



Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

FAITH, EQUALITY & SOCIAL ACTION

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MY ARGUMENT IN 25 MINUTES

- 1) The changing nature of faith and belief on our society
- 2) The pandemic opened up a new conversation about religion and belief and created the conditions for a 'new normal' of partnership-working across faith and secular agencies.
- 3) What does public policy look like if we manage to invest in this 'new normal' and work strategically to keep that space alive?

2021 CENSUS – RELIGION ENGLAND AND WALES (94% CHOSE TO ANSWER VOLUNTARY ‘RELIGION’ QUESTION)

| Religion | 2011 (number) | 2021 (number) | 2011 (percent) | 2021 (percent) |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Buddhist | 248,580 | 272,508 | 0.4 | 0.5 |
| Christian | 33,268,056 | 27,522,672 | 59.3 | 46.2 |
| Hindu | 817,679 | 1,032,775 | 1.5 | 1.7 |
| Jewish | 265,073 | 271,327 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Muslim | 2,720,425 | 3,868,133 | 4.9 | 6.5 |
| Sikh | 423,345 | 524,140 | 0.8 | 0.9 |
| Other religion | 240,849 | 348,334 | 0.4 | 0.6 |
| No religion | 14,115,359 | 22,162,062 | 25.2 | 37.2 |
| Not answered | 3,976,542 | 3,595,589 | 7.1 | 6.0 |

CENSUS 2021 – RELIGION AND BELIEF BY REGION

- London remains the most religiously diverse region of England in 2021, with over a quarter (25.3%) of all usual residents reporting a religion other than “Christian”;
- When you add these to the ‘Christian’ population (i.e 40.65%) London is 66% religious and 27% no religion (those who chose not to answer the question on religion were 7%)

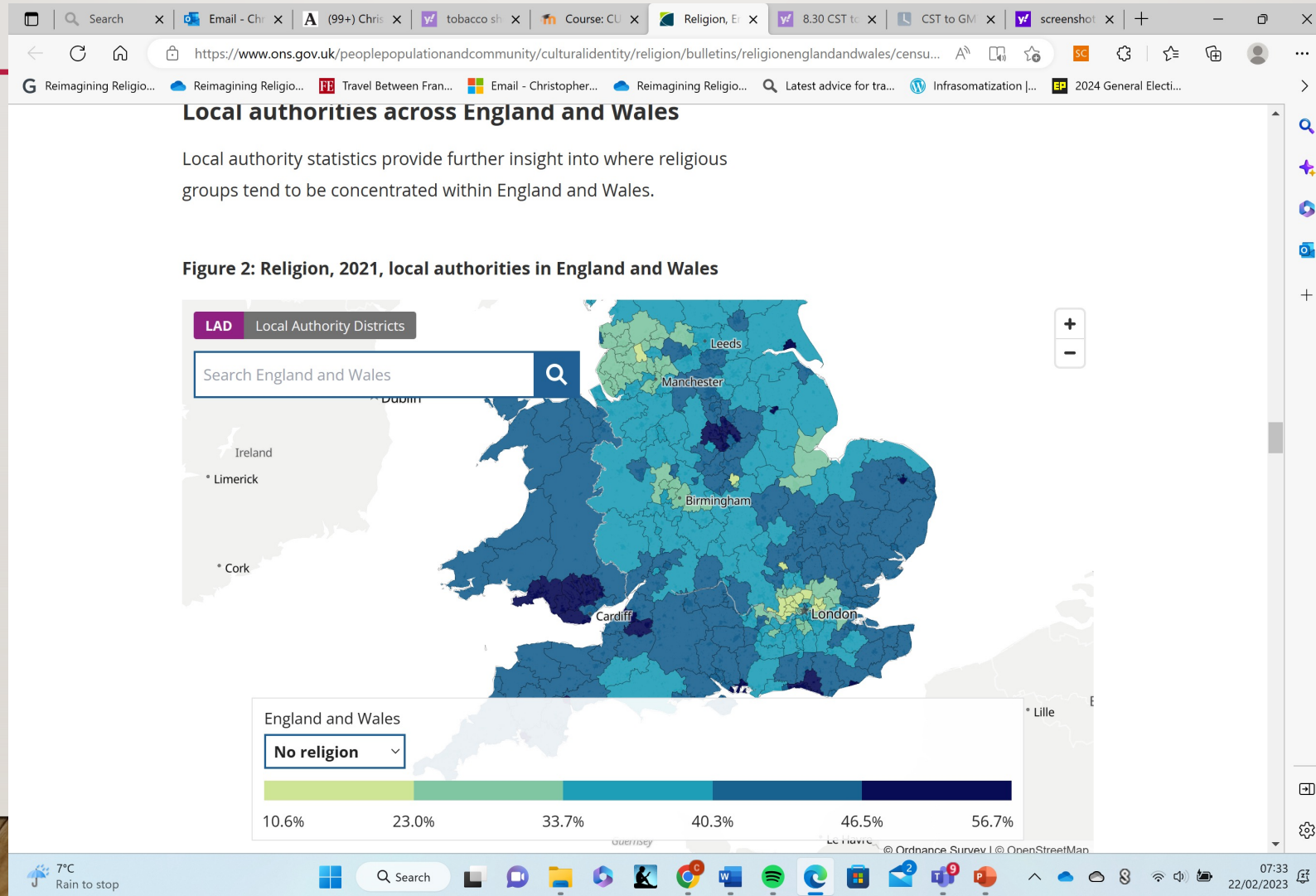
CENSUS 2021 – RELIGION AND BELIEF – WEST MIDLANDS

| Region | Religion/Belief | Count |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------|
| East Midlands | 2 Christian | 2211101 |
| | 3 Buddhist | 14521 |
| | 4 Hindu | 120345 |
| | 5 Jewish | 4313 |
| | 6 Muslim | 210766 |
| | 7 Sikh | 53950 |
| | 8 Other religion | 24813 |
| | 9 Not answered | 286841 |
| | -8 Does not apply | 0 |
| West Midlands | 1 No religion | 1955003 |
| | 2 Christian | 2770559 |
| | 3 Buddhist | 18804 |
| | 4 Hindu | 88116 |
| | 5 Jewish | 4394 |
| | 6 Muslim | 569963 |
| | 7 Sikh | 172398 |
| | 8 Other religion | 31805 |
| | 9 Not answered | 339714 |
| -8 Does not apply | 0 | |
| East of England | 1 No religion | 2544509 |
| | 2 Christian | 2955071 |
| | 3 Buddhist | 26814 |
| | 4 Hindu | 86631 |

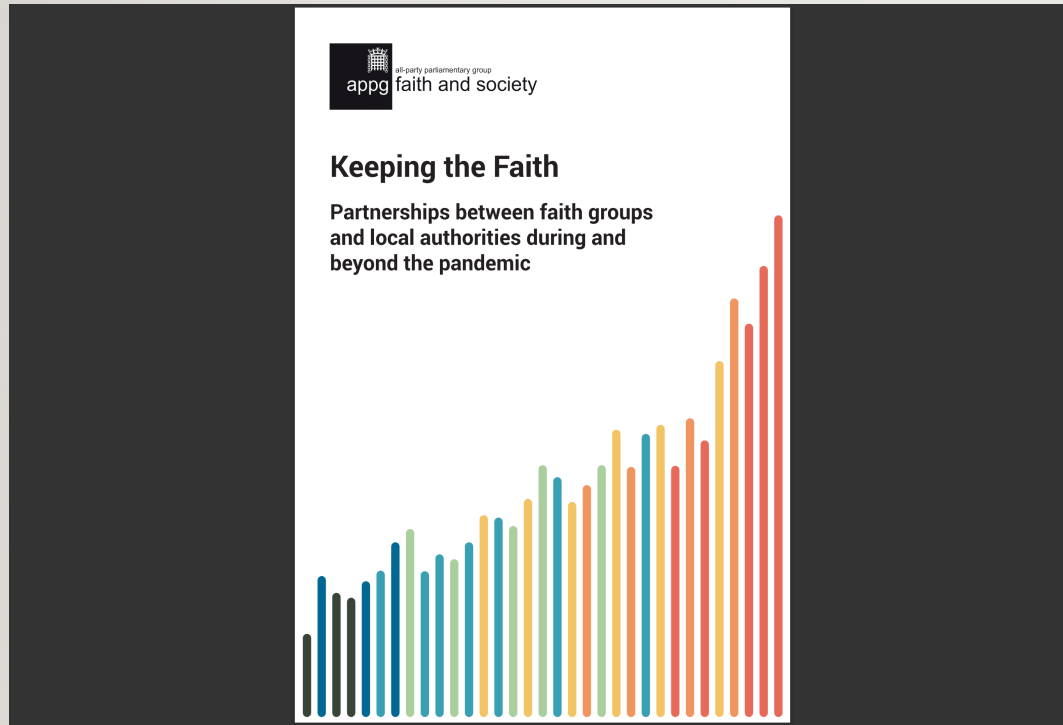
CENSUS 2021 – RELIGION AND BELIEF – WEST MIDLANDS (TOTAL RESPONSES)

- No Religion 32.8%
- Christian 46.5%
- Buddhist 0.3%
- Hindu 1.5%
- Muslim 9.6%
- Sikh 2.9%
- Other Religion 0.5%
- No Answer 5.7%
- **Religion 61.3% and No Religion 32.8%**

NO RELIGION MAP OF ENGLAND AND WALES



KEEPING THE FAITH REPORTS 1.0 AND 2.0

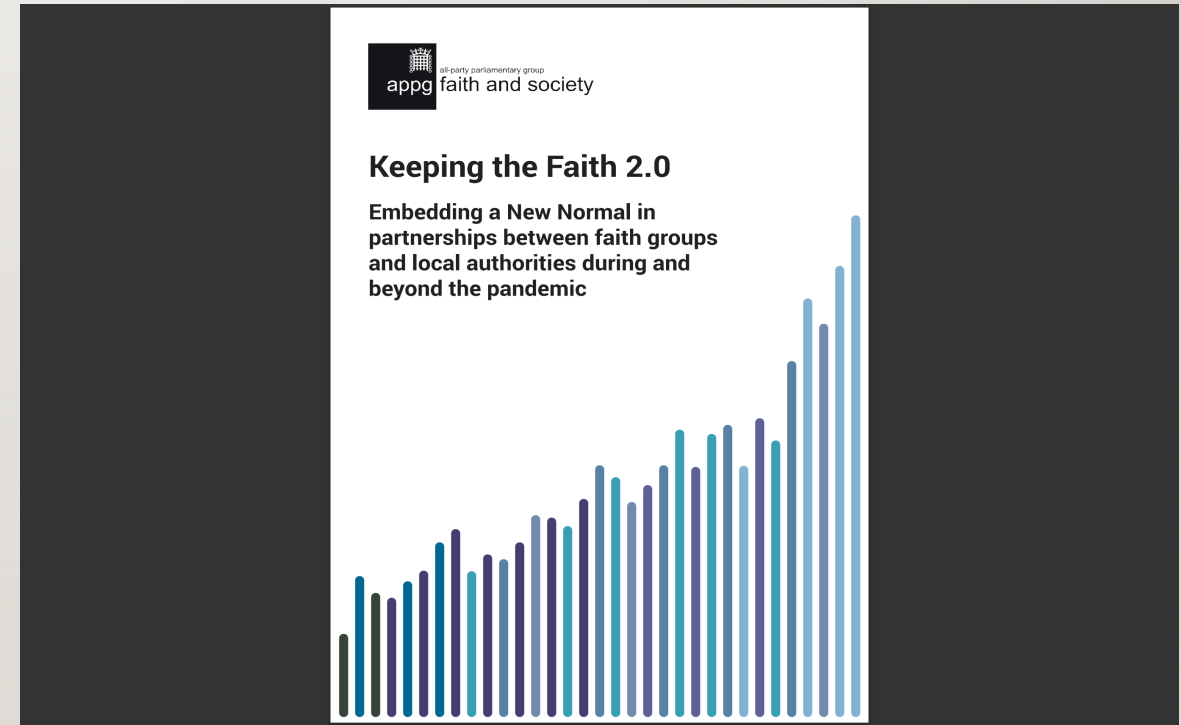


The cover of the 'Keeping the Faith' report features a white background with a black border. At the top left is the logo for the All-party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Faith and Society, which includes a crown icon and the text 'all-party parliamentary group' and 'appg faith and society'. Below the logo, the title 'Keeping the Faith' is written in a bold, black font. Underneath the title is the subtitle 'Partnerships between faith groups and local authorities during and beyond the pandemic'. The bottom half of the cover is dominated by a bar chart with 25 vertical bars of varying heights, colored in a gradient from dark blue on the left to bright red on the right.

all-party parliamentary group
appg faith and society

Keeping the Faith

Partnerships between faith groups and local authorities during and beyond the pandemic



The cover of the 'Keeping the Faith 2.0' report features a white background with a black border. At the top left is the logo for the All-party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Faith and Society, which includes a crown icon and the text 'all-party parliamentary group' and 'appg faith and society'. Below the logo, the title 'Keeping the Faith 2.0' is written in a bold, black font. Underneath the title is the subtitle 'Embedding a New Normal in partnerships between faith groups and local authorities during and beyond the pandemic'. The bottom half of the cover is dominated by a bar chart with 25 vertical bars of varying heights, colored in a gradient from dark blue on the left to light blue on the right.

all-party parliamentary group
appg faith and society

Keeping the Faith 2.0

Embedding a New Normal in partnerships between faith groups and local authorities during and beyond the pandemic

BASIC PARAMETERS

- Research conducted July/August 2020
- All 408 Local Authorities in the UK approached
- Responses from 194 different local authorities (48%)
- 55 interviews with local Authority leaders and Faith group/faith-based organisation leaders/managers in 10 LA areas.

KEY POINTS

- 67% of Local Authorities reported an increase in partnership working since the pandemic started.
- 91% said that their experience of pandemic partnership working with faith groups/FBOs was 'Very Positive' or 'Mostly Positive'
- 76% said that they intended to continue the partnership working developed with faith groups during the pandemic into the future, including 47% who said 'Yes, but probably with some changes'.

3. SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES ON EXPERIENCE (CHARACTERISES MY EXPERIENCE OF WORKING WITH FAITH GROUPS 'TO A GREAT EXTENT/SOME EXTENT')

- Adding value due to longstanding presence in local community **(88%)**
- Providing pool of volunteer resources **(79%)**
- Improving access to hard to reach groups **(79%)**
- Acting as a source of local leadership **(78%)**
- Articulating and promoting social transformation **(62%)**
-
- Lack of representation by women and young people at meetings **(17%**
- Safeguarding concerns **(9%)**
- Socially conservative **(7%)**
- Possibility of proselytization **(3%)**

TOWARDS A NEW NORMAL?

A new normal/policy framework has opened up based on increased trust, collaboration and innovation that has implications for working practices.

1. Deepening relationships
2. Willingness to share resources and innovation
3. Commitment to co-developing a more inclusive framework for partnership working that moves from delivery and dissemination to more strategic forms based on intentional co-creation.



SENIOR MANAGER – LOCAL AUTHORITY (KEEPING THE FAITH 1.0 (P.16))

- ‘The main thing I will keep coming back to is relationship, and that I suppose is about a commitment to a way of working that is open and inclusive and collaborative and codesigned and doing our best to understand each other’s worlds. I think all partners and indeed our own staff found that way of working to be liberating and empowering in the emergency phase.’

NINE ASPECTS ESSENTIAL TO DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINING OF GOOD PARTNERSHIPS

- Developing Trust
- Cultivating Transparency
- Sharing values, ethos, and motivation
- Embracing new mindsets, including reimagining the structures of governance and finance
- A commitment to talking honestly about conflict and misunderstanding
- A willingness to communicate regularly
- Coming with data-backed solutions
- Developing shared goals (derived from shared values) and action plans
- Telling good stories and celebrating achievements

NEW MINDSET ON FINANCE ...

(OLD
NORMAL)

- Many respondents regard the traditional funding models as no longer fit for purpose in a post COVID-19 world
- Current procurement model reinforces a static and embedded sense of hierarchy between 'experts' and 'supplicants'.
- It favours instrumental and technical language that doesn't connect with faith communities.
- Often favours larger providers who can work to economies of scale, or those who already have existing contracts.
- Suspicions of favouritism and mistrust, as the process is usually highly competitive.
- Local authorities have had their budgets substantially cut, so there is no money to dispense anyway.
- It is a deficit-framed, rather than growth-framed, way of looking at how to solve increasingly challenging problems

MORE CREATIVE APPROACH ACCELERATED BY PANDEMIC

(NEW
NORMAL)

- Start with the problems to be addressed, and then come with possible solutions and action-plans.
- ‘Funding is the last thing I ever talk about.’ Rather start with a series of open questions. ‘What is God calling us to do? What’s the city calling us to do? And how are we responding to God’s call?’
- This approach immediately aligns the task of problem solving and asset allocation with personal and institutional core values, minimising the danger of burn out and resentment.
- The call to local authorities is to invite them to ask same sorts of questions (but without the God language) and to do to this in parallel or shared spaces with their faith communities
- Starting from position of ‘call’ rather than position of ‘resources’ releases new energies and thinking indispensable to the needs of the moment, and planning for the future.

SHARED VALUES LEAD TO SHARED OUTCOMES

- COVID-19 has heightened the need for a more authentic, participatory, and dynamic form of governance and decision making.
- There is increasingly coherent support for the idea of experimenting with a values-led, rather than a purely financially led, economy.
- In a values-led economy outcomes were framed with perhaps unusual words to describe the hallmarks of a good partnership between local authorities and faith groups; words such as **kindness, empathy, compassion, motivation, hope and friendship and social justice.**
- This unfamiliar vocabulary or lexicon might come more into the policy mainstream as the UK attempts to build back better after COVID-19/COL.

I. SHARED VALUES LEAD TO SHARED OUTCOMES

‘Coming together on the basis of shared values across difference will be a major policy tool as we seek to rebuild a shattered politics & restore faith in our public life.’ (CB Tweet)

2. FROM CO-PRODUCTION TO CO-CREATION

- Co-production is traditionally a bureaucratic and technical process whereby stakeholders and/or consumers are involved in the delivery of a service.....
- Co-creation on the other hand, tends to demarcate a more radically open space, whereby citizens are not merely co-implementers of a service. They are also co-initiators (i.e., identifying the problems that need to be addressed and getting processes underway) as well as co-designers (of the goods or services proposed to meet the challenges created by the problems).

3. A 'KENOTIC' TYPE OF LEADERSHIP

- Kenotic (*Kenosis*) – emptying of an institutional perspective to let new perspectives emerge – involves an element of risk-taking and openness to experimentation (and failure)
- To model relationality, authenticity and partnership
- To create hospitable and safe spaces for the practical sharing and application of beliefs, values and worldviews

SHARED
VALUES LEAD
TO SHARED
OUTCOMES

- ‘I don’t want to be problem-solving all the time, because economically it’s a waste of money – instead of putting sticking plasters on stuff, we want to swim upstream, and let’s not get hung up too much on labels or channels by which we are doing this work.’
- How can we create funding streams to support this new normal?