project was open only to members of the organisation* (page 15).

10 Ibid

11 Ibid – page 47

12 *Provision of Community Services by Voluntary and Faith-based Groups in North Hertfordshire* produced by the East of England Faiths Council

## CHARACTERISTICS OF FAITH SECTOR

Our findings about the characteristics of the faith sector broadly match those of numerous other surveys. The majority of welfare oriented VCS projects in Wandsworth operate with limited human and financial resources and this is especially true of the faith sector. Faith based projects spend on average considerably less than secular projects and the organisations receive much less support from public funds. Faith based projects are run with fewer paid staff and both secular and faith based projects rely heavily on volunteers. Faith based projects have fewer users. Our findings echo the description given in the NCVO report: *The majority of activities, however, are small, have a local focus, are informal, heavily dependent on volunteers and firmly rooted in the community. Most are born from a recognised local need and are delivered 'by the community for the community'.*<sup>13</sup>

The fact that these projects add up to 40% of the VCS welfare projects in the borough is important but it is equally important that this is not by any means the whole story of the organised social contribution of faith-based bodies to the local community.

Several respondents from the faith sector suggested that concentrating on welfare projects organised directly by the faith body concerned focussed on only one model of community involvement. The following response, written in November 2010, puts this eloquently:

*I can describe what happens here in my parish. I suspect that many other churches have similar modes of involvement in their community rather than, or as well as, schemes which they "organise, run or manage".*

*We have in the parish one church and two church halls. The church, besides worship activities, hosts a weekly mother and toddler group and occasional concerts.*

*One church hall has a full fund of community activities. Scouts, cubs, brownies and guides (all church-sponsored groups) are based there, and a theatre club and several activities based round young children. The other hall hosts the offices of a charity working to provide aid in Africa, an after school club, two separate Alcoholics Anonymous groups and a yoga class. All of these activities pay rent, but none at anything approaching a commercial rate. The uniformed organizations pay a peppercorn rent. A considerable amount of church effort goes into maintaining the halls as a community resource.*

*The main activities which we support in the community are two Anglican church schools, a local mental health project, and the local Street Pastor organization which is a shared ecumenical endeavour, and may well be flagged up in your returns as "organized, run or managed" by another church – or churches!*

*The two church schools require between them a complement of about fifteen church appointed governors, most but not all of whom are members of my congregation. Expectations on school governors are enormous and probably excessive. The chairs of both schools are congregation members. In effect, even though the schools are independent, their constitutions require that they are largely governed by the parish church. (They also want the congregation to provide people to come in and read and help on a voluntary basis, which I am rarely able to provide.) People often imagine that church schools are privileged places serving the middle class congregations, but this is not the case here, where the level of deprivation is very high. My middle class parents send their children elsewhere. Only three or four children from the two church schools attend church here.*

*The mental health charity has close links with the parish, obviously in no official way as far as the charity is concerned, but simply in the nature of things that organizations in the community pull on help from local churches. In the last two to three years they have gone through a difficult phase and are working to re-establish themselves. I know they have appealed to other worship groups for help but we are the only ones who have responded. I am chair of the trustees, and two other congregation members are deeply involved. To a large extent the church has "organized, run and managed" the charity and I don't think it would have*

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13 *Faith and Voluntary action – an overview of current evidence and debates* pub NCVO 2007 edited by Veronique Jochum, Belinda Pratten and Karl Wilding – page 44



*survived without our support. We have supported this work with our Christmas service collections twice, which would I guess come to about £4,000.*

*Since September I have spent most of my working time on the two schools and the mental health project.*

*I hope this is helpful. I realize you will have difficulty fitting these things in your boxes, but I would guess that it is a pattern which is quite common in churches, and I would strongly suggest that you widen your survey to include this kind of community involvement. If you stay simply with those activities which are run under the church label you will have an impoverished view of the commitment of faith groups to their community.<sup>14</sup>*

As this respondent notes, churches are not the only faith group which supports the local community in this way and there are also secular organisations, like the Katharine Low Settlement in Battersea with its community centre, which provide similar support for local groups. Other forms of community engagement in which faith bodies are involved include Street Pastors, to which the respondent refers, and Community Organising through London Citizens, which includes secular organisations.

## **RESOURCES AND RESILIENCE**

By the time we carried out this survey in 2010-11 there was considerable concern throughout the voluntary sector about the impact of the public expenditure cuts which were clearly going to be a feature of the next years. We therefore emailed our respondents in March 2011 and asked

*What effect, if any, do you expect the announced public expenditure cuts to have on your project? If you are running more than one project please name, and answer for, each project separately. Please tick with an 'x':*

- ▶ *No effect*
- ▶ *Some loss of public funding but we will be able to continue*
- ▶ *Reduced funding – will have to close*

*Any other comments:*

Twenty-six secular organisations and ten faith organisations responded (a response rate from each sector of about 10%).

The **secular organisations** responded as follows:

- ▶ *Some loss of public funding but we will be able to continue: 14*
- ▶ *No effect: 7, but increased number of users for some projects*
- ▶ *Closed/ will have to close: 3*
- ▶ *Don't know: 2*

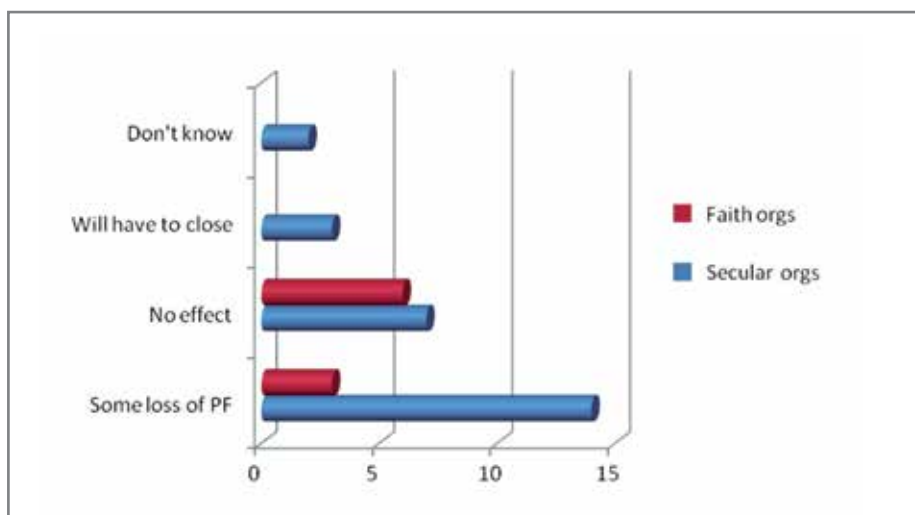
From **faith organisations** responses were:

- ▶ *Some loss of public funding but we will be able to continue: 3*
- ▶ *No effect: 6*

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14 Revd Gordon Jeanes, vicar of St Anne with St Faith, Wandsworth

## CHART 19: Effect of public expenditure cuts on projects



### A SELECTION OF COMMENTS RECEIVED:

- ▶ *In response to your questions, we have lost 2 funding streams that enhanced the work that we do with children and young people, however at this present time we believe that our CYPSS service will be extended for another 6 - 9 months when it will then be up for re tendering. As you know, in the current climate things change on a weekly basis.*
- ▶ *It should be fine for us. We may have slightly fewer antenatal bookings but unfortunately cuts in Healthcare budgets are likely to mean a reduced antenatal service for women so we may be busier if the hospitals reduce the number of courses they run.*
- ▶ *We are not funded by public money, so we will not be facing direct cuts. However, we are funded by grants and the cuts mean that the competition for grants funding is going to be phenomenal. We have already been turned down by funders who have said that, despite our application being high quality, they have been inundated with applications. So, the cuts definitely mean that our funding will be much more difficult to obtain, and we may be facing redundancies in 2012 if we are unable to secure grant funding. (refugee project)*
- ▶ *For 2011-12 we are funded at the same level as last year though there is no allowance for inflation. There is a broader review of day services for older people in Wandsworth effective from 2012-16. The outcome of this is not yet determined, though in our locality there will be a reduction of £83,905 (from £214,405 to 130,500) in the funding distributed to 4 voluntary sector open access day services providers. Though some of this reduction is the consequence of a proposed redistribution of funding (blind to deprivation) across the whole borough.*
- ▶ *The recent public expenditure cuts are not going to affect much our community organisation because it is run by volunteers, who are not paid and have no bonuses, but will sadly decrease the number of events and workshops that we organise for our children and the community.*
- ▶ *It is very puzzling that our local government has got substantial savings out of which the cut services could be funded and yet they are not...?*

### Better off without them?

*Report of a pilot study into the proportion of voluntary sector welfare projects organised by churches and other faiths*



The findings from this survey show that there is a direct relationship between the amount of money a project can spend and the size and outreach of the project. They also show a relationship between the amount of public funding a project receives and its size and capacity. What they do not show is the point illustrated in the small survey above, namely that dependence on public funding is a very mixed blessing. It is in fact a positive feature for vulnerable people in local communities that faith groups and their projects are significantly self-sustaining. A recent survey in Northwest Region showed that, while other voluntary projects were having to retract or close because of funding cuts, some of the faith-based projects were actually finding more money, from their own resources, to meet the increased demand.<sup>15</sup>

What we did not ask in our survey was whether an organisation had applied for public funding. While faith groups continue to report difficulty in securing resources, especially from local authorities, others prefer not even to apply, often because of the complicated process involved and the fear of losing their independence and their faith distinctiveness.

Our findings about the often small and local characteristics of faith projects (as well as many secular projects) contribute to the warnings against expecting them to play an expanded role in delivering public services. Most of the faith projects surveyed in this project would have neither the desire nor capacity to play this role. As the Chief Executive of the Church Urban Fund said in the NCVO report<sup>16</sup> *The size and scale of projects are a significant limiting factor in the public service delivery agenda. Locally based initiatives are very effective in tailoring resources to a specific local need but the small-scale localism of these projects will not easily transfer to a wider – say borough – service delivery.*

There will be individuals and organisations from the faith sector with the capacity and ambition to organise and deliver publicly funded welfare support on a large scale. But they would be wise to sup with a long spoon. What the statutory sector provides can be as readily taken away. Governments come and go as do their initiatives and funding offers. One of our survey respondents, an employee of a major national charity which was under contract to deliver services in Wandsworth, questioned whether the organisation could really be regarded as a voluntary sector welfare charity at all. Whose services was it providing – its own or the borough's? If the need and the delivery model is defined by the public sector which is funding the service it is difficult to see what distinctive ethos or approach is left to the charity. Is it even still dependent on donors who support its mission, the classic characteristic of a welfare charity (and a very good form of accountability)? The danger to smaller charities is that these very big 'charities' could make it difficult for smaller and distinctive projects to access even modest public funds to add value at a more local level.

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15 *Faith in England's Northwest – How Faith Communities are Adapting to the Current Economic and Political Climate* by Mgr John Devine January 2012

16 *Faith and Voluntary action – an overview of current evidence and debates* pub NCVO 2007 edited by Veronique Jochum, Belinda Pratten and Karl Wilding – page 45

## Chapter 4 – Implications & Conclusions

This survey puts a figure on the part played by the faith sector in delivering welfare services. The finding that faith organisations are providing 40% of VCS welfare projects is powerful. This was however only a pilot project and more research needs to be done to see if Wandsworth is broadly representative of London as a whole, and what might be the situation in other parts of the country, and not least in rural areas. We hope that others will take up this challenge, following the methodology used in this survey. We have indicated in the Appendices where the questionnaires could be improved.

Meantime, it would be wise to acknowledge some of the implications of this survey.

- ▶ The *voluntary and community sector* needs to embrace the faith-based sector as an integral part of its membership. At present, voluntary sector support agencies such as Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) or their equivalents too often have only a limited awareness of faith bodies and faith based projects. This was highlighted in a report by Faithworks in 2005, which was commissioned by the Government Office for London.<sup>17</sup> It is repeated in the NCVO report.<sup>18</sup> Too often the distinctiveness and diversity of the faith sector seems to have been an excuse for isolating the sector. That should end.
- ▶ By the same token, *faith bodies* need to recognise that they are part of the richness of the voluntary and community services in this country. There are resources provided to support VCS bodies through, for example, CVSs which could help build the faith sector's capacity to serve our communities. Faith bodies should make contact with these services and use them. And they should build relationships and take opportunities to share information and experiences with other organisations, whether faith or secular, facing similar challenges.
- ▶ There has been a good deal of discussion (including in the NCVO report quoted repeatedly in this report – see page 55) about whether or not faith based services are distinctive. It is difficult to show, for example, that faith based services are necessarily better at engaging in a direct, personal and holistic way with those they seek to serve. However, if this pilot piece of research is supported by further surveys it will be difficult to avoid the conclusion that there is a connection between religious faith and the motivation to support people in need, often at significant cost to the faith body. It is a truism of policy that *governments* should not support faith as such but only its practical outcomes where these appear to support society's values. But if it is religious faith which is behind these values and driving this good work, perhaps this approach also needs to be reviewed?

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17 *Building the Capacity of London's Faith Groups* Faithworks February 2005

18 *Faith and Voluntary action – an overview of current evidence and debates* pub NCVO 2007 edited by Veronique Jochum, Belinda Pratten and Karl Wilding – pages 52-53 on capacity building et seq

# Appendix 1 – The questionnaire for voluntary organisations/ groups



## Mapping of Welfare Contribution by Voluntary Sector and Faith Organisations: *Serving Londoners Survey*

### The questionnaire for voluntary organisations/ groups

Dear Colleague,

This *Serving Londoners Survey* is a groundbreaking study of the welfare contribution of voluntary sector organisations to their communities in London. **We need your help**, so that we can **for the first time**:

- (i) map all voluntary sector including faith based organisations and groups involved in welfare projects/ activities in selected London boroughs; and
- (ii) identify what proportion of all local welfare projects are inspired and run by faith bodies.

Las Casas Institute at Blackfriars Hall, University of Oxford has been commissioned to carry out the survey, in partnership with the **London Voluntary Service Council**, the London Churches Group and the Faiths Forum for London.

This survey covers the borough of Wandsworth. Building on the Wandsworth Voluntary Sector Development Agency's *State of the Sector* survey carried out in Autumn 2009, it aims to paint as comprehensive a picture as possible of the **welfare element** of local voluntary activity.

We will treat all data that we collect during this study strictly **confidentially**. No individual organisations or groups will be identifiable in our report, unless they explicitly give their permission to feature them.

While appreciating other more important demands on your time, we would be very grateful if you could fill in this brief questionnaire and return it to us by **10 June 2010**. The quickest and easiest way is to complete it online at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/V97QGST](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/V97QGST). (If clicking the link does not work please copy and paste it into your web browser).

Otherwise please return it to us either by e-mail at [research.lascasas@bfriars.ox.ac.uk](mailto:research.lascasas@bfriars.ox.ac.uk) or by mail: **Las Casas Institute, Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London SW1H 9NH**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Dr Jolanta Stanke from Las Casas Institute on 07738 447591.

With many thanks

Research Team



**9. Does your organisation/ group organise, run or manage any welfare projects/ activities<sup>2</sup> in the borough of Wandsworth dealing with the following issues or needs?** (Please DO NOT include any totally independent organisations operating from your premises, nor purely religious activities such as prayer and music groups). By 'welfare projects/activities' we mean those aimed at meeting individuals' social needs (as opposed to hobbies/ activities for pure enjoyment).

Area	YES	NO
1. Advice and counselling		
2. Alcohol abuse		
3. Drug or substance misuse		
4. Arts and music		
5. Café		
6. Sports		
7. Environmental activities		
8. Family support		
9. Crime prevention		
10. Health		
11. Mental health		
12. Disability		
13. Education		
14. Training		
15. Employment		
16. Credit union/debt advice		
17. Housing and homelessness		
18. Crisis/emergency response		
19. Campaigning / advocacy		
Other (please specify):		

**10. Does your organisation/ group organise, run or manage any welfare projects/ activities<sup>2</sup> in the borough of Wandsworth targeted specifically at the following user groups?**

User groups	YES	NO
1. Elderly		
2. Teenagers/ youth		
3. Children/ infants		
4. Women		
5. Men		
6. People with disabilities		
7. People from Black and Ethnic Minority communities		
8. Asylum seekers/ refugees		
9. Migrant workers		
10. Offenders and Ex-Offenders		
Other (please specify):		

<sup>2</sup> Suggest add 'located'

**11. Please list all welfare projects/ activities provided by your organisation / group in the borough of Wansdsworth.** (Use as many rows as necessary or a separate sheet if you prefer).<sup>3</sup>

Project/ Activity	Issues/ needs addressed (see examples in Q9)	User groups (see examples in Q10)	Frequency of activities (please tick one option below with an X)	Number of paid staff (full time/ part time) working on this project	Number of volunteers working on this project	Approx. number of different users per year	Annual expenditure on this project, £
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	FT: PT:			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	FT: PT:			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	FT: PT:			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	FT: PT:			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	FT: PT:			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	FT: PT:			

**Comments**

<sup>3</sup> Suggest add an option on frequency for 'every day/every weekday' and add question on whether project open to everyone – modelled on Q in faiths questionnaire

**12. In the last financial year, approximately what proportion of your total annual expenditure on these<sup>4</sup> welfare projects was covered by public funding? \_\_\_\_\_ %**

**13. Can you tell us of any other voluntary organisations/ groups that are providing welfare projects at your premises? If yes, please give their names and contact phone numbers/ email addresses below:**

**14. Name and position of the person who completed the questionnaire:**

**15. The address where you are based, if different from the address you gave in Q2:**

**16. Your contact phone number and / or email address:**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!**

<sup>4</sup> Suggest for 'these' substitute 'the welfare projects described in Q11'



# Appendix 2 – questionnaire for faith organisations/ groups

## Covering letter to Christian organisations



## Mapping of Welfare Contribution by Voluntary Sector and Faith Organisations: *Serving Londoners Survey*

### Questionnaire for church and other Christian organisations/ groups

Dear Colleague,

This *Serving Londoners Survey* is a groundbreaking study of the welfare contribution of voluntary sector organisations to their communities in London. **We need your help**, so that we can **for the first time**:

- (i) map all voluntary sector including faith based organisations and groups involved in welfare projects/ activities in selected London boroughs; and
- (ii) identify what proportion of all local welfare projects are inspired and run by faith bodies.

Las Casas Institute at Blackfriars Hall, University of Oxford has been commissioned to carry out the survey, in partnership with the London Churches Group, the Faiths Forum for London and London Voluntary Service Council.

This survey is **backed by the London Church Leaders**, representing all the main denominations, who believe that it will support the Church's mission in London.

We will treat all data that we collect during this study strictly **confidentially**. No individual organisations or groups will be identifiable in our report, unless they explicitly give their permission to feature them.

While appreciating other more important demands on your time, we would be very grateful if you could fill in this brief questionnaire and return it to us by **10 June 2010**. The quickest and easiest way is to complete it online at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/FLDLVKB](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FLDLVKB). (If clicking the link does not work please copy and paste it into your web browser).

Otherwise please return it to us either by e-mail at [research.lascasas@bfriars.ox.ac.uk](mailto:research.lascasas@bfriars.ox.ac.uk) or by mail: **Las Casas Institute, Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London SW1H 9NH.**

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Elizabeth Simon, Executive Officer of London Churches Group, on 020 7222 0281.

With many thanks

Research Team

## Covering letter to other faith organisations

### Mapping of Welfare Contribution by Voluntary Sector and Faith Organisations: *Serving Londoners Survey*

#### Questionnaire for faith-based organisations/ groups serving the area covered by the London Borough of Wandsworth

Dear Colleague,

This *Serving Londoners Survey* is a groundbreaking study of the welfare contribution of voluntary sector organisations to their communities in London – starting with the London Borough of Wandsworth. **We need your help**, so that we can **for the first time**:

- (i) map all voluntary sector including faith based organisations and groups involved in welfare projects/ activities in selected London boroughs; and
- (ii) identify what proportion of all local welfare projects are inspired and run by faith bodies.

This survey is **backed by Faiths Forum for London**, representing all main faith traditions, who believe that it will support the continued work of faith communities for the benefit of the people of London.

Faiths Forum for London are working together with London Churches Group for Social Action on this project and are supported by the London Voluntary Service Council and, for the pilot study of Wandsworth, we are assisted by the South London Inter Faith Group.

We will treat all data that we collect during this study strictly **confidentially**. No individual organisations or groups will be identifiable in our report, unless they explicitly give their permission to feature them.

While appreciating other more important demands on your time, we would be very grateful if you could fill in this brief questionnaire and return it to us by **25 June 2010**.

There are three easy ways to complete the questionnaire.

The quickest and easiest way is to complete it online at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/FLDLVKB](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FLDLVKB). (If the link does not work please copy and paste it into your web browser).

Complete the attached questionnaire and return it to us either by e-mail at [stevesvm@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:stevesvm@blueyonder.co.uk) or by mail: **Serving Londoners Survey, London Churches Group, Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London, SW1H 9NH.**

If we do not hear from you by the 25<sup>th</sup> we will call you and go through the questions on the telephone.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Elizabeth Simon, Executive Officer of London Churches Group, on 020 7222 0281.

With many thanks

*Steve Miller*

Steve Miller on behalf of the research team



**9. Does your organisation/ group organise, run or manage any welfare projects/ activities<sup>2</sup> in the borough of Wandsworth dealing with the following issues or needs?** (Please DO NOT include any totally independent organisations operating from your premises, nor purely religious activities such as prayer and music groups). By 'welfare projects/activities' we mean those aimed at meeting individuals' social needs (as opposed to hobbies/ activities for pure enjoyment).

Area	YES	NO
1. Advice and counselling		
2. Alcohol abuse		
3. Drug or substance misuse		
4. Arts and music		
5. Café		
6. Sports		
7. Environmental activities		
8. Family support		
9. Crime prevention		
10. Health		
11. Mental health		
12. Disability		
13. Education		
14. Training		
15. Employment		
16. Credit union/debt advice		
17. Housing and homelessness		
18. Crisis/emergency response		
19. Campaigning / advocacy		
Other (please specify):		

**10. Does your organisation/ group organise, run or manage any welfare projects/ activities<sup>2</sup> in the borough of Wandsworth targeted specifically at the following user groups?**

User groups	YES	NO
Elderly		
Teenagers/ youth		
Children/ infants		
Women		
Men		
People with disabilities		
People from Black and Ethnic Minority communities		
Asylum seekers/ refugees		
Migrant workers		
Offenders and Ex-Offenders		
Other (please specify):		

<sup>2</sup> Suggest add 'located'

**11. Please list all welfare projects/ activities provided by your organisation / group in the borough of Wansdsworth.** (Use as many rows as necessary or a separate sheet if you prefer).<sup>3</sup>

Project/ Activity	Issues/ needs addressed (see examples in Q9)	User groups (see examples in Q10)	Frequency of activities (please tick one option below with an X)	The project/ activity is open to (please tick one option below with an X):	Number of paid staff (full time/ part time) working on this project	Number of volunteers working on this project	Approx. number of different users per year	Annual expenditure on this project, £
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	1 only members of your congregation 2 only members of your faith 3 everyone	<b>FT:</b> <b>PT:</b>			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	1 only members of your congregation 2 only members of your faith 3 everyone	<b>FT:</b> <b>PT:</b>			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	1 only members of your congregation 2 only members of your faith 3 everyone	<b>FT:</b> <b>PT:</b>			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	1 only members of your congregation 2 only members of your faith 3 everyone	<b>FT:</b> <b>PT:</b>			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	1 only members of your congregation 2 only members of your faith 3 everyone	<b>FT:</b> <b>PT:</b>			
			1 every week / almost every week 2 every month 3 several times a year 4 once a year or rarer	1 only members of your congregation 2 only members of your faith 3 everyone	<b>FT:</b> <b>PT:</b>			

**Comments**

<sup>3</sup> Suggest add an option on frequency for 'every day/every weekday'

**12. In the last financial year, approximately what proportion of your total annual expenditure on these<sup>4</sup> welfare projects was covered by public funding? \_\_\_\_\_ %**

**13. Can you tell us of any other voluntary organisations/ groups that are providing welfare projects at your premises? If yes, please give their names and contact phone numbers/ email addresses below:**

**14. Name and position of the person who completed the questionnaire:**

**15. The address where you are based, if different from the address you gave in Q2:**

**16. Your contact phone number and / or email address:**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!**

<sup>4</sup> Suggest for 'these' substitute 'the welfare projects described in Q11'



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