

OWW- National Training Day
Reading Town Hall
Saturday 14th March 2009

Attendants

Samia Ahmed	Islamic Relief
Laura Bigoni	CAFOD
Jenny Cameron	OWW
Hilary Campbell	Churches Together Kidlington
Mina Comrie	OWW
Stephen Harrow	OWW
Sarah Hiron	OWW
Barbara Holden	Loughton OWW
Ryad Khodabocus	Luton Council of Faiths
Sarah Kilou	OWW
Milind Kolhatkar	OWW
Gavin Lloyd	Unitarian Churches
Joy Mead	Aylesbury Development Centre
Susan Mills	Churches Together Kidlington
Mahmooda Qureshi	Islamic Awareness Week
Ingrid Wilson	OWW

Introduction

Welcome to all from the Chair of Trustee, followed by welcome by the Project Manager. Logistics for the day were covered by the Researcher.

Ice-breaker

Each attendee was given a People Bingo sheet, with questions in each square and were asked to find someone who could say yes to a question and write their name beside it. The card needed to be completed with a different person's name under each question.

At the end one person started by introducing them self and saying a bit about them self, before choosing a name on their bingo card to introduce the next person and say what on the bingo card they said yes to.

This activity got us to know a little bit about everyone and proved to be popular.

Overview of the Day

An introduction of the day was given, including a map of where we are heading with the sessions. Sheets and packs were given out and referred to.

Session 1: Overview of OWW, Ubuntu – putting it in context

An overview of One World Week and how the Ubuntu project came about was given by one of the trustees. Two OWW supporters gave a 5 minute Power point presentation each of OWW events that they had been involved with in 2008.

Session 2: Putting on an Event

Some scenarios were given highlighting specific situations that planners face. The participants were split in groups and asked to come up with ways of overcoming the challenges.

Each group had a specified setting (rural, city, mainly Christian, mixed faith, older & younger planners, no planners). Aim was for participants to experience planning an event and addressing some of the challenges that exist and to come up with helpful tips for organisers putting on events. Those with experience could be quizzed by those without experience.

Group 1 - Rural, majority Christian area

Brief: Your group has decided to put on a OWW event for this year to raise awareness on the theme Hungry for One World.

You have seen this as part of a OWW leaflet

What are you hungry for? What does your community hunger for? What does the world hunger for? How could you be the change in the world?

You want to hold an inter faith event, but you live in a predominantly mono-faith area. Discuss the following questions:

1. In what ways could you include a diverse faith element?
2. What could be some of the advantages of including a diverse faith element?
3. What kind of response would you expect? From who?
4. What positive things may come out of holding an inter faith event?
5. What challenges may you face? How could you deal with them?
6. Anything else that strikes your group?

Group 1 – Feedback

- Important to have speakers or representatives – speaking from not speaking for minority groups or faith groups
- Video to ease people into context
- Local politics
- Hungry for What? – Survey
- Food focus – local group/organisations debate about concerns.
- Life stage concerns: Use local issues to broaden it
- Venue – Crucial to make it neutral

Group 2 – New OWW group in Muslim Community

Brief: You are keen to put on a OWW event in your local community and want to plan something for the first time on the theme “Hungry for One World” – for example, on the issue of food miles (food transported to the UK from other countries not adds to the CO₂ emissions/ farmers growing their own crops/need for trade). Discuss the following points:

1. What kinds of events could you put on that would reach a wide age range?
2. How could events be linked to Islamic faith?
3. How could events be linked to inter faith?
4. What positive things could come out of this? What challenges may you experience?
5. Anything else that strikes you

Group 2 – Feedback

Their event would be a Family Fun Day which would take place in Birmingham which has a predominantly high muslim community.

- There would be hands on workshops (making use of recycle materials).
- Food miles/Green Tree (The tree of life)
- Hena painting, Junk artist, Face Painting
- Free food
- Talks on Islam and the Environment
 - Posters
 - Sayings of the Prophet /Other faiths
 - Stalls by PPL/Organisations set up with those aims
- Different community groups providing workshops on their take on “Hungry for One World”
- They would have a diverse steering group to set up the event
- The event would include youth groups, which would encourage the parents and siblings to attend.
- Faith groups would be researched to see what “Hungry for One World” meant to their faith.

Positive

- People coming together
- Reinforce family network
- The event becomes sustainable and inspires others
- It has a ripple effect
- Get contacts who can be followed up.
- Faith values – unity

Challenges

- Getting peoples’ attention
- Different agendas – working towards an ideal.

Group 3 – Christian group wanting to reach out to Muslims

Brief: Your group has been holding annual Church services for OWW for the past 10 years. You are interested in the Ubuntu project and have tried unsuccessfully to make your service more inter faith in previous years. This year you want to try to put on a joint event with some Muslims in your community. Discuss the following points:

1. How could you persuade the rest of the congregation that it would be good to join with the Muslims in your local area?
2. How would you get in touch with local Muslims?
3. How would you persuade the Muslim community that they would benefit from sharing in an event?
4. What might motivate you to attend an event organised by and (specifically for) Muslims?
5. What might motivate Muslims to attend an event organised by and (specifically for) Christians?
6. Who would you need to contact? How would you publicise your event? What would you need to be sensitive towards? What would you want to find out?

7. Anything else that strikes you

Group 3 Feedback

1. Identify common issues of concern and make a point of interaction. Current climate – negativity re Muslims in media. Help M to understand Christianity.
2. Bring Muslims in from isolation. People may be sceptical. Knock on doors, contact the Muslim Council of Britain website for list of local mosques, Local community centres, human interaction is important so visits rather than letters.
3. Muslims integral to society. Help Muslims to understand Christianity, help Christians to understand Muslims. The point is not conversion. There is fear from both sides. Remove this fear; the aim is not to take people away from their faiths but closer.
4. Curiosity and education
5. Would Muslims feel comfortable? Probably best not to attend an event at a church but some sort of festival would be good. Creating trust would be key. Issues around justice nad global issues would be good.
6. Get people involved in the planning stages. Do some “underground work”. Find out who the dignitaries are, invite them (mayor, community leaders. Be careful of social cultural norms – but don’t let this put people off. Disseminate through existing structures.

Session 3: The OWW inclusive approach to global issues

Aim of the session

The aim was to explore some of the benefits and challenges of holding interfaith events and giving space for Q&A. A 15 minute (approx) PowerPoint presentation was given summarising key points, followed by a small group discussion activity (15 mins discussion; 15 mins feedback).

Activity:

In groups of 3-4, discuss how you would advise each of the people who gave the following responses (to an interfaith question on the OWW 2008 evaluation form)– advising them on how to move forward in interfaith planning given their individual circumstances.

‘Minehead has no non-Christian places of worship of faith groups that are identifiable’

‘no plans at present’

‘Bridport is a mainly white community – not really possible’

‘focus was on climate change rather than interfaith relations’

‘we need to think about something outside of Sunday services!’

‘Open a dialogue with the Muslim community. No other communities present’.

‘Try a joint service with Sikhs / Hindus / Muslims’

Group work feedback

The following is compiled from the written feedback given from all groups that took part in this activity.

‘Minehead has no non-Christian places of worship of faith groups that are identifiable’

- Working on issues, not interfaith per se
- Speakers to come and talk on issues relating to other faith groups
- Difference between working with minority groups in the community and individuals
- BEN good network for BME groups
- Prepare for change – it will come
- Work beyond your area
- Reach out to people of no faith

'no plans at present'

- Just by there being a question, these issues relate to them
- Motivation lacking
- What are your plans?
- Identify points to link to interfaith

'Bridport is a mainly white community – not really possible'

- Why not possible?
- Show video
- leaflets

'focus was on climate change rather than interfaith relations'

- Stem from faith
- Get other faith groups in on planning
- Find out what other faith groups think about climate change (see IFEES)
- Know that faith is not irrelevant – it underpins shared values

'we need to think about something outside of Sunday services!'

- OWW festival
- Inside library, schools to be on leaflet
- Invite artists from different cultures
- What about other faiths?
- Learn about how they worship differently
- Share values, learn from each other
- Knowing what issues are around for local communities
- Look on the OWW website for ideas
- Make connections with what has happened before

'Open a dialogue with the Muslim community. No other communities present'.

- Maybe you have bundled them altogether as 'Muslims'?

'Try a joint service with Sikhs / Hindus / Muslims'

- Try a social instead?
- Vast differences in worship
- Look at social issues rather than religious issues
- Start simple – Unitarians, Baha'is, all shades of every religion

Session 4: Celebrating successes

Participants were able to share for 2 minutes on what successes they had had in organising events.

The following are some comments:

- As part of a project called 'Speak up for tomorrow's world' 6th forms were contacted to nominate a young person to visit the mayor and subsequently organise a OWW event. It was difficult but teachers and parents were involved – never know what the ripple effect may have.

- Important to use enthusiasm to get people involved.
- Little steps with sincerity do grow into bigger steps. Encouraging story from Birmingham of how events for IAW have grown and how positively people involved in planning have been received.
- Not about ticking boxes but about people. Sent invitations to everyone, so that everyone feels valued. A personal telephone call is better still.

Lunch break

Before we ate we heard a brief Christian and Muslim perspective on food and eating followed with a blessing and a prayer.

Session 5: Workshops

It was decided by the group to combine these workshops and have a shorter version of each one together as a whole group rather than split into two groups.

Media

This session was a participatory method called “Fish Bowl” getting participants to use role play. 2 people were OWW supporters and had an appointment with their local newspaper editors (2 others) to persuade them to feature the up-coming OWW events. The rest of the participants listened and then took over one of the roles at any point.

Some points that arose:

- Research the media. Find out what they stand for.
- Role of a OWW supporter could include clueing up local newspapers and radio on OWW – can be a great opportunity for features during the week.
- Find the angle, become alert to what is going on so that you can use hooks. Follow on from what one story is saying. If one paper is thinking about their story being snatched they may be more likely to take up your story.
- A good “selling point” is to say to Editors that by having our OWW article it is extending readership.
- OWW has been featured in “The Archer” – good to keep looking out for avenues in to popular media outlets. Look out for unusual roots in
- Not only new stories – could be cartoons, sports etc
- We are all ambassadors for OWW – persistence does pay off. Keep writing to TV shows, National radio programmes, the more people that do, the more response is likely.
- Support newspapers – what can you do for them. Find out what the local campaigns are, get to know them. Builds up loyalty.
- Getting into the media gives positive press for OWW. What we may think of as an exciting news release can be boring for the newspaper – be creative! An interesting example of young people dressing up as the A Team to go and help older people tidy up their gardens catches attention. **DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE SILLY & CREATIVE!**
- Keep asking, don't self censor. Slowly overtime a database of local media contacts will build up.
- Get the local council involved & they can also send in press release. Someone with a press officer can be useful .
- Consider Church press and ethnic media contacts.

Fundraising and Evaluation advice / support

The following are main points and comments which arose:

- Sponsorship of venue for free eg school, community centre – will have their logo on publicity
- Government money available for social cohesion
- A fundraiser application form ‘language to succeed’
- Invite potential funders to this year’s event for future years.
- ‘See us as a brand to get involved with’
- Use your networks to get sponsors
- Co-op will get food vouchers
- Bring and share meals
- Charge small amount for entry
- Tickets for limited space
- Fundraising events – eg. auction, dinner, travelling meal
- Waitrose sponsors charities
- Lottery
- A4A
- Arts
- Heritage
- Apply through local authority

Session 6: Plenary Session

Everyone was asked to form two lines in the corridor. They had one minute to talk to the person opposite on one question and each time there was a new question, one row of people walked on one place, so that each time someone new was talking to the other person.

“One thing you have learnt today” “One thing you will do” “One encouraging word of advice”

We concluded with listening to an inspirational reading by Marianne Williamson and collectively reading an Inter Faith Act of Commitment.

Participants filled in an evaluation form.

Evaluation from the day

The following are taken from the evaluation forms given out at the end of the training day

“The day was helpful in providing ideas as to what we could do locally”

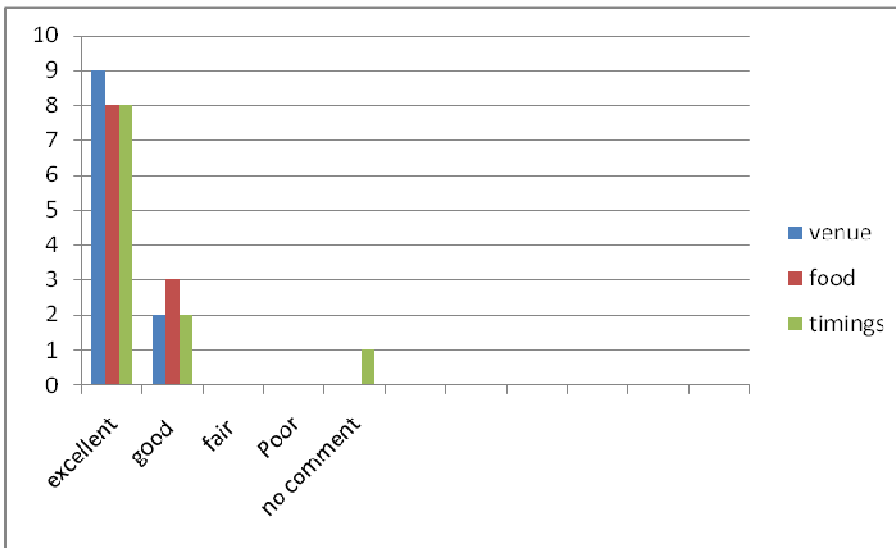
“Stimulating day, got me thinking”

“They (the sessions) have been generally very helpful. Maybe more depth would be advised”

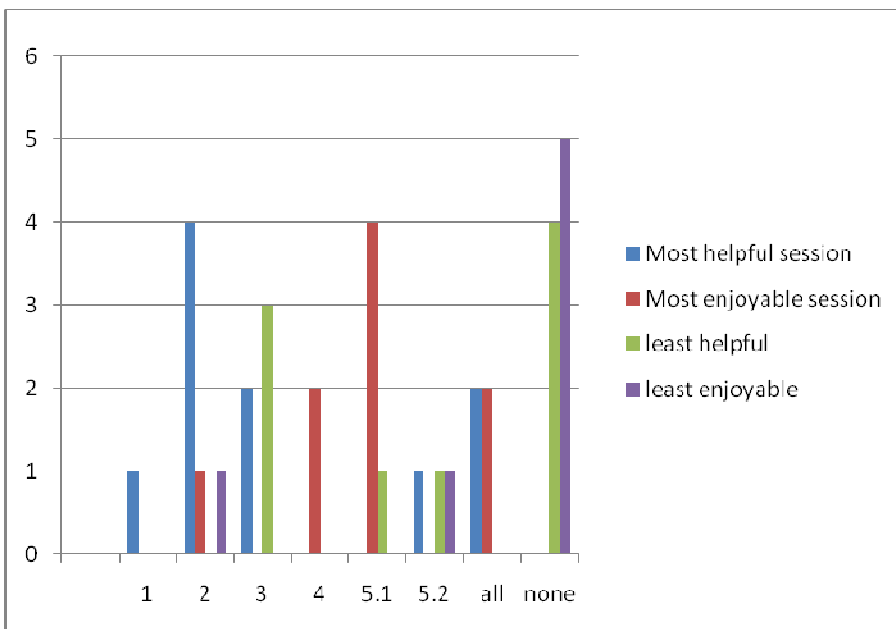
“One World Week is genuinely sincere to bring people together and very inspiring, today was very important to share good practice and make friends”

“Take the risk... do something! Be a good neighbour...there are lots of good-hearted people out there”

“One World is making a tremendous and invaluable effort to bring people together on core human values irrespective of religion and culture. Keep up the excellent work”



Which session was the most helpful? Most enjoyable? Least helpful ? Least enjoyable?



The results show:

Session 2 “Putting on an event” was the most helpful.

Session 5.1 “Media” was the most enjoyable

None of the sessions were the least helpful

None of the session were the least enjoyable