

Connecting Communities

Building Partnerships



COMMUNITY
DIALOGUE
MANUAL
S E R I E S



DIALOGUE
SOCIETY



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To readers of this manual:

This manual is part of the Dialogue Society's Community Dialogue Manual Series. The PDF version of this and the other manuals in the series can be downloaded from www.dialoguesociety.org/publications

If you have any comments on this, or any of the other manuals in the series, we would be very glad to have your feedback. Please email your comments to manual@dialoguesociety.org

We would like to showcase the valuable work and effort of groups that use the Community Dialogue Manuals to help inspire other groups to take part also. Please get in touch and let us know how this manual helped you and your group with any photographs and testimonials. Please email these to manual@dialoguesociety.org

If you represent a local stakeholder or public body and are interested in Dialogue Society consultancy please email consultancy@dialoguesociety.org



The Dialogue Society is a registered charity, established in London in 1999, with the aim of advancing social cohesion by connecting communities through dialogue. It operates nationwide with regional branches across the UK. Through localised community projects, discussion forums and teaching programmes it enables people to venture across boundaries of religion, culture and social class. It provides a platform where people can meet to share narratives and perspectives, discover the values they have in common and be at ease with their differences.

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**DIALOGUE
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Overview

01

Preface

The Dialogue Society is a registered charity, established in London in 1999, with the aim of advancing social cohesion by connecting communities through dialogue. It operates nation-wide with regional branches across the UK. Through localised community projects, discussion forums and teaching programmes it enables people to venture across boundaries of religion, culture and social class. It provides a platform where people can meet to share narratives and perspectives, discover the values they have in common and be at ease with their differences. It has done this through a wide range of events including community celebrations, interfaith sharing circles, and open cultural festivals as well as a broad variety of dialogue meetings and seminars.

The manual you hold in your hand is part of a series of ten Community Dialogue Manuals developed by the Dialogue Society to encourage interaction between members of different communities. The primary aim of the series is to help people to bring their communities together through a number of approaches and events that the Dialogue Society has found successful. We have always found that the most successful events have been those with clear objectives and where attention has been paid to detail. Therefore the manuals are full of advice, tips and checklists to help everything go smoothly as you plan, organise and host your own events.

This manual is focused on identifying potential partners with whom you might organise events, whom you might turn to for help, advice and support, and whose projects you might be able to support in turn. It aims to provide a wide range of possible partnership ideas, and clear, practical advice to help you find your prospective partners and make contact with them. Other manuals in the series provide detailed advice on planning and running particular events that you might wish to organise with the support of these partners, such as Noah's Pudding events, Fast Breaking Dinners and Open Mosque Days.

Please get in touch with us to let us know if and how the manual was helpful, to give any feedback and comments about the manual's content, style and structure and with any other enquiries. Please see inside cover for contact details.

We hope that this manual and perhaps others will be helpful to you, and that you will enjoy exploring the many benefits of collaboration with different local organisations and stakeholders.

The Dialogue Society

Introduction

This manual is designed to help you to identify, locate and contact a range of groups who may become your partners in the local community. It is hoped that it will be of assistance to community groups and charities seeking to bring different sectors of the community together to create intercultural friendship, support community cohesion and encourage citizenship. However, it will be equally useful to community groups and charities pursuing a range of other goals who wish to serve those goals through relationships with other organisations and individuals.

Finding and collaborating with local partners has a range of benefits for voluntary groups and charities working in the local community. Other local community groups, local stakeholders and local businesses might provide advice, support and training, provide venues, lend resources, offer sponsorship, help publicise events or even work in partnership with you to organise events. During difficult economic times the sharing of resources between like-minded voluntary groups may determine whether or not these groups survive and continue their valuable work.

In addition, working with other organisations can bring about valuable new friendships and can open up different sectors of the local community to each other. Such partnerships may also strengthen the image of your organisation, recommending it to those who already know and trust your partner.

The aims of this manual are listed in full following this introduction, and a summary of the benefits of working in partnership and a list of guidelines to bear in mind are also included. The overview will give you a better idea of the range of possible partners that you might like to bear in mind, including a few thoughts and suggestions about each and referring you to the relevant section of the manual. Immediately following the overview, a chart of all the groups included in the manual is intended to give suggestions at a glance on who might help you (and whom you might help) in a range of circumstances.

In the main body of the manual you will find advice relating to a wide range of local stakeholders, community groups, contact points with the general public and businesses. For each specific group included you will find suggestions on:

- possible forms of cooperation and partnership;
- advice on how to locate and contact them; and
- tips for how and when to approach them.

In the appendices you will find an array of sample emails, letters and other materials to assist you when initiating contact with your prospective partners.

The PDF version of this and the other Community Dialogue Manuals can be downloaded from www.dialoguesociety.org/publications; you can copy and paste materials from the appendices to adapt for your own use.

This fairly long manual is not intended to be read from cover to cover. It is intended to serve more as a guide. Reading the overview will give you ideas of possibilities for partnerships. You will then find advice for locating and contacting each type of possible partner in the relevant section of the manual. And perhaps on another occasion you will turn to it again for advice on different potential partners.

Aims and Objectives of This Manual

1. To provide new ideas for partnership and collaboration
2. To provide tips, advice and know-how for identifying and contacting potential partners
3. To encourage the interaction of a range of different cultural, religious, social and professional groups
4. To encourage the sharing of knowledge, expertise and contacts
5. To facilitate the mutual support of people working on worthwhile local projects
6. To facilitate the sharing of venues and materials
7. To help organisations to find financial support
8. To help organisations find sources of free or affordable training
9. To help organisations to build up diverse networks of contacts who will be able to provide help in a range of situations, and whom they may be able to assist in turn
10. To facilitate the development of partnerships for joint planning and organisation of events

Who is This Manual For?

- Community groups, charities and religious groups engaging in intercultural dialogue
- Community groups, charities and religious groups engaged in different projects in their local communities
- Stakeholders
- Small businesses

Working in Partnership: Benefits and Principles

This section is specifically concerned with carrying out projects in collaboration with another organisation(s).

Working in partnership has a range of benefits for small organisations:

- It expands your range of expertise by bringing in the skills of members of another group.
- It expands your range of guests, as you can invite all your partners' contacts to your event(s).
- It can bring you new insight into the perspectives and concerns of a different cultural, social or religious group.
- It can increase trust and interest in your organisation; some sectors of the community who are unfamiliar with your work may already know and trust your partner organisation, and be more inclined to get involved with your projects because of the connection.
- It allows different groups to share resources and facilities. This may be a crucial advantage in difficult economic times.
- It allows you to support the work of another worthwhile organisation.
- It can establish a lasting, mutually beneficial relationship where each partner can sometimes benefit from the support, expertise, contacts, resources and facilities of the other.
- It opens different communities up to one another.
- If you are aiming to bring different cultural, religious and social groups together, for example through one of the dialogue projects outlined in other manuals in this series, working in partnership unites your ends and your means. Your goal of promoting interaction and friendship between different groups is served even at the planning stages of your event as your group and another work together on the project and get to know each other.

Tips for Working in Partnership

- Attending events run by other organisations with objectives linked to your own will give opportunities to meet possible partners.
- It is a good idea to invite prospective partners to an informal, social meeting, perhaps over lunch or tea. If they are interested in what you do and in working with you on the project you propose you can then arrange another meeting.
- Choose your prospective partners carefully. The most successful partnerships are those that serve the objectives of both/all partner organisations.

- When you are looking for an organisation with which to form an ongoing relationship, look for one whose aims or vision overlap with your own in some areas.
- When choosing a partner to collaborate on a particular project, look at the stated aims of organisations on their website to see whether your project contributes to their goals as well as your own.
- Do not be too ambitious when working with another organisation for the first time. Try a simple, “easy win” project together first, building trust and confidence before you try to do something bigger.
- When contacting an organisation to propose a meeting or collaboration on a particular project, emphasise the objectives that you share and show how collaboration makes sense for you both.
- Make sure that your partners have the opportunity to be involved at every level. If possible, try to get them involved in planning from the early stages, so that they are really part of the team.
- Make sure that your partners feel valued and recognised; be sure to include their names and details on any materials for a jointly organised event, and ensure that they are visible and acknowledged on the day.
- Keep mutually beneficial relationships alive after the initial meeting or event by being ready to help your partner organisation out where you can, for example by advertising their events among your contacts, lending them a venue or putting them in touch with a helpful contact.

Networking

Networking at events run by other organisations is very important when you are trying to connect with local partners, because:

- People are much more likely to respond to invitations and requests if they have met and talked with you previously. This includes busy MPs, councillors etc who may be very difficult to get hold of.
- At relevant events you will meet people from interesting organisations that you didn't know about and whom you can invite to your future events as guests or speakers.
- You will meet individuals who may later attend your events or help you with something.
- Attending other organisations' events is part of being an active member of your community.
- People from other organisations are more likely to support your work if you show support for theirs.

Finding Suitable Networking Events

- Look out for events in local papers/magazines.
- Use your local support and development organisation (see page 35 below) to keep in touch with what is going on locally. They may have a members' mailing list for local events.
(E.g. <http://www.vai.org.uk/join-us/benefits-of-membership/>)
- Use any available “neighbourhood media”,¹ such as neighbourhood facebook pages (e.g. <http://www.facebook.com/bracknellforestcouncil>) or neighbourhood social media websites (e.g. <http://www.harringayonline.com/>). These kinds of sites may help keep you informed of local events as well as advertising your own. Try typing the name of your neighbourhood into a search engine such as Google, or searching Facebook for it to see if there is anything for your area.
- Use social media to keep in touch with local stakeholders, organisations and individuals and with their activities. Facebook (www.facebook.com), Twitter (<http://twitter.com/>) and LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) can be useful resources. You may be able to find out which events a particular stakeholder is attending and meet him/her there.

Tips for Networking

This is by no means an exhaustive list.² Here are just some general pointers to get you started:

- Arrive early. It will help calm your nerves. If you are late or only just in time you will be less relaxed. It may also be more difficult to find people to talk to as most will already be engaged in conversations.
- Take business cards or equivalent so that you can give out your contact details quickly and easily.
- Put your own business cards in one pocket and those given to you by others in another. This will avoid confusion and mistakes and make you less inclined to fiddle.
- Ask others for their contact details; if you have these you don't have to rely on them remembering to contact you.
- Take the initiative to be friendly and start conversations. People will usually be glad to chat to someone who makes an effort.

¹ 'Internet and mobile services that connect people with the neighbourhoods they live and work in.' The Young Foundation, http://www.youngfoundation.org/files/images/onversation_-_A_guide_to_neighbourhood_media.pdf

² There are a number of books that provide detailed information and techniques on successful networking. One we have found helpful is *The Networking Survival Guide* by Diane Darling, McGraw-Hill, 2002.

- Wear something appropriate but a little distinctive; it will be easier for people to recognise you during the event and they will be more likely to remember you afterwards.
- Wear a clear name badge with large writing. Even if badges are given out at the event the writing may be small and difficult to read from a distance. It is worth bringing your own.
- It is not how many people you meet that counts, it is whether you meet the people you want to meet. Make sure you identify and focus on people most relevant to your work.
- Don't try to explain everything about your organisation all at once. You only need to give enough information to get a new contact interested and secure a second meeting with him/her.
- If you want to meet the speaker at an event try to do this before their presentation. Many people will be trying to speak to them afterwards and it will be crowded and difficult.
- Try to say something memorable. People are less likely to forget who you are if, for example, you compliment them on something they are wearing.
- Use a firm handshake.
- Smile.
- Don't go to the event on an empty stomach; if you are not too hungry it will be easier to focus on meeting people rather than on refreshments.
- Be your natural self.
- Act confident. If you act as if you are confident you will feel confident.
- Look up the personal interests of key people you want to meet to help you engage with them.
- Be a 'key person' for the person you're meeting: try to help them in some way, by offering contacts or opportunities. You may want to follow up on the initial meeting by emailing them to pass on helpful contacts or relevant information or to suggest opportunities.

Manual Overview

Chart of Possible Partners and Circumstances In Which you Might Like to Contact Them 17

The main body of the manual provides advice on when you might like to approach each of the specific groups listed below. For clarity they are divided into different categories: stakeholders; community groups; general public (contact points) and local businesses.

Local Stakeholders

MPs..... 20

It is very valuable to get to know your MP, who represents his/her constituency, including your group, in Parliament. You could invite your MP to events and celebrations, perhaps as a special guest, and perhaps ask him/her to speak at a seminar.

MEPs..... 22

Getting to know local MEPs will give them the benefit of your group's perspective in their work at the European level.

London Assembly Members..... 23

London Assembly Members monitor the decisions and actions of the Mayor of London. If you are London-based, engage with the Member assigned to your area to help him/her better represent the Londoners within your group.

The Mayor 24

A first choice VIP guest for local events.

Councillors 25

These can bring your organisation's perspective to the local council. Invite them to events and celebrations, or ask them to speak on local issues at seminars or other discussion forums.

The Council..... 27

Local councils provide a range of services that may be helpful to your organisation.

NHS Institutions and Health Professionals 29

These may be able to provide valuable training for your organisation, a partner organisation or sectors of the community with which you have links. They deal with all sectors of the local community and can bring an interesting perspective to discussion forums.

Schools and Teachers..... 30

These are, of course, key partners for organising projects for children and young people. Teachers may be interesting participants or speakers at discussion forums.

Universities and Academics..... 31

These may be very valuable partners. You may like to invite academics to talk at seminars about research related to your interests and goals. They may also be able to host discussion forums at the university, bringing your work into the academic sphere and giving your| discussions a higher profile.

Police..... 32

Collaboration with the local police can have great mutual benefits, reducing any feelings of intimidation and prejudice and building trust.

Local Community Groups

Faith Groups, Religious Leaders and Faith Forums 34

Particularly if your organisation has its roots in faith, these groups and their local leaders can be key partners and supporters.

Local Support and Development Organisations..... 35

These provide a range of invaluable resources, from free or affordable training to networking and funding opportunities.

Supplementary Schools..... 37

You may be in a position to help a small supplementary school in your area by putting them in touch with useful contacts or giving advice on matters in which you have more experience. Staff and volunteers may like to attend your events, and you may be able to work in partnership on certain projects.

“Friends of” Groups..... 38

Your area may have a group that raises funds for the local primary school, church, scout group or other community resource or organisation. Why not help out the “friends of Hazelgrove Primary” or “friends of Elmwood Community Centre” by organising a fundraising event, or collecting for them at other events? A good way of serving the local community.

Tenants and Residents Organisations..... 38

These may offer advice on issues of importance to the local community, and provide participants or even partners for relevant events.

Older People’s Groups 39

You may like to invite a local group to events or celebrations, or visit with festive food on the day of *Ashurah*,³ during Ramadan, or before Christmas.

Women’s Groups 40

Your local area may have women’s groups providing support and social activities for local women and/or engaging in voluntary projects and campaigns. Perhaps you could contribute to a project run by such a group, invite them to your own events or run an event in partnership.

Cultural Community Groups/Centres 41

These are key contacts for involving particular cultural communities in your projects, and you may be able to share resources or form partnerships for running events.

Local Charities and Voluntary Organisations..... 42

Where your objectives overlap you may be able to collaborate on events and projects.

³ The day of *Ashurah* is a day of historical importance for Muslims for a number of reasons. On this day Anatolian Muslims make Noah’s Pudding to commemorate Prophet Noah and distribute it to local neighbours. For more detailed information on *Ashurah* and Noah’s Pudding, please refer to the ‘Noah’s Pudding Community Dialogue Manual.’

Local Campaign/Issue-Focused Groups 43

Invite such groups to attend events relevant to their goals. On goals that you share you may like to contribute to their campaigns or work in partnership.

Sports Groups 44

You may like to ask local sportsmen and women to consider raising money through sponsored runs, bike rides, canoe marathons etc.

Music/Art Groups 45

These may be willing to work with you to provide music or decoration for community events.

General Public - Local Contact Points**Shops..... 46**

An important advertising point for reaching the general public.

Post Offices 46

Somewhere that everybody sometimes goes, so a good place to place posters and fliers for events.

Libraries..... 46

A good place to advertise events, as well as a potential venue for seminars.

Health Centres 47

Again, these are a contact point with the general public.

Community Centres and Town/Village Halls..... 47

As well as offering a cheaper venue option than private spaces, these are a good place to place posters and fliers to advertise events.

Local Businesses..... 49

These may be interested in sponsoring events. You may like to invite local businessmen to events or to meet you over tea or lunch and hear about your work.

Appendices:..... 52

Sample materials and extra resources (as listed in “Contents”)

Chart of Possible Partners and Circumstances In Which You Might Like to Contact Them

Category	Group	Whom to approach when you are:							
		Looking for partners/ contributors/ venues	Offering help	Goodwill visiting	Asking for training/ advice	Inviting people to an event	Asking for help to publicise an event	Looking for speakers	Seeking financial support
Stakeholders	MPs			•		•		•	
	MEPs			•		•		•	
	London Assembly Members			•		•		•	
	The Mayor			•		•		•	
	Councillors			•		•		•	
	The Council	•			•	•			•
	NHS/Health professionals				•	•		•	
	Schools/ teachers	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	Universities/ academics	•		•	•	•	•	•	
	Police	•	•	•	•	•		•	
Community groups	Faith groups, religious leaders, faith forums	•		•	•	•	•	•	
	Local support and development organisations	•			•	•	•	•	
	Supplementary Schools	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	"Friends of" groups		•	•		•	•		
	Tenants and residents associations	•	•	•	•	•	•		

Chart of Possible Partners and Circumstances In Which You Might Like to Contact Them

Category	Group	Whom to approach when you are:							
		Looking for part-ners/ contributors/ venues	Offering help	Goodwill visiting	Asking for training/ advice	Inviting people to an event	Asking for help to publicise an event	Looking for speakers	Seeking financial support
	Older people's groups		•	•		•	•		
	Women's groups	•	•	•		•	•		
	Cultural community groups/ centres	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	Local charities/ voluntary organisations	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	Local Campaign /issue-focused groups	•	•	•		•	•	•	
	Sports groups	•				•			
	Music/arts groups	•				•			
General public contact points	Shops						•		•
	Post Offices						•		
	Libraries						•		
	Community centres/ Town/Village halls	•					•		
Local businesses						•	•		•



COMMUNITY
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S E R I E S

Making Contact With Your Local Partners

02

Advice on Making Contact with Local Stakeholders

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership with MPs, MEPs, London Assembly Members, Mayors and Local Councillors (these have been compiled because of the significant overlap):

- Invite him/her to visit you for lunch or other refreshments, or arrange to visit him/her to introduce your group and your work. This is a good way to encourage his/her general interest in and support for what you are doing. (Appendix 1 gives a sample contact email.)
- Invite him/her to events and celebrations, perhaps as a special guest speaker (see Appendix 2 for a sample letter of invitation).
- Invite him/her to open a new office, or the new community centre or supplementary school building of a partner organisation.
- Invite him/her to open a fair or fete.
- Ask him/her to speak at a seminar.
- Ask for his/her support over difficulties faced by sectors of the local community with whom you have links.

MPs

Your local Member of Parliament (MP) represents the people of his/her constituency, including your group, in Parliament. He/she can be a valuable supporter of your work and a key guest for events.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

Please see section on page 20: Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership with MPs, MEPs, London Assembly Members, Mayors and Local Councillors.

How to Find and Contact Your MP⁴

To check **who your local MP** is you can use the online Find Your MP service at <http://findyourmp.parliament.uk/>

If you have any difficulties you can ring the House of Commons Information Office on 020 7219 4272.

You can find your MP's **email** address through the www.parliament.uk directory of MPs: <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>. Email is a good means of fast and clear communication. You could also email your MP via www.writetothem.com

When **writing** to your MP just add his/her name at the top of this address:

House of Commons,
London
SW1A 0AA.

⁴This information comes from the www.parliament.uk website.

You may find a direct **phone number** for your MP's office on his/her page in the directory at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>. Alternatively call the House of Commons switchboard on 020 7219 3000 and ask for him/her by name.

Your MP will probably have a **local constituency office** in the area that they represent. You can find **addresses and contact numbers** in local libraries and town halls, by calling the House of Commons Information Office (020 7219 4272) or through the MP's personal website. You should be able to find his/her personal website by typing his/her name into an internet search engine like Google (www.google.co.uk).

MP's generally hold "**surgeries**" to allow their constituents⁵ to meet them and ask for support or advice. Many hold these once a week. The local press and possibly the local library should give information on your local MP's surgeries. The MP's personal website will also have this information.

A visit to an MP's surgery could be a good opportunity to make contact and briefly introduce your work, perhaps providing printed information or issuing an invitation to an event.

You can find and follow local MPs on Twitter through <http://tweetminster.co.uk/mps> - a good way of keeping in touch with them and with what they are doing. You can also search for them on Facebook (www.facebook.com) and on the professional networking site LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com).

Hints and Tips

- If you are not sure who your MP is it is worth making absolutely sure. MPs have a special responsibility to their own constituents so your own MP is the one who may be able to get involved with your work.
- When talking to or writing to your MP you use the same title as if he/she was not an MP- "Mr", "Ms", "Dr", "Lord", etc. (The same applies for MEPs and London Assembly Members.)
- If you are inviting your MP to attend an event, give plenty of notice; MP's diaries fill up very fast. Give at least two months' notice if you can.
- When you email your MP with an invitation it is worth attaching a copy in letter/PDF format in addition to the text provided within the email. They will probably have assistants who will print the invitation for them to read, so an attached invitation in letter format will make things easier for the assistant and look better (see Appendix 2).
- Send invitations by post where you can for a personal touch, but be ready to follow these up by phone or email.
- When contacting an MP for help with a problem in the local community: www.parliament.co.uk gives guidance on which issues in the local community should be discussed with your MP, and which you should discuss with someone else, such as the local council or Citizens Advice Bureau. Visit <http://www.parliament.uk/get-involved/contact-your-mp/when1/> for this information.

⁵ "Constituents" are people living in the area represented by the MP- the people that he/she represents.

MEPs

Members of European Parliament (MEPs) represent regions of the UK in Europe. Whereas MPs represent a particular local area, as small as Islington, or Leeds North East, the system is a bit different for MEPs. The website for the UK office of the European Parliament (<http://www.europarl.org.uk/section/your-meps/your-meps>) explains:

“72 UK MEPs were elected in the European Parliament elections on 4 June 2009. The UK is divided into twelve electoral regions made up of the nations and regions of the UK. Each region has between three and ten MEPs and each MEP in a region represents each person living there:

Eastern - 7, East Midlands - 5, London - 8, North East - 3, North West - 8, South East - 10, South West - 6, West Midlands - 6, Yorkshire and Humber - 6, Wales - 4, Scotland - 6, Northern Ireland - 3.

For example, if you live in Cambridge, all seven Eastern region MEPs represent you and you can contact any or all of them. If you are not sure, please telephone us on 020 7227 4300.”

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

Please see section on page 20: Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership with MPs, MEPs, London Assembly Members, Mayors and Local Councillors.

How to Find and Contact Your MEPs

To check **who your regional MEPs are** you can use the online Find an MEP service at <http://www.europarl.org.uk/section/your-meps/your-meps>. If you just pick your region in the “Electoral Region or Nation” section, leaving the rest blank, all the MEPs who represent you will be displayed, with **contact details**.

You can also call the UK Office of the European Parliament on 020 7227 4300 to enquire about your MEPs.

Try finding and following MEPs on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/>) - a good way of keeping in touch with them and with what they are doing. You can also search for them on Facebook (www.facebook.com) and on the professional networking site LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com).

Hints and Tips

- If you are inviting your MEP to attend an event, give plenty of notice; MEP's diaries fill up very fast. Give at least two months' notice if you can.
- When you email your MEP with an invitation it is worth attaching a copy in letter/PDF format in addition to the text provided within the email. They will probably have assistants who will print the invitation for them to read, so an attached invitation in letter format will make things easier for the assistant and look better (see Appendix 2).

- Send invitations by post where you can for a personal touch, but be ready to follow these up by phone or email.
- When emailing your MEP give as much notice as possible as their diaries are booked up several months in advance. MEPs also spend a lot of time in Brussels so they may not be very flexible with dates. To ensure the attendance of your requested MEP you may want to ask them when they will be in the UK and available and set the date of your event accordingly.

London Assembly Members

The www.london.gov.uk website explains the London Assembly as follows:

“The London Assembly is a watchdog for London. Its 25 Members hold the Mayor to account by examining his decisions and actions, in order to make sure he delivers on his promises to Londoners.”⁶

There are twenty-five members; eleven cover London in as a whole and fourteen are responsible for particular regions of London (such as “Barnet and Camden,” or “Northeast (Hackney, Islington and Waltham Forest)”).

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

Please see section on page 20: Possibilities for cooperation and partnership with MPs, MEPs, London Assembly Members, Mayors and Local Councillors.

How to Find and Contact Your Assembly Member

To find the London Assembly Member for your region of London look at the list at <http://www.london.gov.uk/who-runs-london/the-london-assembly/members>.

If you click on your Assembly Member's name on this list the link will take you to his/her page. **Contact details** will be given here.

Try finding and following Assembly Members on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/>) - a good way of keeping in touch with them and with what they are doing. You can also search for him/her on Facebook (www.facebook.com) and on the professional networking site LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com).

Hints and Tips

- If you are inviting your Assembly Member to attend an event try to give at least one-two months' notice.
- When you email your Assembly Member with an invitation it is worth attaching a copy in letter/PDF format in addition to the text provided within the email. They will probably have assistants who will print the invitation for them to read, so an attached invitation in letter format will make things easier for the assistant and look better (see Appendix 2).

⁶ <http://www.london.gov.uk/who-runs-london/the-london-assembly/about-london-assembly>

- Send invitations by post where you can for a personal touch, but be ready to follow these up by phone or email.
- Each Assembly Member (AM) has a page on the www.london.gov.uk website which tells you what committees they are part of and gives a brief biography; this should provide an idea of their interests and expertise.

The Mayor

The Mayor is the civic head of your town, city or borough. A key role for the Mayor is to act as ambassador for the city/town/borough as well as to speak and act for all of the diverse communities represented within it. The Mayor also takes the lead in highlighting causes and helping members of the community receive the recognition they deserve. His/her involvement with your projects can be a valuable support for your work and raise the profile of what you are doing among local people.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

Please see section on page 20: Possibilities for cooperation and partnership with MPs, MEPs, London Assembly Members, Mayors and Local Councillors.

How to Find and Contact the Mayor

If you are not sure who the Mayor of your city, town or borough is, visit the website of the City, Town or Borough Council (which you should be able to find by typing, e.g. “Islington Council” into a search engine such as Google). There will probably be a section on the Mayor giving contact details for his/her assistant. In some cases he/she will be included in a list of councillors and contact details given here (as on the Islington Council website: <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Council/political/Councillors/listcouncillorname.asp>).

In some cases the Council website will include an online form that you should use when inviting the Mayor to an event. For example: <http://www.merton.gov.uk/council/mayor/invitethemayor.htm>

Try finding and following the Mayor on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/>) - a good way of keeping in touch with him/her and with what he/she is doing. You can also search for him/her on Facebook (www.facebook.com) and on the professional networking site LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com).

Hints and Tips

- If you are inviting the Mayor to attend an event try to give at least 1-2 months’ notice.
- When you email the Mayor with an invitation it is worth attaching a copy in letter/PDF format in addition to the text provided within the email. He/she will probably have assistants who will print the invitation for him/her to read, so an attached invitation in letter format will make things easier for the assistant and look better (see Appendix 2).

- Send invitations by post where you can for a personal touch, but be ready to follow these up by phone or email.
- Note that even if you do not use an online Mayoral Invitation form to invite the Mayor you may need to fill in one of these later to provide all necessary practical details. Make sure that you do this promptly; in some cases failure to do so will mean that the Mayor is not able to attend (<https://forms.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/AF3/an/default.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=iXPGB7QJLX4>).
- Make sure you use the correct mode of address in your chosen form of correspondence when contacting the Mayor. (See Appendix 11 for a guide for addressing the Mayor in letters, introductions and conversation.)
- Because the Mayor is the civic head of your town, city or borough, there are some customary ways of showing him/her respect. For example, on formal occasions, people generally stand when the Mayor enters and when he/she leaves. There are often customs about where the Mayor should be seated at a meal or public meeting, so it is worth checking these with your Council's website, or by ringing or emailing the Mayor's office (there will be contact details on the Council's website). Camden Borough Council has some "Helpful hints" on protocol which you can find through <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/council-and-democracy/who-represents-you/the-mayor-of-camden/how-to-address-the-mayor.en;jsessionid=EEA48E0E57BC009279A92F5FBCCE3D67>

Councillors

Councillors are your elected representatives for local government. They can bring your organisation's perspective to the local council and provide valuable support and recognition for your work. Invite them to events and celebrations, or ask them to speak on local issues at seminars or other discussion forums.

The borough, city or county is divided into smaller areas called "wards" or "electoral divisions." For example, the London borough of Islington is divided into sixteen wards. There will be 1-3 councillors for your particular "ward" or "electoral division" (usually three in cities). On an occasion particularly linked to your immediate local area it may be especially appropriate to invite one of the councillors for your ward. But if you do some work beyond the ward you are in it will often be worth inviting other councillors from the city, borough or county.

The Council is led by an Executive Committee or Cabinet. This will be formed of up to ten councillors, and each will have responsibility for a different broad area, such as Finance, or Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities. You may wish to look at the roles of the members of the Executive Committee or Cabinet and invite the member responsible for a relevant area.

Every council has a range of committees, led by councillors, which examine and take decisions on particular local issues or sometimes on particular parts of the borough. When considering inviting a councillor to an event, particularly as a speaker, it is worth looking at membership of committees to see who works on issues of particular concern to your organisation. For example, if your focus is on education and you are looking for a councillor to invite from Enfield you might want to look at who is on the Children's Services Scrutiny panel and the Young Peoples' Life Opportunities Scrutiny Commission (<http://governance.enfield.gov.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>).

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

Please see section on page 20: Possibilities for cooperation and partnership with MPs, MEPs, London Assembly Members, Mayors and Local Councillors.

How to Find and Contact Councillors

To find out who your City, Town, Borough or County councillors are, or to find the councillors for your particular ward, visit the website of the City, Town, Borough or County Council (which you should be able to find by typing, e.g. "Islington Council" into a search engine such as Google). There will be a list of councillors giving their wards. There may be a section where you can choose your ward and the councillors for that ward are displayed (e.g. http://www.islington.gov.uk/Council/councilwho/your_councillors_open.asp).

Contact details for each councillor should be given on the website (either in the list of councillors or on the particular councillor's own page).

If you want to find details, including contact details, for a member of the Cabinet or Executive Committee, you may find a list of members with links to their details in the "Councillors" section of the website, which will itself be generally part of a "Council and Democracy" section or similar. If you have difficulty finding such a list, try entering "Cabinet" and "Executive Committee" into the website's "Search" box.

There may be a "Committees" section in the "Council and Democracy" part of the website. If there is not, searching for "Committees" will help you to find relevant committees and contacts. As well as identifying councillors working on each committee, the relevant sections may give helpful contacts for a committee assistant or support officer.

If you have difficulty finding the relevant councillor or committee, ring for advice on the general contact number given in the "Contact Us" section of the website.

You may want to visit the councillors, or one of the councillors, for your own ward at a local "surgery," which many councillors hold once a month to allow people to meet them and ask for support or advice. This could be an opportunity to make contact and briefly introduce your work, perhaps providing printed information or issuing an invitation. Details of surgeries should be available on the councillors section of the Council website.

You can find and follow local councillors on Twitter through <http://www.tweethall.com/> - a good way of keeping in touch with them and with what they are doing. You can also search for them on Facebook (www.facebook.com) and on the professional networking site LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com).

Hints and Tips

- If you are inviting a councillor to attend an event try to give at least one month's notice.
- Unless a member of the Executive Committee, councillors volunteer their time to represent the interests of their community members and therefore will not have an assistant. Most will also be in some form of full or part-time employment. Executive Committee members are full-time, paid councillors and will usually have assistants to help manage their workload. When you email an Executive Committee member with an invitation it is worth attaching a copy in letter format for his/her assistant to print out (see Appendix 2).
- Send invitations by post where you can for a personal touch, but be ready to follow these up by phone or email.
- When writing to a councillor put the following on the envelope:
- Councillor Name Surname, or for a woman [Councillor Title (Mrs/Miss/Ms) Name Surname].
- Begin the letter with "Dear Councillor [Surname]."
- In conversation call him/her "Councillor [Surname]," unless he/she introduces him/herself by his/her first name, or until he/she asks you to call him/her by his/her first name.

The Council

The local Council may be able to help you find venues for events and access helpful training and advice. Most councils will also have a small budget to support community programmes and initiatives delivered by voluntary or third sector organisations. You may be eligible to receive awards or funding for some of your projects provided you meet the Council's funding criteria.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

- The Council can be a contact point for finding suitable venues such as community centres to host your events.
- Most councils have budgets set aside to deliver certain community projects. Local councils are always seeking credible/reputable partners to deliver some of those services. If your project aims and objectives overlap with those of the Council's then it is possible to receive funding for the relevant project(s). It is also a contact point with a range of social services and health professionals

who may be able to provide helpful advice or training for people in the community whom you know or who come to your events.

- Council employees such as social workers may be very interesting speakers at seminars and other discussions on local issues. Invite them to community events too; they are an important part of the local community.

How to Contact the Council

Find the website of your local Council through a search engine such as Google.

There will be a “Contact Us” section giving details of office opening hours (in some cases) and providing contact details. On finding contact details for committees working on particular issues, please see “Councillors” section above.

There will be contact numbers for people working in various council departments and services, from children’s social care to libraries, on the relevant sections of the website or in online directories. Directories may also include contacts for a wide range of relevant local private/voluntary services. Islington Council, for example, has a range of directories for different kinds of services: see <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Directories/>

You should find listings of community centres with contact details for these in a local services directory (e.g. <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Directories/listsectionpagethreecol.asp?dir=LTCS&title=Directory of Local Services>), or by typing “community centre” into the website’s search box.

Hints and Tips

- Have a browse on the Council website and see what services are offered, or what services you find in the directory. You may find possible partners that you had never thought of.
- Social workers, who are employed by the Council and are involved with local social challenges every day, are well worth making contact with. The connection may have real mutual benefits. You may be able to help them provide support to parts of the community that you have strong links with, and they may be able to contribute to discussion events and provide advice and training.
- Remember that you may be able to help another organisation with which you have links, perhaps a cultural community group or supplementary education organisation, by putting them in touch with council contacts such as social workers or community centre staff.

NHS Institutions and Health Professionals

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

- Health professionals may be able to provide advice or presentations on using the health services and on important health issues for people in the local community with whom you have contact.
- Health professionals, who in most cases spend their working lives looking after people from all sectors of the community, can be interesting speakers at seminars and other discussions related to health and wellbeing. Invite them to community events too; they are an important part of the local community.

How to Contact Local NHS Institutions and Health Professionals

The Council website's directories may include a range of healthcare institutions, with contact details. The NHS online directory provides information and contact details for a range of health services and institutions, including GPs' surgeries/practices/health centres and hospitals. <http://www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx>.

The NHS website for your borough, city or county will also have a services section giving information and contact details on everything from local hospitals to nutrition and dietetics services.

When contacting a hospital concerning possible training, ring or email a contact at the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if there is one (for example see <http://www.whittington.nhs.uk/default.asp?c=1341>). There will not necessarily be a PALS at your nearest hospital but there will be one within in your borough, city or county. (See Appendix 3 for a sample letter to practice manager of local health centre enquiring about training.)

Hints and Tips

- You may have to be quite persistent in finding out about training and advice, because work in the health service can be very pressurised.
- Your local GPs' surgery/practice/health centre is probably the most promising source of training and community advice.
- Some hospitals will be able to offer training but many will not have the resources. Contact the PALS or Communications staff to find out if the hospital can offer anything. It is possible that they will be able to invite a group to an information meeting or open day if no one is available to come out to you.
- Note also that the British Red Cross and St John's Ambulance offer training in first aid, health and safety etc. They can also provide qualified first aiders for events. Find your local branch via www.redcross.org.uk and www.sja.org.uk respectively.

Schools and Teachers

These are, of course, key partners for organising projects for children and young people. You may be able to help each other in a variety of ways.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

- If you have staff, volunteers or contacts in a community that speaks another language, you may be able to assist the school in their communication with parents who speak that language as their first language, for instance by translating an important letter or offering volunteers to help with parents' evenings.
- If you think there are ways that your organisation or its contacts could help the school, or if you are looking for their support in one of your projects, arrange to drop in after school and talk to a teacher. If you know a parent at the school it may make sense for you to go with him/her.
- You may also want to approach teachers about contributing to a lesson by bringing a religious or cultural tradition to school. For example, you could bring traditional Noah's puddings to school around the time of the Muslim festival of *Ashurah*, and teach a class about its meaning in a Religious Studies lesson (see *Noah's Pudding* community dialogue manual). Teachers will often appreciate this kind of input, especially if some of your group have children at the school. Some schools, especially in particularly culturally diverse areas, have a "celebrate our differences" day or week, or something similar; this would be a perfect opportunity to contribute to a lesson. Teachers can make very interesting contributions to seminars and other discussions, and should be invited to community events; they are educating the local community's children and are a crucial part of the community.
- You may be able to contribute to a school assembly. Perhaps somebody from your organisation could talk about a particular cultural or religious festival around the time it falls.
- A local school may be able to provide a very helpful and economical venue for community events.

How to Contact Local Schools

The following website allows you to find information on and contact numbers for schools in your area: <http://schoolsfinder.direct.gov.uk/>

Council websites will often have lists or directories of local schools with contact details (sometimes giving more detailed information than the site above and including email addresses). Islington Council website, for example, lists local schools: <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Education/SchoolYears/secondary/secondarylist.asp>

The best way to contact a school is through colleagues or friends with children at the school who know teachers there. (See Appendix 4 for sample emails.)

Hints and Tips

- Note that schools are obliged to restrict outsiders' access to pupils for reasons of child protection. Don't be offended if you can't be left alone with children.
- If your work or projects are aimed at children or teenagers, it is possible that you will be required to provide the school with a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. The new governmental approach to child protection means that from 2012 you will be less likely to need a CRB check than you would have been previously. Whether a check is required will depend on how closely you will be working with children and for how long, whether or not a teacher will also be present and the policy of the school. You will need to ask the school about this. There are two types of CRB checks (Enhanced and Standard). Where a check is required, the type depends upon the nature of the position. Both require a fee for paid employees but are free of charge for volunteers. For more up to date information on CRB checks you can visit the following website: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/crb/>
- Note that encouraging citizenship and social cohesion is now a priority for British schools; if your organisation is itself engaged in promoting these goals, or if it is in a position to help the school achieve them its input will probably be welcomed.

Universities and Academics

Academics, are knowledgeable in their particular field of study, can be valuable partners, and are quite often interested in contributing to relevant voluntary organisations. You may like to invite academics to talk at seminars about research related to your interests and goals as well delivering workshops and training to your youth groups. They may also be able to host discussion forums at the university, bringing your work into the academic sphere and giving your discussions a higher profile.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

- Academics can be interesting speakers on areas related to their research and teaching.
- Invite them to community events; universities are part of the community.
- If an academic's work or research area is particularly relevant to your interests you may like to invite him/her to visit for lunch/tea to talk about possible collaboration or ask advice.
- Academics who are experts in really relevant fields may be good official advisers for your organisation; get to know them and think about asking them to take on this role.
- Ask academics you know to help publicise relevant events among their colleagues and students.

- Through an academic that you know you may be able to arrange to use a university venue for an event, especially if academics from the university are involved with it.

How to Contact Universities and Academics

The website of a local university will have sections on different academic departments (Law, Sociology, Religious Studies etc), with information on the academics belonging to each department. You should be able to find out about the interests and research of the academics there, and if you decide you want to get in touch there will usually be email addresses and numbers supplied. (See Appendix 5 for a sample email to arrange a meeting with an academic.)

Hints and Tips

- When considering asking an academic (or any other person) to speak at an event, it is always ideal to check whether the person is a good public speaker. Being knowledgeable is one thing; being able to communicate effectively in front of a large audience is another. To avoid disappointment you can try searching for clips of the person speaking on YouTube (www.youtube.com) or attend any public lectures that they may be delivering. (It is worth doing this with any prospective speakers, but academics are relatively likely to have been filmed speaking or to be giving public lectures.)
- Although academics may be very busy, especially during term time if they do a lot of teaching, their diaries do not usually fill up as fast as MPs' or councillors' diaries. So although it is best to give as much notice as possible when inviting them to events, it is still worth inviting them close to the event when you are looking for guests.
- Many academics will be pleased to contribute to local events and programmes without expecting any form of financial contribution. However, some academics may expect to be paid an honorarium for delivering a speech at one of your events. If your organisation is unable to pay such a fee, then it is worth being very clear at the outset when inviting them to speak, that it would be on a voluntary basis and not paid, to avoid embarrassment at a later stage. You may want to consider giving your speakers a small gift as a token of appreciation instead.

Police

A key part of policing in the UK is it is undertaken with the consent of the community. The police are keen to talk to the community as this dialogue helps the police understand the community and its needs but also helps inform the community about how and why the police operate in a particular way.

Inviting local police officers to your events, getting to know them and working in partnership with them can be very beneficial. Bringing the groups you work with into

contact with the police in positive ways can build their confidence in interacting with the police and build trust. It also increases the police's awareness of community events and issues affecting the community.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

- Invite local officers to your events, bringing them into contact with the people you work with at community celebrations or discussion events.
- Give officers an open invitation to speak to the people you work with at your community centre/office/place of worship when they feel it would be helpful to do so. It may be valuable for them to have this platform to share important information with your community.
- Invite officers to speak at discussion events and maybe cover areas that are police related such as preventing crime, how to help the police or stop and search.
- Attend local events arranged by the police to build good relationships and to better understand issues affecting the area where you live.

How to Contact Your Local Police

Every area of England and Wales will have a Neighbourhood Policing Team/Safer Neighbourhoods Team dedicated specifically to working in the local area. A key part of their role is to develop contact and dialogue with communities.

Please visit <http://local.direct.gov.uk/LDGRedirect/Policing.do?ref=neighbourhood> to find your local team and their contact details.

The Metropolitan Police website also has a helpful index for finding local Neighbourhood Policing Teams in London: <http://www.met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods/>

Use contact details provided and ask if you can be put in touch with a neighbourhood officer or, if appropriate, a faith relations officer (not every force will have these officers). (Appendix 1 gives a sample email to initiate contact and arrange an appointment to meet with your local police.)

All police forces have an internet site. Another way of finding your Neighbourhood Policing Team/Safer Neighbourhoods Team is by looking directly on the website of your local force. Find this by typing “police” and the name of your town, city, borough or county/area into a search engine such as Google.

Hints and Tips

- Remember that the police will be interested in collaboration that helps them to build good relations with different sectors of the local community; you need not be nervous of approaching them.

Advice on Making Contact with Community Groups

Faith Groups, Religious Leaders and Faith Forums

Particularly if your organisation has its roots in faith, these groups and their local leaders can be key partners and supporters.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- You can invite local faith groups to your events by contacting the religious leader and asking him/her to pass on the invitation, visiting a service or arranging to leave posters and fliers in the place of worship.
- Religious leaders may be interesting speakers for discussion events.
- Faith groups may be able to help you with venues for your events. For example, it may be possible to hold an event at the local church hall.
- Faith groups may be interested in working in partnership with you to organise events. For example, if you are organising a fast breaking dinner or a community engagement dinner you may want to ask the local priest or rabbi if members of his/her congregation may be interested in contributing to the planning, cooking or running of the event.
- You may want to get involved with the activities of a local multi-faith or interfaith forum. You may be able to help them with the forum's events, or at least attend them. This is a great way of meeting people from other faith groups whom you might then invite to events or ask to work with you on other projects.

How to Contact Local Faith Groups, Religious Leaders and Faith Forums

A good way of making contact with local faith groups is to introduce yourself to faith leaders at any local community events that you attend. If the local Church has a fete or a Christmas sale, go along and make contact.

Notice boards outside places of worship often display contact details for leaders along with service times. Use these to get in touch.

The “A Church Near You” website will help you find local Church of England churches and give contact details where these are available. (The majority of Christian churches in the UK are part of the Church of England. They are also called “Anglican” churches, and “Church of England” Christians are the same as “Anglicans.”) <http://www.achurchnearyou.com/>

Google Maps can help you find places of worship nearby. Try typing “Church near [Your Address]” into the search box, and then repeat with “synagogue” or “temple.”

The national interfaith network may help you find a local multi-faith/interfaith forum. It is an umbrella organisation, and its website has a “member bodies” section listing

all the local member organisations with links to websites and email. See: <http://www.interfaith.org.uk/members.htm>

As well as being an important contact in itself, a local multi-faith/interfaith forum may be able to put you in touch with its members - local faith groups. Some have directories of faith groups/places of worship on their websites. See, for example, Islington Faiths Forum's directory: <http://www.islingtonfaithsforum.org.uk/database.html>

(See Appendix 6 for a sample email to arrange a meeting.)

Hints and Tips

- Build a relationship of trust with a local religious leader by inviting him/her for lunch or tea and getting to know him/her.
- If you are inviting a local faith group or religious leader to an interfaith event, find out what (if anything) they have already done in terms of intercultural/interfaith dialogue. It is important to recognise the work that other groups have done and you may be able to learn from each other by comparing experiences.
- If your organisation has roots in faith, or if you do yourself, you will need to be clear about your objectives when engaging with a group of a different faith. People may be wary, thinking that you want to convert them, so make sure you explain that your aim is to engage with them respectfully, not to change/convert them.
- For advice on visiting other places of worship see Appendix 12: Advice for attending religious service. (Advice on other places of worship can be found in the *Celebrating Festivals* Community Dialogue Manual.)

Local Support and Development Organisations

It is well worth investigating your local support and development organisation. They exist to provide support to voluntary organisations and volunteers in a particular borough, district or city. They provide a range of invaluable resources, from free or affordable training to networking and funding opportunities.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

They may be able to provide:

- Networking opportunities.
- Funding advice, contacts and opportunities.
- Volunteering projects and vacancies.
- Advice and resources for managing volunteers.
- Free or affordable training on a range of issues relevant to the voluntary sector, such as project management, finding and taking on premises, fundraising, public speaking, managing volunteers, minute taking and responsibilities of trustees and governing body.

- Affordable office space and venue rental.
For example, see Voluntary Action Islington's website:
<http://www.vai.org.uk/>

How to Contact Your Local Support and Development Organisation

You can find your local support and development organisation through the NAVCA (National Association for Voluntary and Community Action) website: <http://www.navca.org.uk> This organisation is an umbrella body that describes itself as “the national voice of local support and development organisations in England. We champion and strengthen voluntary and community action by supporting our members in their work with over 160,000 local charities and community groups.”

The website has a directory of local support and development organisations: <http://www.navca.org.uk/liodir/>. You can browse the full list or search by your town, region, county or district.

Equivalent directories for support and development organisations for Scotland and Wales can be found at:

- Voluntary Action Scotland: http://www.voluntaryactionsotland.org.uk/third_sector_interfaces.html
- Wales: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/grants/voluntary/contact/?lang=en>

There are a number of other useful organisations which offer voluntary organisations support, advice, training opportunities, networking opportunities and directories of voluntary organisations:

- Directory of Social Change (DSC):
<http://www.dsc.org.uk/Home>
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO):
<http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/>
- Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO):
<http://www.scvo.org.uk/>
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA):
http://www.wcva.org.uk/main/dsp_home.cfm
- Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA):
<http://www.nicva.org/>
- Community NI:
<http://www.communityni.org/>

Hints and Tips

- It may be worth browsing the website regularly to find out about new training events and networking opportunities.
- Find out about membership, which in many cases is free, and can give you

access to various helpful services, such as free advice from experienced staff and access to email newsgroup to advertise your events and hear about others. For example see <http://www.vai.org.uk/join-us/benefits-of-membership/>. The website will probably give details of benefits of membership and of how to join. It will also provide contact numbers for you to call and make enquiries.

Supplementary Schools

You may be able to be of service to a local supplementary school, especially if people from your group and theirs share a language other than English.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

- You could make contact by inviting staff for lunch or tea.
- You may be able to help out by putting staff in touch with useful contacts or giving advice on matters in which you have more experience.
- You could contribute to relevant events and assemblies organised by the school.
- Invite staff and volunteers to attend your events.
- You may be able to work together on certain events, particularly events for young people.
- Consider inviting staff to speak at a discussion event; they may have interesting perspectives on education, community relations, integration etc.

How to Find and Contact Your Local Supplementary School

Enquire among local acquaintances. Friends with school age children may send them to a supplementary school, or may know of one through enquiries or through other parents.

The local Council website may be helpful for locating local supplementary schools and contact details for them. For example, Islington Council's website has a services directory; you can find supplementary schools by entering "supplementary schools" in the directory search box. See <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Directories/listsectionpagethreecol.aspx?dir=LTCS&title=Directory of Local Services>. Some Council websites have whole directories of supplementary schools. Ealing's directory can be found at: http://www.ealing.gov.uk/ealing3/export/sites/ealingweb/services/education/schools/supplementary/_docs/Suplmt_y_Schls_Dir_29_Apr_09.pdf

Local support and development organisations in some cases have similar directories. See, for example, the Community and Voluntary Sector Association Hammersmith and Fulham (CaVSA) directory at http://www.vusra.org.uk/directory_supplementary.shtml

(See Appendix 7 for a sample email.)

“Friends of” Groups

Your area may have a group that raises funds, or awareness, for the local primary school, church, scout group, park or other community resource or organisation. Why not help out the “Friends of Hazelgrove Primary” or “Friends of Elmwood Community Centre” by organising a fundraising event, or collecting for them at other events? This is a good way of serving the local community.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

- Attend a meeting to introduce yourself and get involved.
- Your group could contribute to the work of a “friends of” group by collecting donations for them at one of your own events, helping with one of their events, or organising a fundraising event for them.
- You will be able to invite contacts from the group to your events and ask them to pass invitations to their local contacts too.

How to Find and Contact Local “Friends of” Groups

Enquire among local acquaintances. Friends with children at a local school, for example, may know if the school has a “friends of” group, and medical professionals may know of a “friends of the hospital/hospice” group.

The local Council website may be helpful for locating local “friends of” groups and contact details for them. For example, Islington Council’s website has a services directory; you can find supplementary schools by entering “friends of” in the directory search box. See <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Directories/listsectionpagethreecol.aspx?dir=LTCS&title=Directory of Local Services>.

Local support and development organisations often have similar directories. For example, Voluntary Action Islington has a “Find a Local Organisation” section where you can search for “friends of” and find a range of groups: <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/>

Tenants and Residents Organisations

They may offer advice on issues of importance to the local community, and provide participants or even partners for relevant events.

Possibilities for Cooperation and Partnership

- Try attending a meeting to make contact and get to know some of the practical issues facing local tenants and residents; if appropriate it may be worth joining.
- Consider asking the Chair of the local organisation to speak at an event.
- You could ask him/her for advice on topics for panel discussions/seminars that would be of interest and importance to local people.
- Publicise your event amongst people at the meetings.

How to Find and Contact Local Tenants and Residents Organisations

The local Council website may be helpful for locating local tenants and residents organisations and contact details for them. For example, Islington Council's website has a services directory; try searching for "tenants" and for "residents": <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Directories/listsectionpagethreecol.aspx?dir=LTCS&title=Directory of Local Services>.

Local support and development organisations often have similar directories. For example, Voluntary Action Islington has a "Find a Local Organisation" section where you can search for "tenants" or "residents": <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/>

The Tenants and Residents Organisations of England website has a list of organisations in England (http://www.taroe.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=89&Itemid=105) and the Tenants Place organisation has a database of Scottish organisations (http://www.tenantsplace.co.uk/index.php?id=153&organisation_type=RTO&keywords=®ions=&postcode=&search.x=62&search.y=13)

(See Appendix 7 for a sample email.)

Older People's Groups

Making contact with a local older people's group – whether it is a support group, a social group or a campaign group - is a good way of involving the older generation with your work

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- Include members of a local older people's social group in invitations to discussion events or celebrations.
- You could offer to come and explain your work at one of their meetings.
- You could arrange to attend the meeting of a social or support group with festive food during the festival of Ashurah (see *Noah's Pudding* Community Dialogue Manual), during Ramadan or before Christmas or Hanukkah. This could be combined with giving an explanation of your work.
- If you work within a particular cultural community, try bringing older people from that community together with people from the older people's group. Isolation and loneliness are common problems for older people of all cultural groups. Try collaborating to tackle the problem through social events.

How to Contact a Local Older People's Group

Look out for notices in local papers or magazines, or on posters or notices at places of worship.

The local Council website may be helpful for locating local older people's groups and contact details for them. For example, Islington Council's website has a local services

directory with an “older people” section: <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Directories/listsectionpagethreecol.aspx?dir=LTC&title=Directory of Local Services>

Local support and development organisations often have similar directories. For example, Voluntary Action Islington has a “Find a Local Organisation” section where you can select “older people” from a selection of service user options, or search for “older people” as key words: <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/>

Hints and Tips

- When you make contact, make it clear who you are and what want to do/contribute.
- Fit the invitation/suggestion to your audience. It may be worth visiting a group with festive food as a first project. Having met members of the group at this event you will have a better idea of whether members might be able and willing to attend events elsewhere.

Women's Groups

Your local area may have women's groups providing support and social activities for local women and/or engaging in voluntary projects and campaigns. They may target women of a particular cultural group or all local women. Your local area may have a branch of the Women's Institute (WI), which is the largest voluntary organisation for women in the UK.

Perhaps you could contribute to a project run by a local women's group, invite them to your own events or run an event in partnership.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- You may like to make contact with a local women's group by arranging to attend a meeting, or by inviting the Chair, Coordinator or other representatives for lunch or tea.
- Offer to help with a charitable project.
- And/or ask for volunteers to work with you on one of your projects.
- Invite members to your events. You may like to attend a meeting to do this, or ask a contact within the group to help you with publicity.
- If you are a woman and a local women's group's activities are of interest to you, you could join and maintain the connection by going to meetings as a member.
- Women's Institutes often invite speakers to give talks at their meetings on a range of topics. You may like to offer to do this.

How to Find and Contact Local Women's Groups

Look out for notices in local papers or magazines, or on posters or notices at places of worship.

The local Council website may be helpful for locating local women's groups and contact details for them. For example, Islington Council's website has a local services directory with a "women" section: <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Directories/listsectionpagethreecol.aspx?dir=LTCS&title=Directory of Local Services>

Local support and development organisations often have similar directories. For example, Voluntary Action Islington has a "Find a Local Organisation" section where you can select "women" from a selection of service user options, or search for "women" as a key word: <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/>

The Women's Institute website has a "Find your WI" section: <http://www.thewi.org.uk/section.aspx?id=11>. You can contact a group via an email form or through phone numbers provided. Northern Ireland has its own website with a similar section: <http://www.wini.org.uk/?tabindex=9&tabid=1315>

The equivalent of the WI in Scotland is the Scottish Rural Women's Institute. The website has an interactive map for finding your local group: <http://www.swri.org.uk/institutes/map.html>

(See Appendix 7 for a sample email.)

Hints and Tips

- Women's groups are often involved in worthwhile projects that you might like to support, and members may in turn be interested in supporting your projects. Try to build a mutually supportive relationship. A very positive way to begin a relationship with this kind of group is to introduce yourself, enquire about what they are doing and ask if there is anything you can help with.

Cultural Community Groups

These are key contacts for involving particular cultural communities in your projects, and you may be able to share resources or form partnerships for running events.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- You may like to make contact with a local cultural community group by inviting them for lunch or tea/arranging to visit them. You will be able to get to know each other and each other's work and discuss possible collaboration.
- There may be projects of theirs that you can help with, whether by providing volunteers, advising on areas in which you have more experience, or sharing

contacts. You might also be able to help them with fundraising by helping with fundraising events or collecting for them at your events.

- Equally, you may be able to call on them to support your events or even to work in partnership on some events.
- Staff will be able to help you publicise events among the sector of the community with which they are in contact.
- They may be able to advise on the needs and concerns this sector of the community and on the kinds of events and discussions that might appeal to their contacts.
- They might also be interesting speakers for seminars on issues of importance to the cultural community which they serve.

How to Find and Contact a Local Cultural Community Centre

If you do not know of a local cultural community centre people you know might do: ask around. Look out for notices in local papers, shops etc.

The local Council website may be helpful for locating groups and contact details for them. For example, Islington Council's website has a local services directory where you can search for "community centre": <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Directories/listsectionpagethreecol.aspx?dir=LTCS&title=Directory of Local Services>

Local support and development organisations often have similar directories. For example, Voluntary Action Islington has a "Find a Local Organisation" section where you can search for "community centre" as key words: <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/> (See Appendix 7 for a sample email.)

Hints and Tips

- If a local community centre is able to advertise your events among its members and give you a good turnout from that sector of the community, make sure that you make a good effort with other publicity to get other sectors of the community along too. This is an ideal way to bring different sectors of the community together.

Local Charities and Voluntary Organisations

If you look at a directory on a local support and development organisation's website you will probably find a whole range of worthwhile organisations that you never knew existed. Where your objectives overlap you may be able to collaborate on events and projects.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- You may like to make contact with a local organisation by inviting them for lunch or tea/ arranging to visit them. You will be able to get to know each other and each other's work and discuss possible collaboration.

- There may be projects of theirs that you can help with, whether by providing volunteers, advising on areas in which you have more experience, or sharing contacts.
- You might be able to help them with fundraising by helping with fundraising events or collecting for them at your events.
- You may be able to work together on a joint project that furthers the aims of both groups. For example, if the organisation is focused on providing activities for young people in the area, and yours is concerned with intercultural dialogue, you might be able to organise an intercultural trip for local young people.
- The organisation may be able to publicise your events among their contacts.
- If they work with the local community they may be able to advise on the needs and concerns of the people they work with, and on the kinds of events and discussions that might appeal to them.
- They might also be interesting speakers for seminars, drawing on their professional experience.

How to Find and Contact a Local Charity/Voluntary Organisation

Local support and development organisations often have directories which are very useful for this. For example, Voluntary Action Islington has a “Find a Local Organisation” section where you can try typing in relevant key words and browse the results: <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/>

(See Appendix 6 for a sample email.)

Hints and Tips

- Becoming a member of the local support and development organisation can give you access to a network of charities and voluntary organisations and help you to keep in touch with what is going on in the area.

Local Campaign/Issue-Focused Groups

You may find a range of local groups focused on a particular campaign or issue, such as protecting the environment or tackling racism. You may like to invite these groups to attend events relevant to their goals. On goals that you share you may like to contribute to their campaigns or work in partnership.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- You may like to make contact with a local organisation by inviting them for lunch or tea/arranging to visit them. You will be able to get to know each other and each other's work and discuss possible collaboration.
- There may be projects of theirs that you can help with, whether by providing volunteers, advising on areas in which you have more experience, or sharing contacts.

- You might be able to help them with fundraising by helping with fundraising events or collecting for them at your events.
- The organisation may be able to publicise your events among their contacts.
- They might also be interesting speakers for seminars, explaining the issues that they campaign on.

How to Find and Contact a Local Campaign/Issue-Focused Group

Local support and development organisations often have directories which are very useful for this. For example, Voluntary Action Islington has a “Find a Local Organisation” section where you can try typing in “campaign” or other key words and browse the results: <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/>

(See Appendices 6 and 7 for sample emails.)

Hints and Tips

- Becoming a member of the local support and development organisation can give you access to a network of charities and voluntary organisations and help you to keep in touch with what is going on in the area.
- Make sure you are fully informed about the content of a campaign before you pledge your support to it.

Sports Groups

Why not get in touch with a local sports group to see if they would consider raising money for your organisation through sponsored runs, bike rides, canoe marathons etc?

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- Make contact with a local group, explain who you are and what you do and enquire about whether they may be able to help you with fundraising through any sponsored events.
- You might like to suggest a meeting over lunch or tea to discuss possibilities.
- Once you have made contact you can start inviting interested members of the group to your events.
- You may want to consider doing some team building for your own group, staff or members by taking part together in a local sports event. This would also be a good way of meeting with members of local sports groups.

How to Find and Contact a Local Sports Group

Enquire among friends.

Look in local papers/magazines.

Your local Council website may have details of local sports clubs. For example, Islington Council's website has a Leisure and Culture section which includes a “Find a Sports Club” page: <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Leisure/Sports/findsportsclub.asp>

You could also look for sports-based groups among organisations included on the website of your local support and development organisation. For example, see Voluntary Action Islington's "Find a Local Organisation" section. You can select "sports and leisure" in the Advanced Search "services offered" section, or search for "sport," "running" etc as key words: <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/>

Hints and Tips

- A running club might be a good one to try; many people run marathons or half marathons for charity and someone from a local club may be prepared to run for you.

Music/Art Groups

These may be willing to work with you to provide music, decoration and other artistic features for your community events.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- Make contact with a local group, explain who you are and what you do and enquire about whether they may be able to help you with music/artwork/decoration for your event(s)
- You might like to suggest a meeting over lunch or tea to discuss possibilities
- Once you have made contact you can start inviting interested members of the group to your events

How to Find and Contact a Local Music/Arts Group

Enquire among friends.

Look in local papers/magazines.

Your local Council website may have details of local sports clubs. For example, Islington Council's website has a Leisure and Culture section which includes a "Clubs and Societies" page: <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Leisure/HobbiesAndInterests/default.asp>

You could also look for music/art groups among organisations included on the website of your local support and development organisation. For example, see Voluntary Action Islington's "Find a Local Organisation" section. You can select "Arts and Music" in the Advanced Search "services offered" section, or search for "music," "painting" etc as key words: <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/>

Hints and Tips

- Make it clear what you need for the event; you don't want your volunteer musicians/artists to be confused about what they are supposed to be doing.

Advice on Making Contact with the General Public through Local Contact Points

Shops

Shops which a large number of local people visit quite regularly are an ideal place to advertise events. Newsagents and supermarkets may have a board or other space for local adverts. Local shop owners might also be prepared to give you some kind of financial support, such as sponsorship for a local event (see “Local Businesses” section below).

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- Ask local shops if they are able to display posters for you and if you can leave some fliers for a local event.

Hints and Tips

- Even if there is a public notice board in the shop you should ask before adding anything to it (unless there is a note saying otherwise). There may be a small charge for using it or the shop owner may want to check what goes on it.

Post Offices

Most people visit the Post Office from time to time, so it is an excellent place to advertise events. For advice on advertising in the local Post Office see “Shops” section above.

Libraries

Libraries are a good place to advertise events, as well as a potential venue for seminars.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- Ask staff at the local library if they are able to display posters for you and if you can leave some fliers for a local event
- It is also worth asking whether the library is able to host a discussion event

How to Contact the Local Library

If you are not sure where your local libraries are your local Council should have details on the website. For example, Islington Council’s website has a Leisure and Culture section which includes a “Libraries” page: <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Leisure/HobbiesAndInterests/default.asp>

Go in and make enquiries in person. Or if you would rather make tentative enquiries by email or telephone first there should be contact details on the Council website again.

Hints and Tips

- Even if there is a public notice board in the library you should ask before adding anything to it (unless there is a note saying otherwise). There may be a small charge for using it or the library may want to check what goes on it.
- The library may be able to lend you some space for a seminar, but probably not for any event involving much food or other possible mess. If you approach the library to ask about holding an event there, make it clear what kind of occasion it will be.

Health Centres

It may be worth putting a notice in your local health centre to advertise an event; the waiting room will be full of local people every day that might have a look at any notices for local events while they wait. If the health centre does not generally allow advertisements it may make an exception if you are holding a health-related discussion.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- Ask at the health centre whether they are able to display posters/fliers for a local event.

How to Contact Your Local Health Centre

- Go in and enquire in person.

Hints and Tips

- Be prepared to wait if the health centre is very busy; receptionists are often very busy and will want to prioritise patients.
- Even if there is a public notice board in the surgery waiting area you should ask before adding anything to it (unless there is a note saying otherwise). Staff may want to check what goes on it. It will be helpful if you have a brief, clear explanation ready.

Community Centres and Town/Village Halls

As well as offering a cheaper venue option than private spaces, these are a good place to place posters and fliers to advertise events.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- Staff at the local community centre will probably be glad to allow you to advertise with posters and fliers
- You may also be able to use the community centre as an event venue

How to Find and Contact Local Community Centres and Town/Village Halls

Contact details for people responsible for the running of a town or village hall may be found on a sign or notice board outside. Otherwise you could try enquiring via the town or parish council. A search engine such as Google may lead you to a town/parish council website. If there is no website, you may find contact details via a directory on the county council website. For example (Dorset): <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/parishcouncils>

The local Council website may be helpful for locating community centres if you do not know them anyway. For example, Islington Council's website has a local services directory where you can search for "community centre": <http://www.islington.gov.uk/Directories/listsectionpagethreecol.aspx?dir=LTCS&title=Directory of Local Services>

Local support and development organisations often have similar directories. For example, Voluntary Action Islington has a "Find a Local Organisation" section where you can search for "community centre" as key words: <https://remote.vai.org.uk/db/>. These websites should give you contact details (email and telephone). Alternatively, you could just drop in and make enquiries in person.

Hints and Tips

- As well as advertising specific events through these venues, why not ask if you can place some general leaflets or brochures about your work in the centre to raise awareness of your organisation?

Advice on Making Contact with Local Businesses

These may be willing to provide some kind of financial support. You may like to invite local businessmen to events or to meet you over tea or lunch and hear about your work.

Possibilities for Collaboration and Partnership

- Local businesses may be willing to provide some financial support for your work, by sponsoring a particular project, donating goods or services or giving a general donation
- Invite owners and staff to your events where they can see what you do
- You may also want to invite those who show some interest to visit for lunch or tea and hear about your work
- They may also be able to help you advertise your projects by displaying posters and fliers

How to Contact Local Businesses

If you are a customer of a local business and know the owner a little, it may be possible to introduce him/her to what you do when you visit as a customer. You could invite him/her to a forthcoming event or to a presentation of your work for local business people. (See Appendix 8 for a sample email.)

Larger businesses will have email addresses and contact details listed on the internet or their own website.

The 118118 directory allows you to search for a type of business in a particular area anywhere in the country: <http://www.118.com/>

Yell.com has the same function: <http://www.yell.com/>

Hints and Tips

- Kinds of businesses that you may like to approach: football stadiums (these are often actively interested in contributing to the local community); accountants' firms; solicitors' firms; estate agents; newsagents; (small) supermarkets; cafes and restaurants.
- If you are able to host local business people for a meeting over lunch or tea, prepare your presentation of your work with care. Try to present the nature of your work, its importance and your past achievements clearly. Potential funders need to understand what you are doing and why it is worth supporting, and to see that you believe in your work.

- Some large businesses such as football stadiums sometimes seek to put money back into the community through donations to local charities (see, for example, the Arsenal Small Grants Scheme: <http://www.newlon.org.uk/about-us/newlon-fusion/supporting-individuals/arsenal-small-grants-fund/>). Look out for such projects in the local press, on a local support and development organisation's website, on the local Council's website and on the websites of large local businesses.
- If you go to someone's shop to introduce your work, remember to take some form of identification demonstrating that you are from a local organisation.
- Larger businesses may be willing to sponsor events to promote their brand.
- Smaller businesses are more likely to provide goods at a reduced price.



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Appendices

You can copy materials from appendices via:

www.dialoguesociety.org/publications

03

Sample Email to Arrange a Meeting with Local Stake Holders (Police/Councillors etc)

Dear [Title Surname],

For the Mayor: Dear [Mr/Madam] Mayor,

For a councillor: Dear Cllr [Surname],

My name is [Name Surname] and I am writing to you on behalf of [Name of Organisation], a local [registered charity/community group] founded in [Year], based on [Road Name].

[Give a brief explanation of who you are and what you do. Example: The aim of our organisation is to promote intercultural dialogue, community cohesion and proactive citizenship. We hold a range of discussion forums on social and cultural issues relevant to these goals. The ideas that come out of these discussions then feed back into a range of community projects and sometimes and publications.

The organisation is firmly rooted in the local community. We have held a range of successful community events including children's activities, intercultural trips and fast breaking dinners for the whole community during the Islamic month of Ramadan. For more information about our organisation and our work, please feel free to visit our website on [Web Address].]

We would love to have the opportunity to meet you and explain our work and our plans for the future. Would your schedule permit you to join us for lunch at any time over the next couple of months? If this is not possible perhaps we could drop in to visit you at your convenience.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes from all the team,

Yours sincerely,

[Name Surname]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Email]

[Website]

Sample Letter of Invitation to a Local Dignitary

[Your name]
 [Position and Organisation]
 [Address],[Postcode]
 [Telephone]
 [Email]
 [Date]

[Title Name Surname]
 [Position and Organisation]
 [Address],[Postcode]

Dear [Title Surname],
 For the Mayor: Dear [Mr/Madam] Mayor,
 For a councillor: Dear Cllr [Surname],

RE: Invitation to a [Event Description], [Date]

On behalf of the congregation and Events Committee of the [Name of Organisation] and the congregation of [Name of Partner Organisation], I would like to invite you to [Event Description- Example: a Noah's Pudding Evening] to be held on [Date], from [Time- Time] at [Location].

[Give a brief explanation of your event. Example: Traditionally during the Muslim Festival of Ashurah we make a special pudding, called Noah's Pudding, and share it with our neighbours. It symbolises the food that Prophet Noah made at the end of the flood. (Please see card enclosed for more details about the day of Ashurah and Noah's Pudding.) This Ashurah, the congregation of [Name of Organisation] is joining forces with [Name of Partner Organisation] to share Noah's pudding with the wider community in a spirit of friendship. We anticipate high attendance and look forward to welcoming local people from all walks of life.]

We would be honoured to have your presence at the event, and would like to extend the invitation to your [wife/husband/partner and family]. We also wondered if you would be kind enough to say a few words at the beginning of the proceedings.

Please contact me by telephone or email to confirm your attendance, or for further information.

Yours sincerely,

[Name Surname]

[Position]

[Organisation]

Sample Letter to the Practice Manager of a Local Health Centre Enquiring About Training

[Title Name Surname]

[Position and Organisation]

[Address]

[Postcode]

Dear [Title Surname],

RE: Request for talk from medical staff

My name is [Name Surname] and I am writing to you on behalf of [Name of Organisation].

[Give a brief explanation of who you are and what you do and, if relevant, of your partner organisation. Example: The aim of our organisation is to promote intercultural dialogue, community cohesion and proactive citizenship. One of our local partner organisations, [Name of Organisation], works to provide advice and support to local people from the local [Example: Turkish speaking] community.]

[Explain your request. Example: Our partners have become aware that some families within this community are finding the question of whether or not to have their children immunised against certain diseases difficult, and do not feel well informed. We wondered whether one of your medical staff would be available to come and talk about the issue with a local group. Our organisation and our partner organisation would be very glad to help with some translation. We feel that this would be very helpful to the people concerned and indeed a time efficient way of increasing their understanding.]

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[Name Surname]

[Position]

[Organisation]

Sample Emails to Schools

a) Proposing a meeting to offer help/discuss possible joint projects

Dear [Title Surname],

My name is [Name Surname]. I live close to your school, on [Name of Street and Postcode]
Or, I am [Child's Name's mother/father/a friend of Child's Name's parents]. I am writing to you on behalf of [Name of Organisation], a local [registered charity/community group] founded in [Year], based on [Road Name].

[Give a brief explanation of who you are and what you do. Example: The aim of our organisation is to promote intercultural dialogue. We hold a range of discussion forums on social and cultural issues relevant to these goals. The ideas that come out of these discussions then feed back into a range of community projects and publications. We have held a range of successful community events, including children's activities, intercultural trips and fast breaking dinners for the whole community during the Islamic month of Ramadan.]

[Give a brief explanation of how you would like to help or what sort of collaboration you suggest. Example: Our organisation was founded by people from the [Language]-speaking community and we wondered whether our staff or volunteers could be of any assistance to you in your communications with parents. If we can help by translating any important letters or by providing volunteers to help with parents' evenings we would be glad to do so.]

We were also wondering whether we could visit the school to share a Muslim/Christian/Hindu festival with the children later this year (in [Month]).

Or, We also wondered whether you might be able to help us distribute invitations for a community event we are planning later in the year. The event will be very much a family occasion and we hope that parents will attend with their children.

Or, We also wondered whether you or one of your colleagues might like to speak at a forthcoming panel discussion on raising the educational and professional aspirations of local children.]

Perhaps we could meet to discuss possibilities? I could easily come to meet you after school, ideally on [Suggested Days of the Week].

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

[Name Surname]

[Position]

[Organisation]

[Address]

[Telephone]

Sample Emails to Schools

b) Proposing a visit to the school to share a cultural/religious tradition with the children

Dear [Title Surname],

My name is [Name Surname]. I live close to your school, on [Name of Street and Postcode] and work with [Name of Organisation], [very brief description- Example: a registered charity working to promote social cohesion in the Islington area].

Or, I am [Child's Name's mother/father/a friend of Child's Name's parents].

[Explain why you are writing, and the tradition that you want to share with the children. Example: I am writing to ask if my friend, [Name Surname] and I could come to the school to involve the children in the tradition of Noah's Pudding. This special dish is traditionally made on the day of Ashurah, which falls this year on [Date], and it symbolises the food that Prophet Noah made at the end of the Great Flood. It is customary to take portions of puddings to neighbours. Children usually enjoy hearing the story of Noah's Pudding, helping to make it, and of course eating it. We think that sharing Noah's Pudding with children from different cultural and religious backgrounds at the school will help strengthen friendship and understanding between them. Please find enclosed a card providing further information about the day of Ashurah and Noah's pudding.]

[Explain exactly what you would like to do. Example: Perhaps we could visit a class during an RE lesson. We would like to visit a [Key Stage 3/Key Stage 4] class if possible [Include this if you are writing to a secondary school teacher]. We would tell the story and discuss the significance of Ashurah before distributing the pudding to the children.]

[Explain how the visit would fit in with the national curriculum. Example: The visit would contribute to the children's progress in national curriculum RE. It would provide an encounter with people and practices belonging to a major religious tradition. We hope that this encounter would help the development of respect and sensitivity towards diverse religious traditions.]

For a Primary School visit: It would contribute to the children's exploration of religious stories and of celebrations.

For a Key Stage 3 visit: It would contribute to the children's exploration of the diversity of religious practices and of the relationships between religious traditions.

For a Key Stage 4 visit: It would contribute to the children's exploration of different forms of cultural and religious expression.]

Please let me know if you think that this would be possible. I would be very happy to come and discuss it with you after school one day if that would be convenient.

Best wishes,

[Name Surname]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Email]

Sample Email to Arrange a Meeting with an Academic

Dear [Title Surname],

My name is [Name Surname] and I am writing to you on behalf of [Name of Organisation], a local [registered charity/community group] founded in [Year], based on [Road Name].

[Give a brief explanation of who you are and what you do. Example: The aim of our organisation is to promote intercultural dialogue, community cohesion and proactive citizenship. We hold a range of discussion forums on social and cultural issues relevant to these goals. The ideas that come out of these discussions then feed back into a range of community projects and publications.]

The organisation is firmly rooted in the local community. We have held a range of successful community events, including children's activities, intercultural trips and fast breaking dinners for the whole community during the Islamic month of Ramadan.]

[Explain your interest in the person's work. Example: I was very interested to read about your research interests in the cultures of religious minorities, and your recent project looking at developments in religious identity among second generation British Pakistanis in London. Our organisation is very interested in issues of identity and integration, and we greatly value the input of people like yourselves working in relevant research. We would be very interested in exploring any possibilities for working together. For instance, we hold regular seminars on topics of interest and would be honoured to host you as a guest speaker.]

We would love to have the opportunity to meet you, to explain our work and discuss any possible collaboration. Would your schedule permit you to join us for lunch or tea at any time over the next couple of months? If this is not convenient perhaps we could drop in to visit you at the university.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[Name Surname]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Email]

Sample Email to Arrange a Meeting with a Community Group

Dear [Title Surname],

My name is [Name Surname] and I am writing to you on behalf of [Name of Organisation].

[Give a brief explanation of who you are and what you do. Example: The aim of our organisation is to promote intercultural dialogue, community cohesion and proactive citizenship. We hold a range of discussion forums on social and cultural issues relevant to these goals. The ideas that come out of these discussions then feed back into a range of community projects and publications. We have held a range of successful community events, including children's activities, intercultural trips and fast breaking dinners for the whole community during the Islamic month of Ramadan.]

[Explain the event for which you would like to have their collaboration. Example: We are currently planning to organise a community celebration for Ashurah. Traditionally at this time Muslims of Anatolian origin make a special pudding, called Noah's Pudding, and share it with neighbours. It symbolises the food that Prophet Noah made at the end of the flood. We intend to hold an event with Noah's Pudding on [Date], in a spirit of sharing and friendship. The aim of this event is to strengthen community spirit, not to challenge or change the beliefs of others.]

[Explain how you hope they could be involved. Example: We very much hope that members of your [church/synagogue/group] will be able to attend, and if any are interested in helping with the event their involvement would be most welcome.]

We are also looking for a venue, as we do not have a suitable space in the mosque. We wondered if [Their Group] might be able to host the event.]

Perhaps you would be able to come and meet our planning group to discuss possibilities? If you are free at [Suggested Times] on [Suggested Dates], please let me know and come for a cup of tea and a chat with us at [Location].

With best wishes,

[Name Surname]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Email]

Sample Email to Make Contact with and Offer Assistance to a Local Community Organisation

Dear [Title Surname],

My name is [Name Surname] and I am writing to you on behalf of [Name of Organisation].

[Give a brief explanation of who you are and what you do. Example: The aim of our organisation is to promote intercultural dialogue, community cohesion and proactive citizenship. We hold a range of discussion forums on social and cultural issues relevant to these goals. The ideas that come out of these discussions then feed back into a range of community projects publications. We have held a range of successful community events, including children's activities, intercultural trips and fast breaking dinners for the whole community during the Islamic month of Ramadan.]

We were very interested to find out about your work in the local area with [People They Work With]. We are keen to collaborate with organisations with goals related to our own, and wondered if we could be of any assistance to you.

We have been working in the area since [Date] and have established good relationships with a range of local stakeholders, businesses and other organisations, including [list relevant stakeholders/organisations]. If at any point we can put you in touch with a potentially helpful contact, or if our volunteers (some of whom speak [Any Languages Spoken]) could be of assistance with any of your projects, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Perhaps we could meet to discuss possible collaboration?

Would you be able to join us for lunch some time during the coming weeks, perhaps on [Choice of Suggested Dates]?

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,

[Name Surname]

[Position]

[Organisation]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Email]

Sample Letter to a Local Business Proposing a Meeting to Discuss Your Work and Possible Sponsorship

[Your Name]
[Position and Organisation]
[Address],[Postcode]
[Telephone]
[Email]
[Date]

[Title Name Surname]
[Position and Organisation]
[Address],[Postcode]

Dear [Title Surname],

RE: Introducing [Name of Organisation]

My name is [Name Surname] and I am writing to you on behalf of [Name of Organisation], a local [registered charity/community group] founded in [Year], based on [Road Name].

[Give a brief explanation of who you are and what you do. Example: The aim of our organisation is to promote intercultural dialogue, community cohesion and proactive citizenship. We hold a range of discussion forums on social and cultural issues relevant to these goals. The ideas that come out of these discussions then feed back into a range of community projects and publications.]

The organisation is firmly rooted in the local community. We have held a range of successful community events, including children's activities, intercultural trips and fast breaking dinners for the whole community during the Islamic month of Ramadan.]

We are keen to forge links with those around us, including other charities and community groups, stake holders and businesses like your own. We would very much like to have the opportunity to meet you and give you a fuller explanation of our work and forthcoming projects. Would you be able to join us for lunch at some point over the coming month, perhaps on [Choice of Suggested Dates]?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[Name Surname]
[Position]
[Organisation]

Sample Thank You Letter to a Local Dignitary

[Your Name]

[Position and Organisation]

[Address]

[Postcode]

[Telephone]

[Email]

[Date]

[Title Name Surname]

[Position and Organisation]

[Address],[Postcode]

Dear [Title Surname/First Name (depending on whether you spoke on first name terms at the event)],

For the Mayor: Dear [Mr/Madam] Mayor,

For a councillor: Dear Cllr [Surname],

I am writing on behalf of [Name of Organisation(s)] to express our heartfelt thanks for your attendance at our [Event Description] on [Day]. It was a great pleasure and honour to have you with us. Many thanks for taking the time out of your busy schedule to attend and for your very apt and inspiring speech.

We felt that the event was a great success. We were delighted with the level of attendance and received a great deal of positive feedback from guests. We really appreciate your support.

As I mentioned, we are planning to hold another event to bring the community together in [Month]. [Give brief explanation of what the event is]. I will send details nearer the time and hope to see you then or indeed before. If you have time to join us for lunch at any point in the interim please do let me know.

Once again, many thanks for your support.

Yours sincerely,

[Name][Surname (if not on first name terms)]

[Position]

[Organisation]

Sample Thank You Email to a Partner Organisation

Dear friends at [Organisation],

I am just writing on behalf of everyone at [Organisation] to express once again our most sincere thanks for all your work on the [Event].

We feel, and I am sure you will agree, that the event was a great success. We were delighted with the level of attendance and that we were able to host such a diverse mix of local people.

It was a great pleasure working with you and we all very much hope that we will be able to do so again. Please do get in touch if we can be of assistance with any projects that you are planning.

I hope to see some of you at [Any Forthcoming Local Event Where Both Groups May Be Present].

Many thanks once again. Please pass this on to those whose email addresses I did not have.

With warmest wishes from us all,

[Name]

Addressing, Introducing and Referring to the Mayor

The following is a rough guide. There is a little variation between different towns, cities and boroughs, so to be really sure you get it right you may want to visit the website of your town, city or borough council, which often provides guidelines on this.

For example, Camden Borough Council: <http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/council-and-democracy/who-represents-you/the-mayor-of-camden/how-to-address-the-mayor.en.jsessionid=EEA48E0E57BC009279A92F5FBCCE3D67;>

Plymouth City Council: <http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/yourcouncil/1091.html>;

Falmouth Town Council: http://falmouthtowncouncil.co.uk/index.php?name=FAQ&id_cat=2;

When writing to the Mayor, address the envelope with:

The Worshipful the Mayor of [Town/Borough]

Or for a Lord Mayor:

The Rt Worshipful the Lord Mayor of [City]

For the Lord Mayors of London, York and Belfast:

The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor of [City]

For the Lord Provosts of Aberdeen Dundee:

The Rt Worshipful the Lord Provost of [City]

For the Lord Provosts of Glasgow and Edinburgh:

The Rt Hon the Lord Provost of Glasgow

Begin the letter with:

Dear Mr (or Madam) Mayor^{7 8}

Or for a Lord Mayor:

Dear Lord Mayor

Or for a Lord Provost:

Dear Lord Provost

End with:

Yours sincerely

When introducing the Mayor, refer to him/her as:

(The Worshipful)⁹ the Mayor of [City/Borough/Town], Councillor [Name Surname]

For the Lord Mayor of London, York and Belfast:

(The Right Honourable) the Lord Mayor of [City]

For any other Lord Mayor:

(The Right Worshipful) the Lord Mayor of [City/Borough/Town]

For the Lord Provosts of Edinburgh and Glasgow:

(The Right Honourable) the Lord Provost of [City]

For the Lord Provosts of Aberdeen and Dundee:

(The Right Worshipful) the Lord Provost of [City]

In conversation after initial introductions:

Mr Mayor/Madam Mayor/Lord Mayor

⁷ “Surprisingly, it is customary for female Mayors to be called “Mr Mayor.” But some prefer “Madam Mayor.” The website of your Council may tell you what the Mayor prefers, or you could call the Mayor’s office to check.

⁸ In some cases, as in Camden, “Councillor [Surname]” is preferred at the start of the letter, and “Councillor [Name Surname]” on the envelope.

⁹ Use “The Worshipful” or, for a Lord Mayor “The Right Worshipful/The Right Honourable” in a formal speech.

The Mayor's wife should be referred to as:

The Mayoress.

In conversation you would call the Mayoress:

Mayoress

In writing to her you would put "The Mayoress, Mrs [Name Surname]" on the letter and begin the letter "Dear Mayoress."

The wife of a Lord Mayor is referred to as:

"The Lady Mayoress."

A Lady Mayoress (the wife of a Lord Mayor) would be called:

Lady Mayoress

In writing to her you would put "The Lady Mayoress of [City], Mrs [Name Surname]" on the letter and begin the letter "Dear Lady Mayoress."

The wife of a Lord Provost is referred to as:

Lady Provost

She would be called:

Lady Provost

In writing to her you would put "The Lady Provost of [City], Mrs [Name Surname]" on the envelope and begin the letter "Dear Lady Provost."

The Husband or partner of a female Mayor:

The Consort - husband or male partner of a Mayor - is called by his name and is addressed by his name in a letter.

The Debretts website (<http://www.debretts.com/forms-of-address/professions/local-government/mayor-of-london.aspx>) gives this advice on addressing the Mayor of London (not to be confused with the Lord Mayor of London):

Beginning of letter:

Dear Title Surname

End of letter:

Yours Sincerely

Envelope: Name Surname, Esq. (for a man), Mayor of London.

Advice for Attending Religious Services

(For guidance on attending other places of worship please see the *Celebrating Festivals* Community Dialogue Manual.)

Dress codes vary between religious denominations and even individual churches/synagogues. The congregation of a “high” Anglican church may dress very formally while that of a large Baptist church may come to church in jeans. However, fairly smart, modest dress is unlikely to be out of place in any church or synagogue.

In Church

You can join in with what is being said or sung when it seems appropriate, or keep silent if you feel more comfortable doing so.

Only confirmed Christians take the bread and wine at communion. You would be welcome to go up to the altar rail for a blessing, but as the blessing makes reference to God as Trinity and the priest often makes the sign of the cross you may prefer just to stay in your seat. It is quite usual for some members of the congregation to do this.

At the Synagogue

Do not wear a tallit, the prayer shawl, as this is a sign of a specifically Jewish obligation to the law. If you are offered one by an usher who is unsure whether or not you are Jewish politely decline it. Men should cover their heads as a sign of respect if the men of the congregation do so. Skullcaps or kippahs/yarmulkes will often be provided at the door for those who do not have one. In some Orthodox congregations married women cover their heads with pieces of lace and in some Reform congregations all worshippers wear kippahs. If you are a woman and do not cover your hair anyway it is respectful to cover your head in such synagogues. Coverings will often be provided.

In Orthodox synagogues men and women sit separately.

Try to follow the rest of the congregation when they sit and stand but don't worry if you get it wrong. You can try to follow the service in the siddur, service book and the Humash, the Torah book. If these are in Hebrew they usually include English translations. They usually begin at what is, in English terms, the “back.”

Join in with the congregation's words as and when you feel comfortable saying them. Wearing a kippah and sitting and standing with the congregation is not an expression of religious allegiance, only of respect. Bowing is a more significant religious act in the synagogue service. If you do not want to join the congregation when they bow, just remain sitting/standing.¹⁰ If wine and bread is shared at a Kiddush or blessing after the

¹⁰ Daniel Kohn, “Sample Etiquette Guide for Guests,” in “Bar/Bat Mitzvah Ideas and Primer for Interfaith Families,” InterfaithFamily.com, http://www.interfaithfamily.com/files/pdf/Bar_BatMitzvahIdeasandPrimerforInterfaithFamilies.pdf.

service you are free to accept or decline it. It does not have the same meaning as the Christian sacrament; it is just bread and wine that is blessed and shared. However, you will not be under any obligation to share the offerings.

At the Mosque

Dress conservatively. Men should wear long trousers. Women's clothing should cover arms and legs, and should not be tight. Girls aged twelve and over should dress modestly in this way. Covering hair with a scarf is a respectful gesture although this will often be optional. Where visitors are requested to wear headscarves spare scarves are sometimes provided. Wear clothes in which you can comfortably sit cross legged on the floor. Visitors may be requested to sit on the floor, although a few chairs may be available for elderly visitors or those whose health makes it difficult for them to sit on the floor.

Do not bring food, drink or any animal into the mosque and do not smoke.

Remove your shoes before entering the prayer hall, leaving them in the designated place to collect afterwards. It is customary for men and women to worship separately in the mosque. Women's prayer facilities will often be on a gallery level or if there is only one main prayer hall, it will be divided into a men's and a women's section. Your host will direct you to the appropriate section.

Avoid walking in front of someone who is praying and be quiet when people are engaged in prayer. During prayer, observe quietly at the back of the mosque, or as directed by your hosts. Be careful not to point your feet towards the Kibla, the direction of prayer.

Some Muslims do not shake hands with people of the opposite sex, so it is best not to go to shake hands with people of the opposite sex unless they do.

Directory of Useful National Organisations

The Big Society Network

Website: <http://thebigsociety.co.uk>

Advice on a variety of funding opportunities can be found at: <http://thebigsociety.co.uk/what-is-big-society/faq/>

British Red Cross

Tel: 08448711111 (switchboard)/

08448718000 (training enquiries)

Email: information@redcross.org.uk

Address:

British Red Cross

UK Office

44 Moorfields

London, EC2Y 9AL

Website: www.redcross.org.uk

The Church of England

Website: www.achurchnearyou.com/

City Hall (Mayor of London)

Tel: 020 7983 4100

Email: mayor@london.gov.uk

Address:

Boris Johnson

Mayor of London

Greater London Authority

City Hall

The Queen's Walk

London, SE1 2AA

Website: www.london.gov.uk

Community NI

Telephone: 028 9087 7777

Email: info@communityni.org

Website: <http://www.communityni.org/>

Directory of Social Change (DSC)

Tel: 020 7391 4800

Email: training@dsc.org.uk

Address:

Directory of Social Change

24 Stephenson Way

London, NW1 2DP

Website: www.drc.org.uk

European Parliament Information Office in the United Kingdom

Tel: 020 7227 4300

Email: eplondon@europarl.europa.eu

Address:

European Parliament Information Office in the United Kingdom

Europe House

32 Smith Square

London, SW1P 3EU

Website: www.europarl.org.uk/

Funding Central

Email: fundingcentral@ncvo-vol.org.uk

Website: <http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk/Default.aspx>

Greater London Authority

Tel: 020 7983 4000

Email: mayor@london.gov.uk

Address:

Greater London Authority

City Hall

The Queen's Walk

London, SE1 2AA

Website: www.london.gov.uk

Mayor of London (see "City Hall")

National Health Service

Address:

Customer Service Centre

Department of Health

Richmond House

79 Whitehall

London, SW1A 2NS

Website: www.nhs.uk

National Association for Voluntary and Community

Action (NAVCA)

Tel: 0114 278 6636

Email: navca@navca.org.uk

Address: NAVCA

The Tower, 2 Furnival Square

Sheffield, S1 4QL

Website: <http://www.navca.org.uk>

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations

Telephone: 020 7713 6161

Email: ncvo@ncvo-vol.org.uk

Address:

Regent's Wharf

8 All Saints Street

London, N1 9RL

Website: www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action

Telephone: 028 9087 7777

Email: info@nicva.org

Address:

NICVA

61 Duncairn Gardens

Belfast, BT15 2GB

Website: <http://www.nicva.org/>

Salvation Army

Website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk

Schools Directory - Direct Gov

Website: schoolsfinder.direct.gov.uk

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Telephone: 0131 556 3882

Email: enquiries@scvo.org.uk

Address:

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Mansfield Traquair Centre

15 Mansfield Place

Edinburgh, EH3 6BB

Website: <http://www.scvo.org.uk/>

St John's Ambulance

Tel: 08700 10 49 50

Email: via <http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/contact-us.aspx>

Website: www.sja.org.uk

Tenants and Residents Organisation of England

Tel: 01928 701001

Email: runcornoffice@taroe.org

Address:

TAROE

Jackson House

2nd Avenue

Runcorn, WA7 2PD

Website: www.taroe.org

UK Parliament

Tel: 020 7219 4272 (House of Commons Information Office)

Email: hcinfo@parliament.uk

Address:

House of Commons

London, SW1A 0AA

Website : www.parliament.uk

Find your MP:

<http://findyourmp.parliament.uk>

Voluntary Action Scotland

Telephone: 01324 692025

Email:

convener@voluntaryactionsotland.org.uk

Address:

Voluntary Action Scotland

Unit 6

Callendar Business Park

Callendar Road

Falkirk, FK1 1XR

Website:

<http://www.voluntaryactionsotland.org.uk>

Wales Council for Voluntary Action

Telephone: 0800 2888 329

Email: help@wcva.org.uk

Website: http://www.wcva.org.uk/main/dsp_home.cfm

The Women's Institute

Tel: 020 7371 9300

Email: hq@nfw.org.uk

Address:

National Foundation of Women's Institutes

104 New Kings Road

London, SW6 4LY

Website: www.thewi.org.uk



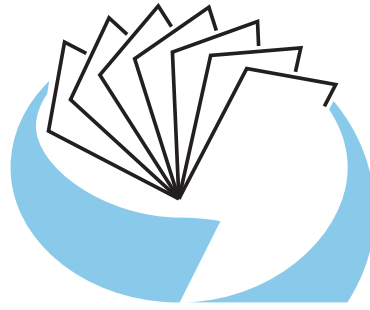
COMMUNITY
DIALOGUE
MANUAL
S E R I E S

This manual is part of the Dialogue Society's
Community Dialogue Manual Series:

1. Building Partnerships
2. Noah's Pudding
3. Celebrating Festivals
4. Community Fairs
5. Community Engagement Dinners
6. Community Centres Branching Out
7. Speed Dialogue
8. Open Mosque Day
9. Fasting Breaking Dinners
10. Media Engagement

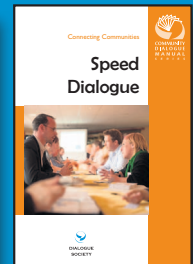
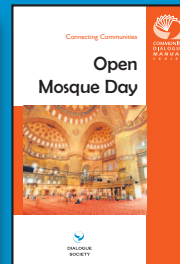
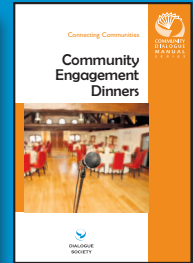
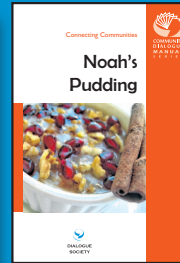
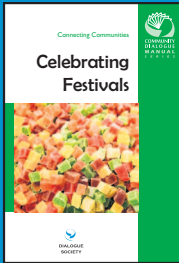
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manuals in the series can be downloaded
from the Publications page of our website at
www.dialoguesociety.org/publications





COMMUNITY DIALOGUE MANUAL S E R I E S

Connecting Communities



**DIALOGUE
SOCIETY**

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