

# Near Neighbours Report



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- Near Neighbours funding has successfully reached individuals and organisations desiring to generate a greater sense of community. The grassroots level grants, embedded in local social networks and institutions, have provided the impetus to launch projects that bring people together.
- The grants have had a snowballing effect: individuals who have participated in, or organised projects, often stated that they felt better equipped and more confident to develop projects in the future.
- The effective delivery of individual projects has been shown largely to depend upon the local networks and the project organiser's previous experience. Projects organised by those possessing little prior experience in the specific area of work were notably less successful.
- Projects that continued after funding had ended were most often situated within an established community organisation, group, or institution, for instance, a church. This finding supports the Near Neighbours application question concerning additional funding and/or volunteer time (Please see Appendix VI) as in many instances this proved to be a key determinant of success.
- Near Neighbours Programme Coordinators often provided critical advice and logistical and moral support during the application process and project implementation; their importance in the process may necessitate thinking about how, on a national level, they can be further supported and how their relations with project organisers can be made more consistent.
- The research found that the role of local clergy from the Anglican Church was vital in initiating interest in Near Neighbours funding and, in some cases, raising the profile of the project. Support was given in various ways: advertising the fund, encouraging applications and publicising events.
- Project organisers interviewed in the research cited building local relationships across faiths and ethnic groups as their primary impact and considered this to be the principal aim of Near Neighbours funding.
- The application process appeared to screen effectively for projects not addressing multi faith issues or simply intended to extend the life of existing activities. Nonetheless, a few of the interviewees wondered if the form should address more explicitly impact on inter faith relations.

## Introduction



The Woolf Institute conducted a small-scale evaluation of project grants for the Near Neighbours Fund. The expressed aim of Near Neighbours funding is to *“encourage stronger civil society in areas that are multi-religious and multi-ethnic by creating association, friendship and neighbourliness. [Near Neighbours] intends to bring together people of different faiths and of no faiths to transform local communities for the better”*. Following these aims, this research addressed the effectiveness of projects in bringing together members of different local faith communities, as well as the potential sustainability and longer term impact of both the projects and the newly formed relations they encouraged. Due to the restricted scope of the evaluation, the research was limited to projects based in London, Birmingham, and the North (Bradford/Oldham/Burnley). However, this small but diverse sample revealed a number of recurrent themes, providing insight into how Near Neighbours projects have developed on the ground.



The research was conducted from April – September 2013 and looked primarily at projects that had been completed before this research began. Interviews included one-to-one interviews with Near Neighbours Coordinators, project applicants and organisers (where the two roles were separate), and project participants wherever possible.

Projects selected for Near Neighbours funding are defined within three categories of work: First Encounters, Everyday Interactions, and Civil Engagement. The research design attempted to interview organisers from each of these types of projects but, as became evident in the interviews, projects often fell into multiple categories. In selecting interviewees our considerations were as follows: i) representing a range of substantive work in local communities ii) types of applicants, for instance, a church-run project versus an individual or community organisation iii) faith, in order to have a range of religions represented in the study iv) the availability of the project organiser for an interview and v) perceived quality of the project on the part of the Near Neighbours Coordinator. This perception differed sometimes, however, from the description of project activities and success offered by the organisers.

One of the limitations of the study is the absence of Leicester, the fourth city where Near Neighbours work is located, due to limited time and resources. Another limitation is the absence of interviews with Nehemiah Workers, as their direct engagement with the projects and local communities would have provided a useful contextual understanding.

The study took into account previous evaluations conducted for Near Neighbours as well as information relating to successful and unsuccessful grant applications. The former offered a context for analysis of change in the communities whereas the applications and discussions with Programme Coordinators provided useful information on how well the application process screened for projects able to deliver on the aims of the Fund.



The following themes emerged from interviews with project organisers, Programme Coordinators and participants, in addition to analysis of application forms and evaluation documents:

### 1. The Ease of the Application Process

The project organisers widely praised the application for its brevity, fast turnaround, and quick release of funding, especially in comparison with experiences of other funding agencies. Nonetheless, interviewees and Programme Coordinators cited several areas for improvement within the application form. Firstly, the options given for the categorisation of projects— i) First Encounters ii) Everyday Interactions iii) Civic Engagement, were often felt to be confusing and sometimes disregarded. Secondly, some felt that the online facility was not an adequate substitute for a face-to-face meeting, where the project idea could be discussed more generally and in greater depth. Finally, many felt that the focus on deprivation and challenge in the application was too great and an alternative emphasis on inter faith impact would have been more helpful.

“The turnaround has been very quick and the feedback in terms of improving the application was very good”.

Salaam Peace – London

“The process was really quick. We modified a leaflet we’d used before and the people involved in the project, especially those deciding on the money, were really efficient. We applied one week and got the approval the week after. It was really quick and good for us because we didn’t have to deal with long forms or complications: it really helped”.

Meet, Greet and Mix for Easter — Oldham

The assistance of Near Neighbours Programme Coordinators was cited as important, even critical, for filling out the application form. Coordinators also expressed their desire for involvement at this stage, stating that they wished to ensure that both they and the local vicars saw applications before they are submitted to the Church Urban Fund.

### 2. The Role of Local Clergy

The role of local clergy was widely reported to be one of encouragement rather than control. Clergy were shown to be important in launching projects, referring individuals to Near Neighbours and supporting applications, rather than directly managing projects on a day to day basis. The connection between local clergy and project organisers was shown to be important in helping to build networks and promoting the project to the wider community. For example, some interviewees stated that when local vicars attended project launches or concluding exhibitions their profile was raised.

### **3. Accessing Under-Represented Communities**

Though the Near Neighbours Fund is administered by the Church Urban Fund, interviewees generally perceived its resources to be open to all faiths. Projects organised by churches (Anglican or otherwise) proved to be successful in involving members of minority communities. For example, a project in East London, initiated by a local vicar, brought together a member of a Hindu organisation, a retired member of the church and another, more active member of the church to develop a peace garden in the churchyard where there had recently been a violent crime.

Some interviewees did suggest, however, that Near Neighbours could give greater consideration to encouraging participation by smaller religious communities and community organisations. A Jewish project organiser emphasised the importance of geographic focus, stating that she had pushed the London Coordinator to extend the reach of Near Neighbours funding to include areas with a significant Jewish population. A Muslim project organiser suggested that religious leaders of all faiths could become more involved in the application process, remarking that it *“would help to embed things in the community and give people a stronger connection with the project”*. Finally, the Birmingham Coordinator mentioned that she felt there was a need to go beyond religious institutions to encourage new applicants: *“I think that we’ve mostly talked to Gurdwaras and Mandirs and I think that maybe they have the same reluctance to ask for money as a Mosque does. The applications that we have had have come from the Hindu Council or the Civic Association rather than places of worship. I think that those places are more numerous and less visible... Near Neighbours representatives have visited places of worship and participated in religious festivals, but in the end it just hasn’t come to anything [i.e. new applications]”*.

#### **The Role of Programme Coordinators**

Interviewees repeatedly stressed the importance of Programme Coordinators in supporting the application process and in some cases, delivering the project successfully. Interviewees who had received visits or advice from the Coordinators all praised their interest and involvement, observing how different they felt this model was from conventional funding agencies, which a few interviewees stated to be ‘hands-off’.

Those project organisers who faced internal difficulties often felt that more consultation with the Coordinator would have helped. For example, one interviewee thought the Coordinator was very helpful during the application process but felt that a fundamental error in the timing of the project could have been avoided if he had been able to talk to the Coordinator during the design and implementation stages. This was not necessarily the Coordinator’s fault but rather the limited time in which the recipients had to use the funds. The need for consultation does raise a follow-up question, though, as to how the Coordinator can feasibly

manage contact with all on-going projects. One suggestion is to use quarterly meetings between local project organisers to inform the Coordinator and provide a forum for networking.

#### **4. Best Practices in Project Development**

Deriving best practices was based on reviewing the design, management, potential sustainability, and perceived impact by Coordinators and organisers of projects. The following list is not exhaustive because of the scope of the research. The intention is to indicate patterns in effective project management:

a) **Local connection**

The local experience and social networks of the project organisers were shown to be important for ensuring the involvement of members of multiple faith communities as well as those with no faith. When social media was used it proved effective in expanding networks beyond the individuals involved.

b) **Inclusive project management**

Likewise, projects led by a team reflective of the diversity of the area were successful at attracting wider participation. For example, a weekly class for parents and babies was successful in encouraging families from a range of ethnic and national origins to attend because the staff, voluntary and paid, were recruited from different groups within the local area.

c) **Timing**

Timing was also shown to be critical. Some of the projects struggled with participation levels due to poor scheduling or the length of time organisers had to spend funds. Again, external consultation before launching projects may help to prevent this.

d) **Coordinator involvement**

The involvement of the Coordinator over the life of the project was instrumental. In addition to offering guidance, Coordinators often played a vital role in supporting and encouraging their project organisers. The relationship between the Coordinator, local clergy and project organisers was shown to be consistently important in embedding the projects in both an institutional framework and a social network. This sense of connection ensured that project organisers felt communication was both responsive to their needs and relevant to their work. As one project organiser stated: *“The worst approach to*



*programme funding is when it comes top-down... [With Near Neighbours], we have had a very personal relationship”.*

e) **Sustainability**

The support of host organisations, voluntary commitment and/or service fees were shown to be important in allowing projects to continue after their funding period had ended. For example, Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre began charged £2 per child for activities such as sports, dance, parties and arts and crafts. The money accrued from the Near Neighbours stage of the project is now being used to continue the activity after the funding period.

f) **Funding workshops**

Several project organisers stated that they had found workshops organised by Near Neighbours on funding and sustainability to be helpful. The Coordinator from Leicester organised funding workshops (7 in all) and reported that assessment in the evaluation forms had, for the most part, been marked as ‘very positive’. All of these workshops, with the exception of one in Bradford, attracted participation from diverse communities. In total, 94 people participated in the workshops.

## 5. Assessing Project Impact

Grant holders generally perceived the aim of Near Neighbours to be the building of local relationships across different faith and non-faith populations, though a few organisers expressed some confusion about whether or not the Fund had more specific aims. One organiser asked: *“Are there specific criteria Near Neighbours wants to achieve? Did we fulfil funder goals?”*

In terms of the evaluation form itself, some project organisers felt that the form was not sufficiently connected to individual projects. Caroline Moore from Community Hubs admitted that she was *“a bit bemused about the evaluation form. It felt a bit different from the*

*rest of the Near Neighbours experience. The evaluation needs to be more in keeping with the way they run everything else”*. She recommended that a personal interview in addition to a form might improve the evaluation process. Others, like Graham Barker from Faith Walks East, had conducted their own evaluations.

“I think there has been impact... but the nature of these projects is that impact is quite difficult to measure”.

North Coordinator

When asked to discuss the impact of their projects grant holders defined impact in a number of ways:

a) **Better Relations**

The first perceived impact was in bringing individuals of different backgrounds together and encouraging better relations. However, what this objective meant differed considerably between regions. In diverse East London, this objective appeared attainable simply through networking. Meanwhile, in the North, some projects struggled to engage diverse participants due to significant residential segregation. However, successful projects were shown to challenge this division of space, with cross community engagement leading to participants and leaders exploring parts of the city

"I think what I've come to understand over the last couple of years is that in a number of ways social interaction — people meeting one another — is transformative in communities and does change things at quite a deep level. So things that might seem quite superficial — it might be a coffee morning, it might be shared meals, actually have a huge ripple effect and can change the way a community sees itself, can change relationships on the street, can change how safe people perceive a community to be and can help with a feeling of well-being generally".

Birmingham Coordinator

which had been previously been perceived as 'off limits'. As one interviewee stated: *"If ten years ago you had said to me, would I feel comfortable walking in certain parts of the town... I would say no... But now because of those relationships that we have built up, I feel safe in going to those parts of town because I know people there and I know people I can trust. I feel safe bringing young people there to work and to participate in projects"*.

b) **Improved Knowledge**

The second perceived impact was improved knowledge of other religious groups. For example, Community Hubs, a London community organisation to support young people, organised a trip to an inter faith conference in Germany with the support of Near Neighbours. The organiser, Caroline Moore, stated that *"The project had a colossal impact on the young people [who participated]... What the young people had learnt, what they articulated, was so different from what they said on the way there. They learned a lot about the Jewish faith — half of them had never met Jews [before the trip]"*.

c) **Inspiring Leadership**

The third was inspiring and empowering individuals in their own community. Kerry Coke, from the parent and child project at the Salvation Army in Stepney, described this in the following terms: *"What Near Neighbours does is give people a bit of fire in their bellies or support to do [their projects]. They learn a lot by doing it"*. The ease of the application process and the support of Project Coordinators were both cited as important in giving confidence to individuals to pursue further projects. Graham Barker from Faith Walks East remarked: *"[our Project Coordinator] was interested and supportive... if you do that as a funder, people will keep coming up with projects... I could happily do 10 of these projects"*.

d) ***New Initiatives***

The fourth perceived impact was the continued involvement of individuals or plans to develop a new project. For instance, the Community Hubs organiser commented that following the trip to an inter faith conference in Germany she was now talking to the Coordinator about organising a similar conference in the UK.

e) ***Mental Well-being***

Finally, a few organisers cited improvement in mental well-being as an impact. The social experience, the 'neutrality' of the project space, learning new skills, and often being creative through activities like cooking or crafts were all cited as having a positive impact on participants' mental health. One participant commented: *"I was going through a really bad patch...I was emotionally very upset [but] the support from the women in the group... was very, very good and helpful for me"*.



### 1. The structure of project design, management, and evaluation needs to be further defined:

- a) Without impinging on their independent initiative, the role of Coordinator could be further standardised. This standardisation could include setting a schedule of consultation and interaction with project organisers during the life of a project, particularly to address problems.
- b) The establishment of regular local, even neighbourhood level, meetings between project organisers could facilitate knowledge-sharing and problem-solving and provide the Programme Coordinator more information on individual projects. Those interviewed rarely knew of other successful bids in the area. Often project organisers were keen to know details of others who had successfully received funding so that they could potentially seek to collaborate and/or share resources. A secondary impact of regular meetings would be to build relationships and ideally trust across communities.
- c) A toolkit for project development, publicity and evaluation could be considered. Project organisers, particularly in the North, remarked that they felt ill-equipped to publicise their activities and often relied on posters to advertise events. This was generally due to a lack of confidence in using social media and other online resources. A brief 'how to' guide for publicity drawing on examples of best practice might be useful for the future.
- d) Greater emphasis on evaluation at a grassroots level could be helpful in encouraging sustainability. The evaluation form disseminated was conducted at a national level through an online form but was not easily available for public use. Including project organisers to a greater extent in the evaluation process may be helpful in developing new projects or sustaining the existing ones. In the future it could be beneficial to provide the project organisers with some form of evaluation exercise in order to help them understand the impact of their own projects better and to contribute to the design of other initiatives.
- e) Integrate financial sustainability into the application and management of the project. If Near Neighbours could support more funding workshops for project organisers that would be helpful. The London Coordinator is encouraging grant holders to join the local CVS in order to access their support services.

- f) Support mentorship and dissemination of best practices to improve project effectiveness. For instance, as cited above, including different communities in project management contributed to diverse participation in the activities themselves.
- g) Encourage connections with local institutions and voluntary organisations in order to access resources and become more embedded in the community.

## **2. Broaden and clarify the expected impacts of Near Neighbours grants:**

Based on the findings of the research, integrate the range of impacts expressed by the project organisers into the application and funding process. These impacts could include the following:

- a) Deeper relations between faith communities.
- b) Cultivation of local leadership.
- c) Provision of services and activities for families, youth and children, older people, and the unemployed.
- d) Skill development through various projects, for example, in arts, cooking, volunteering, caring for children and so on.
- e) Benefits to emotional and physical well-being: for example, some project organisers cited mental well-being as having improved for some participants.

## **3. Broaden participation in Near Neighbours funding:**

- a) Clergy from different faiths and secular activists could also be encouraged to work together, as they already have in some instances, to be more involved in the Near Neighbours funding process and the implementation of projects.
- b) Encourage other local institutions to become involved in Near Neighbours projects. For instance, in East London, a school with a very diverse student population supported a group of mothers to form a lunch club, as parents had tended to group together according to language and ethnicity.
- c) Support project organisers who want to teach particular skills, perhaps through networking with local colleges, private teachers, and universities. Training Near Neighbours grant holders to teach skills could also enhance the sustainability of projects and widen their community appeal.

- d) Encourage the dissemination of outputs like films and photographic exhibitions to expand publicity of particular projects and engage more local and regional partners in Near Neighbours work, for example, community centres or universities.



### Selected Project Details

The following projects were selected in each of the three regions for evaluation:

#### 1) North: Oldham, Burnley and Bradford

**Near Neighbours Coordinator: Carlo Schröder**

**Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre (Afrasiab Anwar):** This project works with young people from across the borough of Burnley to promote interaction and inter faith dialogue through a variety of creative and educational tools as part of a structured extra-curricular programme. The sessions were run in the evenings in collaboration with various local partners. Activities included designing and making religious artifacts, exploring traditional Islamic music, Hindi dance, *Nasheed* classes (Islamic vocal music) and choral singing. There were also Arabic classes and a faith trail to conclude the project.

**Crazy Crafters (Diane Flynn):** The aim of the project was to create a self-sustaining, fully inclusive group of all ages, abilities and faiths using arts and crafts to encourage social activities and well-being within the community. The project ran a total of 34 sessions and had well over 200 participants taking part in a wide variety of art and crafting activities. The project has enabled a mixed group of three people to set up a new socially inclusive craft group that they have called Crazy Crafters.

**Community Network Medlock Valley and Alexandra wards (Kevin Lloyd):** This project used a variety of activities, including cooking and sports to make friendships (especially amongst young people) across the self-imposed territories in the area. The project ran during the holiday season with the aim of bringing young people and their families together.

#### 2) Birmingham

**Near Neighbours Coordinator: Jessica Foster**

**The Old Print Works (Sophie Handy):** The Old Print Works is a community and arts centre in Balsall Heath, Birmingham, which sought to develop the activities of the centre following a consultation with local people. The steering group involved women of different faiths from various community organisations. Building on a world music programme which brought together people from diverse backgrounds, this project hosted arts and craft-based skill sharing sessions over a ten week period. Women had the opportunity to learn from each

other and a tutor, and used these sessions to pursue income generating activities. A grant funded sessional fees, venue hire, publicity, and materials.

**Birmingham Citizens (Sajida Madni):** Birmingham Citizens is a community organising group with 33 member institutions representing a variety of faith centres, schools and community groups. Having listened to the concerns of residents it identified a need to increase provision for young people in the city, particularly in Lozells and Handsworth. The project took place in three stages: i) An initial everyday interactions stage drew in over 100 young people from member institutions. These weekly events facilitated friendship and better understanding between participants, and introduced them to the project's longer term strategy; ii) A second stage built on these relationships to identify local needs, and took the young people on a two day residential training course given by the Gamaliel Foundation; iii) A third stage was a public event for over 500 citizens to celebrate the young people's achievements. A Near Neighbours grant funded the first stage of the project.

**Lozells Methodist Centre, Soup Kitchen (Hayley Wright and Revd Helen Jobling):** The Lozells Methodist Church Centre (LMCC) is situated in the heart of a very ethnically & religiously diverse part of Birmingham. With the support of Near Neighbours the Centre was able to support the extended hours of a sessional worker, tasked with supporting volunteers who wished to run a project. Projects included lunch clubs and arts and crafts events and were shown to successfully engage a diversity of volunteers and participants.

### **3) London**

#### **Near Neighbours Coordinator: Reverend Tim Clapton**

**Leaders in the Community (Caroline Moore):** A youth-led organisation based in Tower Hamlets that works to ensure young people are engaged locally, have access to jobs, and exercise a voice on community issues. The project sought to build on previous inter faith work by taking a group of six young Muslims and Christians (unfortunately, the project had to be organised too quickly to recruit Jewish participants, who normally are not part of the organisation's work) to the JCM Partners in Dialogue Conference in Germany. The participants took part in workshops before and after the conference, and produced a film to document their learning. The aim is for the participants to share their new understanding with their peers and faith leaders in East London. The grant funded conference admissions, travel, accommodation, and film production.

**Babysong / Salvation Army (Kerry Coke):** The Salvation Army in Stepney has piloted a Babysong project, which gives local parents the opportunity to meet together and bond with each other and their children. The project, still ongoing due to Salvation Army support, meets weekly and attracts participants from a wide variety of faith and ethnic backgrounds. Sessions involve an hour of structured musical activities, then an hour of socialising with occasional additional activities. The grant from Near Neighbours allowed the project to run for a year, covering hall hire, refreshments, suitable equipment, and sessional worker fees.



**Peace Garden (Sabina Radeva-Williams):** Peace Garden is an East London project based at the Church of St. Saviour's, Walthamstow. The project consists of members of the community from different faiths volunteering to develop a garden on the grounds of the Church. The inspiration for the project was to overcome feelings about the space, as it had been the scene of a violent crime. The funding is largely paying for materials to build the garden.

**Salaam Peace (Sab Syed):** Salaam Peace is an East London charity bringing young people together through sport. It has particularly good links with the Muslim community, but works with people of all faiths. Its Festive Sports programme in Hackney and Walthamstow is delivering three events around Easter, Eid, and Christmas. Each event aims to include around 200 young people from the community, and involve a football tournament and workshops on unity and respect. The grant funds sessional fees, venue hire, transport, refreshments, publicity, and insurance.

**Jewish Volunteering Network (Leonie Lewis and Mike Silverstone):** The Jewish Volunteering Network collaborated with Interfaith Action to promote volunteering amongst young people in Barkingside, Redbridge. The project had three phases: a half-day seminar and information event, volunteer placements, and a celebration and story-sharing event. The initial seminar provided training on working collaboratively with other faiths, providing information about volunteering and creating social action projects, and helping students to discover local volunteering opportunities. A grant funded publicity, fees for youth workers, room hire, refreshments, administration, and travel.

**Faith Walks East (Graham Barker):** Walk East was established in 2010 as a social enterprise to promote the benefits of walking around the East End of London. Previous projects include 'Photos from the Footpath', which involved a multi faith group of local residents taking a photo-walk course in their Bethnal Green community. This project was organised in Stepney and Whitechapel and included 12-15 local residents visiting and documenting East London Mosque, St Dunstan's Church, and Nelson Street Synagogue. The grant funded sessional fees, photobook production, publicity, and refreshments.



### Research Participants

1. Afrasiab Anwar, Project Coordinator, Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre
2. Carlo Schröder, Near Neighbours Coordinator, Burnley, Oldham and Bradford
3. Diane Flynn, Project Coordinator, Crazy Crafters, Burnley
4. Hayley Wright, Project Facilitator, Lozells Methodist Church / Centre, Birmingham
5. Revd Helen Jobling, Project Coordinator, Lozells Methodist Church / Centre, Birmingham
6. Jessica Foster, Near Neighbours Coordinator, Birmingham
7. Kevin Lloyd, Project Coordinator, Community Network Medlock Valley and Alexandra wards, Meet Greet and Mix for Easter, Oldham
8. Mary Jones, Project Participant, The Old Print Works, Birmingham
9. Sajida Madni, Project Coordinator, Birmingham Citizens
10. Sophie Handy, Project Coordinator, The Old Print Works, Birmingham
11. Revd Tim Clapton, Near Neighbours Coordinator, London
12. Sabina Radeva-Williams and other team members, Peace Garden, London
13. Graham Barker, Faith Walks East, London
14. Leonie Lewis and Mike Silverstone, Jewish Volunteering Network, London
15. Sab Syed, Salaam Peace, London
16. Kerry Coke, Salvation Army (Babysong), London
17. Caroline Moore, Leaders in The Community, London



### Examples of Research Questions

*Research questions included the following:*

- 1) How did the idea come about? How did the initiators establish partnerships? How did they communicate during the delivery of the project?
- 2) How was the application process? Were the processes of designing the project, implementing it, and assessing achievement of goals clear?
- 3) How experienced were the initiators in developing community projects? How much was this a factor in the success of the project?
- 4) How important was the Near Neighbours coordinator for helping launch and carry out the project?
- 5) How important were other institutions (schools, local government, religious institutions) to making the project work?
- 6) What were their goals? What were the positive and negative unintended consequences of the project?
- 7) Do they have suggestions for making projects more effective and sustainable?
- 8) How much communication do they have with other grant recipients in their local area? Do they help each other?



## **Near Neighbours Application Guidance Notes**

*These Guidance Notes are available on the Church Urban Fund website for potential applicants:*  
[http://www.cuf.org.uk/sites/default/files/NN\\_documents/Near\\_Neighbours\\_Guidance\\_2013.pdf](http://www.cuf.org.uk/sites/default/files/NN_documents/Near_Neighbours_Guidance_2013.pdf)

### **Near Neighbours Grant Guidance 2013**

*Near Neighbours is a Christian charity set up to help people of different faiths come together to change their neighbourhoods for the better. The grants programme which is part of Near Neighbours is being administered by our partner organisation, the Church Urban Fund. Near Neighbours is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government. We will work with those of any faith or none.*

*Church Urban Fund is a Christian charity, with a vision to bring about lasting and positive change in the lives of people on the margins of society – through investing resources, influencing change makers, and impacting on the causes of poverty. Church Urban Fund relies on regular contributions from different parts of the Church and donations from thousands of generous individuals.*

### **The Near Neighbours Grant Programme aims to:**

*“...encourage stronger civil society in areas that are multi-religious and multi-ethnic by creating association, friendship and neighbourliness. It intends to bring together people of different faiths and of no faiths to transform local communities for the better”.*

*Grant requests from £250 up to £5,000 will be considered. This is a rolling programme and there are no deadline dates.*

### **Examples of projects/activities Near Neighbours may consider for funding:**

- *Create First Encounters that develop new relationships between people of different faith and ethnic communities and encourage the development of mutual understanding - initiatives which*

*begin the process of developing friendship and neighbourliness. These encounters can be key moments of transformation in a neighbourhood. Examples of this: a Diwali/Christmas event, an awayday for a two different youth groups, or a mums and daughters craft day.*

- *Create Everyday Interactions at the everyday level of community life by encouraging families and individuals to come together regularly to eat together, jointly participating in religious and other festivals, encouraging children to play together in a neighbourhood. Specific examples of this might be: weekly adult football training, a summer Saturday's children's club, or a series of joint events between two places of worship.*

- *Create Civil Engagement which brings together people from different faith or ethnic communities to work together to change their neighbourhoods for the better. This will include establishing organisations and initiatives which have members of different faith communities involved. Examples of this: establishing a joint needle exchange drugs project; setting up a monthly environmental clean up group; beginning a toddler and parents group in a local centre.*

*These must be local initiatives planned by and involving local people from small organisations. We will not fund national organisations working locally, nor are we likely to fund local authority initiatives or schools projects. We will look especially favourably on applications from diverse neighbourhoods and those with particular issues of deprivation and challenge. A key criterion is that grants are spent in ways which bring together people from different ethnic and faith communities which impact specifically locally. If there is the intention and likelihood of lasting relationships between people, then a grant is more likely to be awarded.*

### **Where will we Fund Applications?**

*We will only fund applications to Near Neighbours in certain locations (parishes) from the following areas:*

- *The City of Leicester.*
- *The boundaries of Bradford MDC, Burnley BC and Oldham MDC.*
- *In the City of Birmingham wards of Ladywood, Soho, Nechells, Lozells and East Handsworth, Aston, Washwood Heath, Bordesley Green, Edgbaston, Moseley and Kings Heath, Sparkbrook, Springfield, South Yardley and Hodge Hill.*

- *In the London boroughs of Islington, Greenwich, Hackney, Lewisham, Newham, Redbridge, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.*

*Within these areas, we intend to fund work in places which are diverse and those with issues of deprivation and challenge. A full list of eligible parishes are on the Near Neighbours website at [www.near-neighbours.org.uk](http://www.near-neighbours.org.uk) (Church of England parishes). If you want to find out what parish you are in you can put your postcode in on the website <http://www.achurchnearyou.com/> or visit your local Church of England parish church to find out. We encourage you to discuss your proposals with them, as the local vicar will be asked to comment on your ideas and send the form on to us.*

### **What can grants be given for?**

- *Near Neighbours Grants can pay for specific activities but not for on-going revenue expenditure, existing salary costs, deficit funding, or retrospective spending. However we would consider requests for expanded hours for sessional staff such as youth workers, for a specific activity over a period of six months, for example.*
- *Grants should be claimed or part-claimed within three months and fully spent within 6 months of approval.*
- *We will invest in environmental, social, cultural, artistic and sporting ideas but they need to fulfill the criteria of bringing people together from different faiths, being local, and transformative of local communities. See the funding criteria for more guidance.*
- *We are able to fund charities, religious organisations, Community Interest Companies (CICs), social enterprises, and groups of individuals focusing on community benefit. We will look especially favourably on small faith or community organisations with a turnover of less than £150,000.*

*We recognise the importance of forming partnerships with local voluntary groups, statutory organisations and with ecumenical and inter faith projects. The Fund is particularly pleased to receive applications from people of different faith groups or none, working in partnership with people of different faiths and within the criteria. Funding cannot be granted to individuals but may be given to small groups of individuals where there is a reputable local organisation willing to act as an accountable body for the funds.*

**Priorities:**

*Applications showing the following qualities will be given priority:*

- *Where the purpose of the proposal is first and foremost to bring local neighbours of different faiths and ethnicities together to build trusting relationships through an activity or project.*
- *People from more than one faith group are involved in planning and implementing the proposal.*
- *New and innovative projects with a high local impact at the neighbourhood level.*
- *Proposals from small faith or community organisations or groups.*
- *Proposals from minority faith communities.*
- *Organisations which haven't been given Near Neighbours funding before, unless it is an exceptional idea.*
- *It is clear what difference the activity will make to the local community and you can demonstrate how the activity will lead onto new or deeper sustainable relationships.*
- *It shows value for money.*

**What We Will NOT fund**

1. *Projects outside the areas listed above.*
2. *Individuals.*
3. *Organisations with significant reserves.*
4. *Existing salary costs, except where there is a significant increase in hours in order to expand an existing project or begin new work.*
5. *Ongoing revenue costs (core costs).*
6. *Repeated activities (such as an annual summer camp or regular training sessions that have happened previously).*
7. *Unspecified or excessive volunteer expenses.*

8. *Work that has already been completed or started (retrospective funding). We will not accept applications received by Church Urban Fund less than 14 calendar days before any of the proposed activities are due to take place.*
9. *Deficits or loans*
10. *Campaigning and fundraising activity*
11. *Revenue and capital funding for national voluntary/ community organisations and public and private sector organisations*
12. *Activities open only to one faith group*
13. *Activity promoting a specific faith*
14. *Faith leaders' salaries*
15. *General repairs and refurbishment, internal re-ordering of places of worship, building maintenance or DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliance General appeals*

### **Grant Conditions**

*When we make the grant to you we will outline conditions; for example, how you should report back to us – there is a short evaluation form we ask you to complete about six months after the funding has been given. As well as reporting on the activity and impact of the project, we ask for details of the ethnicity and faith background of the project beneficiaries. Please contact Near Neighbours if you have any queries on this. If you do not have a bank account it may be possible to pay the funding to the local church, Presence and Engagement Centre, or a reputable registered charity to hold on your behalf – we will discuss this with you. Please be aware that additional conditions may be attached as required. These will always be stated at the time a funding offer is made.*

### **Standard application procedure – overview**

1. *Review whether your activity/project fits in with our criteria.*
2. *If yes, contact your local parish church. Discuss your proposal.*
3. *Complete your application form and return this (with a detailed budget and your latest accounts) to the local parish church and send a copy of all the documents to your local*



*Presence and Engagement Centre, listed below. You can send them by email or by post. If the church is unable to deal with your application, for example if there is no vicar at the time, the Presence and Engagement Centre can be approached for advice and support. If you have questions about the process and criteria, they will be able to give you some help. If you need help to fill in the form or there are difficulties in filling in the form, for example language issues, see what support your local Presence and Engagement Centre can give you.*

- 4. Your application will be reviewed locally before being forwarded to Church Urban Fund and Near Neighbours officers for final assessment.*
- 5. We may request further information from those setting up the project – this may be face to face, by telephone, by letter or email. The aim in these conversations is to assist in effectively describing the project and to help ensure that the issues involved in the project have been thought through.*
- 6. Once the form has been given to the church and the Presence and Engagement Centre, it will be sent to CUF and Near Neighbours; CUF and Near Neighbours will endeavour to assess the application and communicate with you within 14 days, if all of the appropriate documentation has been enclosed.*



**Near Neighbours Fund Application Form 2013**

***Application***

**1. About the applicant organisation**

<b><i>Name of accountable group or organisation:</i></b>			
<b><i>Organisation address (including town and postcode):</i></b>			
<b><i>Charity number and company number (if applicable):</i></b>			
<b><i>Phone:</i></b>		<b><i>Organisation email:</i></b>	
<b><i>Fax:</i></b>		<b><i>Website:</i></b>	
<b><i>Please detail how many staff/ volunteers your organisation has:</i></b>		<b><i>Number of full-time paid staff:</i></b>	
		<b><i>Number of part-time staff:</i></b>	

	<b>Number of volunteers:</b>	
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## **2. About you**

<b>Your name, including title (Mr/Ms etc):</b>			
<b>Your position in the above organisation:</b>			
<b>Your contact address, if different from above (including town and postcode):</b>			
<b>Phone:</b>		<b>Your email:</b>	
<b>Fax:</b>		<b>Website:</b>	

## **3. Background information**

<b>Have you applied to Church Urban Fund or Near Neighbours before?</b>	<b>Yes / No / Don't know</b>
<b>If so, under what name and Reference No.?</b>	

<b>Full postcode and electoral ward in which the project will be based:<sup>1</sup></b>		
<b>What Church of England parish is the project in, or which parish church have you given this application to?<sup>2</sup></b>		
<b>Please summarise your proposal in no more than 25 words:</b>		
<b>Please specify costs associated with the project for which you are applying:</b>	<b>Total cost of project:</b>	<b>£</b>
	<b>Amount requested:</b>	<b>£</b>
	<b>Amount already raised:</b>	<b>£</b>

<sup>1</sup>not all areas are eligible – to check, see the Guidance and look at the Near Neighbours website

<sup>2</sup>to find your parish church, you can put your postcode into the website <http://www.achurchnearyou.com/> or ask at your local Church of England church

<p><b><i>How will you bring additional funding or volunteer time to this project?</i></b></p>	
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***4. About your organisation, faith basis, and neighbourhood***

<p><b><i>What is the main purpose of your group/organisation?</i></b></p>	
<p><b><i>Do you identify with a particular religion, denomination, community, or network?</i></b></p>	
<p><b><i>We will look especially favourably on applications from diverse neighbourhoods and those with particular issues of deprivation and challenge within the eligible areas. Could you tell us a little about your neighbourhood?</i></b></p>	

**5. About the proposal and what you intend to do**

***a) How will you bring people of different faiths together, either for the first time or in a meaningful new way? (i.e. First Encounters, Everyday Interactions, or Civil Engagement?) What exactly will you do and when will it happen? (i.e. What? Why? When?) No more than 200 words***

***b) How do your proposals actively involve people of different faiths or ethnicities (for example, in project planning or delivery)? Please be as specific as possible, mentioning names or partner organisations where appropriate. No more than 200 words***

***c) What do you hope the impact of this work will be? (i.e. What difference will this make?) Are there any future plans or projects in mind following on from this? (i.e. How will you sustain the relationships created?) No more than 200 words***

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***d) Who will be undertaking the work, what experience do they have, and how will the project/activity be managed?***

***(i.e. Who and How?) No more than 200 words***

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**6. Project timeframe**

<b><i>If your application is approved, when do you plan to start and complete the project? Please provide an expected date</i></b>	<b><i>Start Date:</i></b>  <b><i>Completion Date:</i></b>
<b><i>If your application is approved, when will you request payment of your grant? Please provide an expected</i></b>	<b><i>Payment Date:</i></b>

<b>date</b>	
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**7. Required documents**

<b>Please indicate that you have included the following, if you have them.</b>	<b>Latest Annual Report and audited accounts (if applicable)</b>	
	<b>Breakdown of proposed expenditure</b>	
	<b>Copies of written quotes or estimates (if applicable)</b>	

**8. Declaration**

<b><i>I am authorised to act on behalf of the aforementioned group/organisation in relation to this application, and to the best of my knowledge all information given is a truthful representation of facts</i></b>
<b>Signature of applicant:</b>
<b>Date:</b>
<b><i>When completed, this form must be sent to your local Church of England parish church, who will send it to Church Urban Fund (acting for Near Neighbours in assessing and administering the grants) and a copy must also be given to the nearest Presence and Engagement Centre (see</i></b>



***Guidance). If for any reason it is not possible for the parish church to send it to CUF, for example if there is no vicar at the current time, you can get in touch with the local Presence and Engagement centre for advice. Their details are at the bottom of this form and are on the Near Neighbours website.***

**Comments on the proposals:**

***To be completed by the Vicar/Rector<sup>3</sup> of the local Church of England parish church.***

***Signature :***

***Position:***

***Date:***

**Presence and engagement centres:**

- ***Bradford Churches for Dialogue and Diversity, Bradford***

***Contact: Carlo Schröder at [near.neighbours@bcdd.org.uk](mailto:near.neighbours@bcdd.org.uk) / 01274668312***

***Address: BCDD, Thornbury Centre, Leeds Old Road, Bradford, BD3 8JX***

- ***The Contextual Theology Centre, London***

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<sup>3</sup>Or their equivalent – Team Vicar, Curate etc.

**Contact: Timothy Clapton at [nearneighbours@theology-centre.org](mailto:nearneighbours@theology-centre.org) / 02077801600**

**Address: CTC, The Royal Foundation of St Katharine, 2 Butcher Row, London, E14 8DS**

- **Faithful Neighbourhoods Centre, Birmingham**

**Contact: Jessica Foster at [jess@nearneighbours.com](mailto:jess@nearneighbours.com) / 01216751156**

**Address: FNC, 10/12 Court Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, B11 4LX**

- **St Philip's Centre for Study and Engagement, Leicester**

**Contact: John McCallum at [nn@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:nn@stphilipscentre.co.uk) / 01162738813**

**Address: St Philips Centre, 2A Stoughton Drive North, Leicester, LE5 5UB**

## Appendix VII

### Samples of literature created by Near Neighbours projects:

1. Faith Walks East, London



### Photos from the Footpath Taking a Faithful Look at Bethnal Green



Free photo-walk course  
Starts Tuesday 13 November 2012



## 2. The Old Print Workshops, Birmingham



### COMMUNITY CRAFTS SKILLS STUDIO Spring Programme 2013

Do you want to learn a new skill, meet new people and do something creative?

**Every Wednesday 10.00am - 2.00pm at The Old Print Works (OPW)**

Batik	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> February
Felt Making	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> February
Ceramics art/Mosaic pm	Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> February
Resyeling & Upcycling	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> March
Ceramics art/Mosaic pm	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March
Introduction to Dreammaking techniques	Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> March
Textiles & Quilting	Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
Glass Painting	Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> April
Wood Work- Frames	Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> April
Willow Lanterns	Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> May
Bees ReVisit Session	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> May

**Also Fridays 10.00am - 2.00pm at the Wesleyan Holiness Church**

Crochet and Macramé	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> March
Bag Bag techniques	Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> April

*Please note workshops are during term time only.*

Register NOW to book your place on this exciting new programme!  
Contact Sophie Handy 07768 431124, [handysophie@yahoo.com](mailto:handysophie@yahoo.com)

**Workshops are FREE, Refreshments will be provided.**

You will be working with artists, who make a living from their craft.

The Old Print Works wants to support your creative business.

This project has been supported by the Near Neighbours Fund and seeks to bring local people together through the learning, sharing and exchanging of creative skills and ideas.

The Old Print Works - 506 Moseley Road, Birmingham, B12 9AH, Tel: 0121 270 0817  
Wesleyan Holiness Church - 27 Corner Road, Boleat Heath, B12 9QT, Tel: 0121 440 5710



### 3. Peace Garden at St. Saviour's, Walthamstow



*We are creating a lovely **"Peace Garden"** at St. Saviour's church,  
Markhouse, Walthamstow.*

*We will be working every Thursday in **September** and **October** between  
5-7 pm and we would welcome any volunteers to join us!*

***"Peace garden"** is about the local community, from any religion, any age  
and any background.*

*Let's build our future with love, organic plants and creative touch!*

*Love & Peace*

*Contact:*

*Steven Saxby; Tel: 078 5555 1050; E-mail: [stevensaxby@btinternet.com](mailto:stevensaxby@btinternet.com);*

*Sabina Nedelcheva-Williams; Tel: 07506 88 55 22; E-mail: [savanahyster@gmail.com](mailto:savanahyster@gmail.com);*

*Valery Brestin; Tel: 0788 2231 301; E-mail: [valou1016@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:valou1016@yahoo.co.uk);*