



BOLTON INTERFAITH COUNCIL

Bolton Interfaith
Council
The Bolton Hub
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BLI ILS

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10 October 2009

Statement from the Bolton Interfaith Council

Members of Bolton Interfaith Council Executive are concerned that the protests of the English Defence League may have an adverse effect upon the good relations between our communities and endorse the statement by Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Inter Faith Network for the UK, issued on 9th October 2009:

“While inter faith relations in the UK are generally positive there are, from time to time, developments which seek to drive a wedge between our faith communities. These range from demeaning rhetoric which claims that some faith communities are less truly British to demands for restrictions on freedom to worship or on other aspects of practising one's faith. While these views may be expressed in ways which remain just on the right side of the law they can still be deeply disturbing. There are also periodic reports of attacks on faith community property - from places of worship to cemeteries - and disruptive activities by extremist groups.

“As we prepare for Inter Faith Week next month in different nations of the UK the importance of good inter faith relations is very much to the fore. As well as highlighting the positive aspects of working together, it is important that we continue to work, peacefully and effectively, to dispel negative stereotypes; counteract prejudice; prevent disagreement from leading to conflict; and work in mutually supportive ways to ensure that all our communities feel safe, secure and valued.

“We must continue to work, with energy and commitment for a United Kingdom where all are free, within the law, to express their beliefs and convictions and practise their faith; where we handle differences well; and, while respecting the right of others to disagree with us, look always for points of commonality and shared values on which we can build together.”

For the Interfaith Network UK: Dr G L Bhan (Co-Chair), Rt Revd Tom Butler (Co-Chair), Dr Manazir Ahsan MBE (Vice-Chair), Hon Barnabas Leith (Vice-Chair), Dr Indarjit Singh CBE (Vice-Chair), Mr Vivian Wineman (Vice-Chair)

Bolton Council and many groups and communities in Bolton have worked hard for peaceful and friendly relations in our town. Bolton Interfaith Council discourage any activity which would undermine that good work.

Moulana Faruk Ali (Chair)
Revd Tony McNeile (Secretary)
Fr Michael Cooke (Treasurer)
Revd Phil Edwards (Project Manager)
Chan Parmar (Strategic Officer)

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