



Some current issues concerning the governance of religious pluralism in the United Kingdom

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Some current issues concerning the governance of religious pluralism in the United Kingdom

1. Basic picture: Statistics & figures
2. Areas of accommodation & governance
3. Emerging issues: separatism, cohesion, extremism
4. Some concluding thoughts

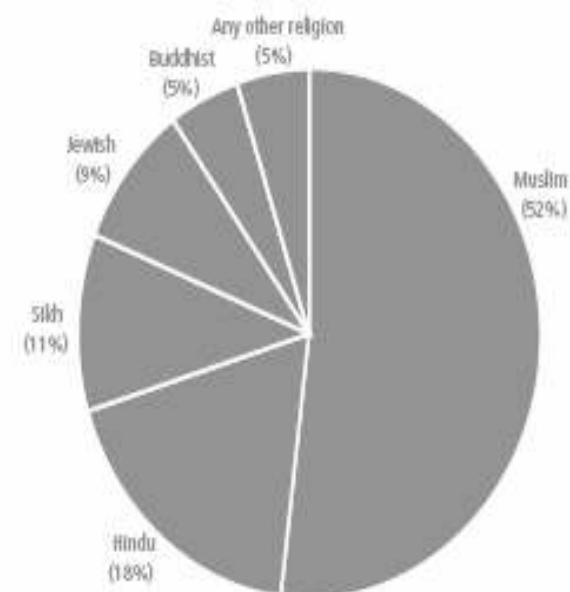
United Kingdom [Census 2001]

	Thousands	%
Christian	42079	71.6
Buddhist	152	0.3
Hindu	559	1.0
Jewish	267	0.5
Muslim	1591	2.7
Sikh	336	0.6
Other religion	179	0.3
<i>All religions</i>	<i>45163</i>	<i>76.8</i>
No religion	9104	15.5
Not stated	4289	7.3
<i>All no religion/not stated¹</i>	<i>13626</i>	<i>23.2</i>
<i>Base</i>	<i>58789</i>	<i>100</i>

The distribution of non-Christian religions, April 2001

Great Britain

Percentages



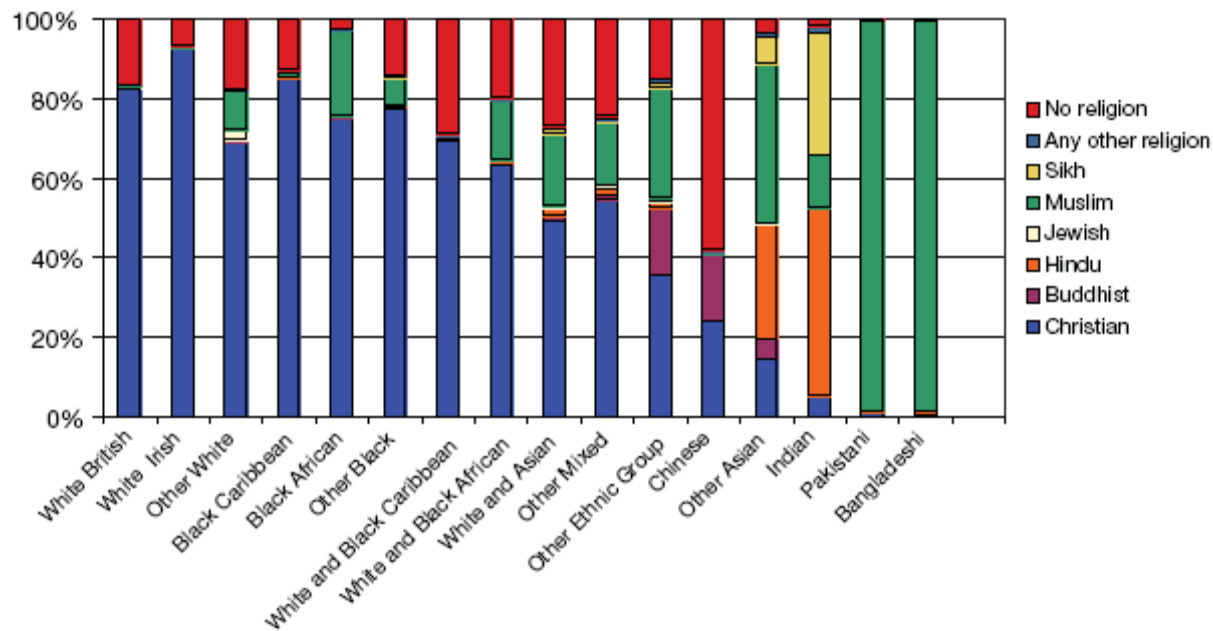
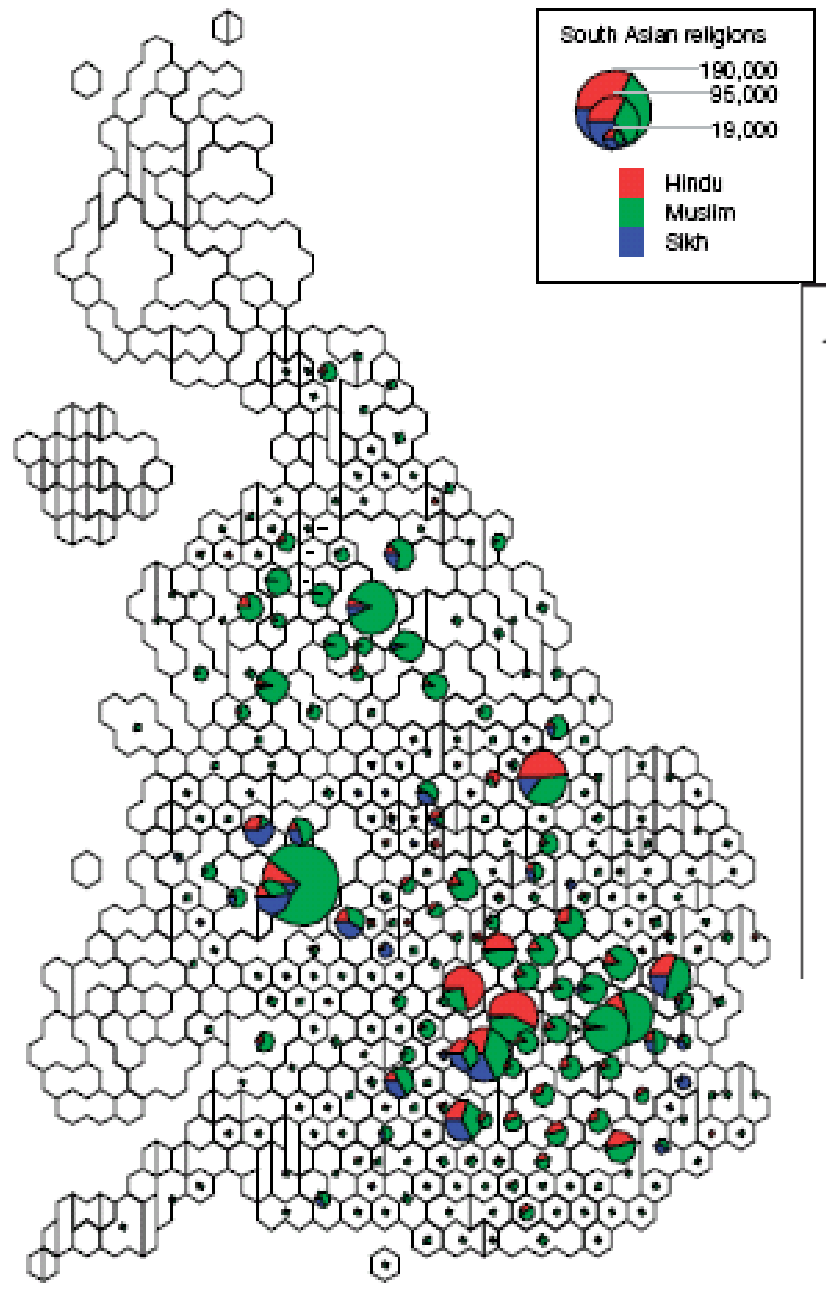


Figure 1.5a

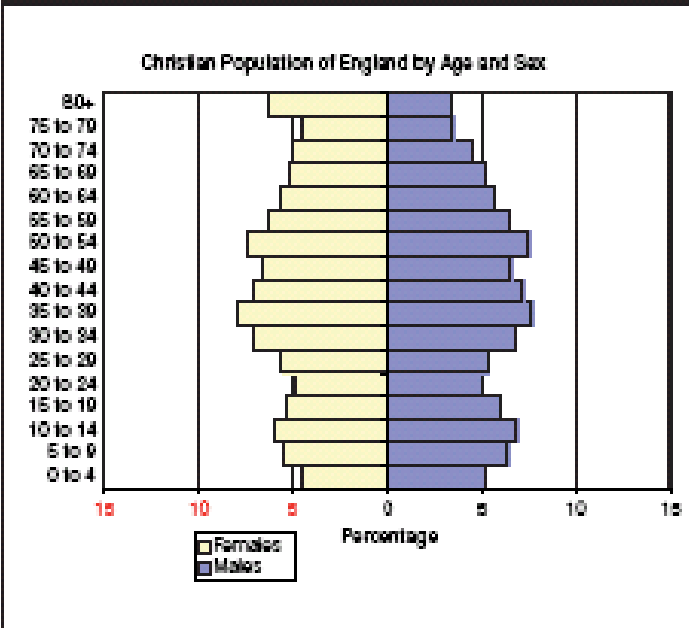


Figure 1.5b

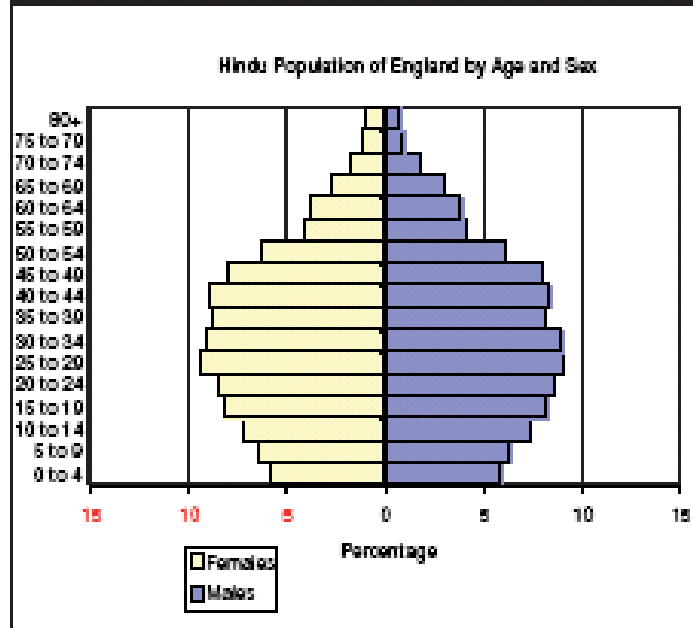


Figure 1.5c

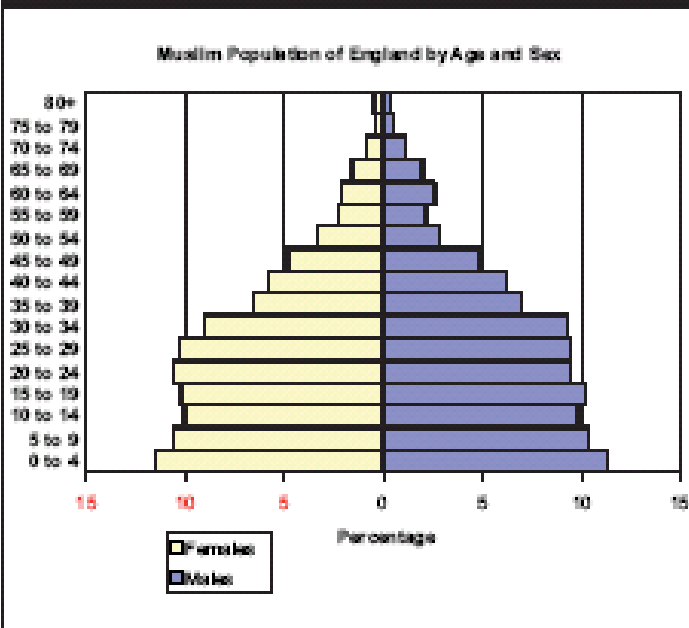
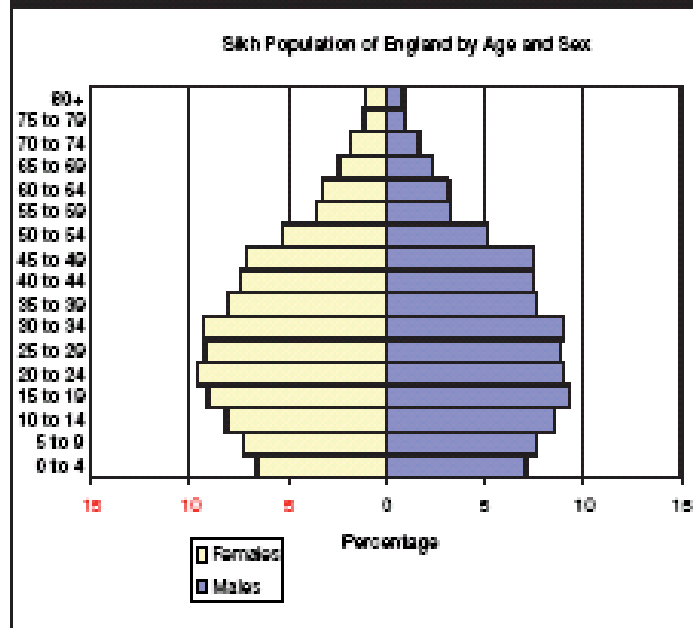
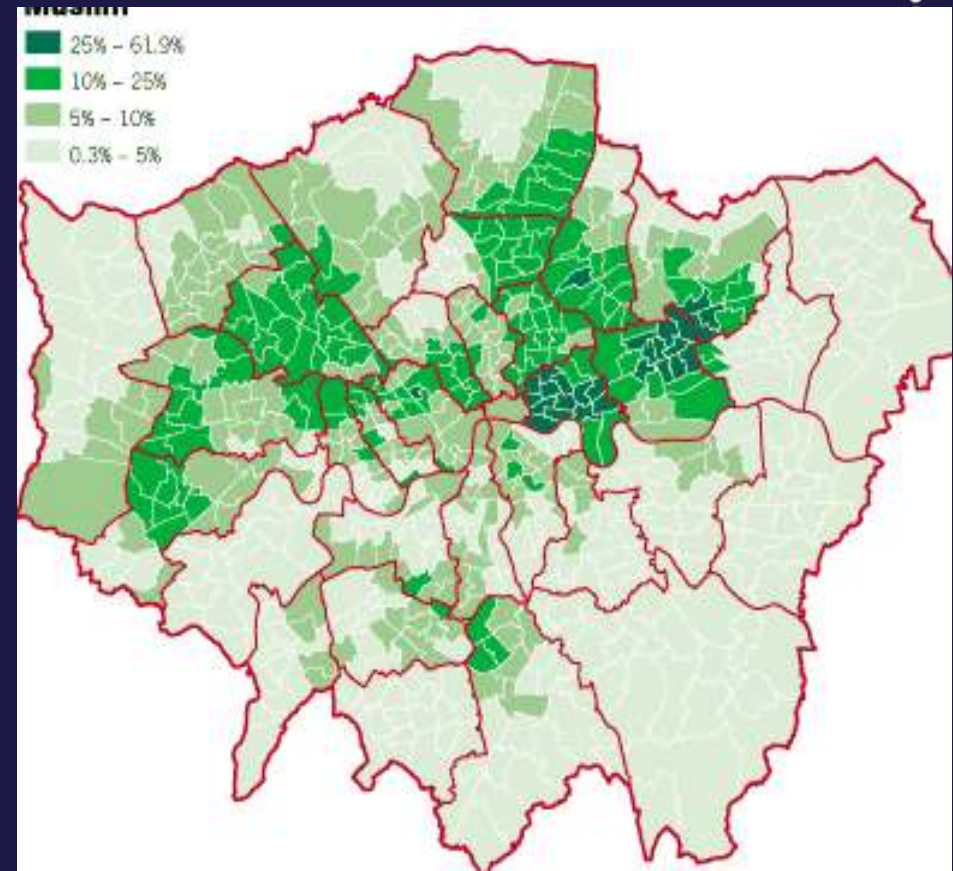


Figure 1.5d



Religion – super-diversity within Islam

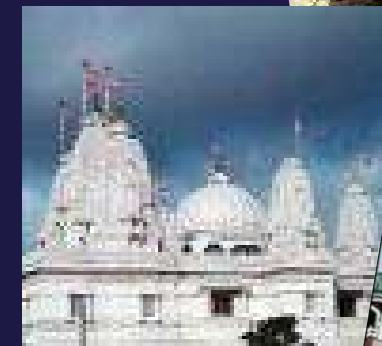
- London Muslims are the most heterogeneous in terms of ethnicity and country of origin, with the largest group (Bangladeshis) making up only 23.5%. (GLA 2005)
- ‘London’s Muslim population of 607,083 people is probably the most diverse anywhere in the world, besides Mecca’ (*The Guardian* 21 January 2005).



Considerable institutional / legal accommodation of religious pluralism



- **Forums for consultation** with local authorities
 - members in House of Commons, Lords, local councillors
- **places of worship**, community centres, cemeteries
- **Public institutions:** *halal* food in hospitals, prisons, schools
- **Law** (exceptions, marriage/divorce, death rites, oaths)
- **Education / schools:**
 - Multi-faith curriculum
 - Modesty in dress, headscarves OK
 - Festivals in school calendar
- **Anti- (indirect) discrimination**
- **Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006**



'Faith Schools'

- State supported: around 7,000 faith schools in England, 600 secondary and 6,400 primary
- vast majority are Christian, with 45 Jewish, 5 Muslim, 2 Sikh schools, 1 7th Day Adv, 1 Greek Ordx, 1 Hindu
- 120 independent Islamic schools
- More segregation?
- Less extremism, or more?



...Events...



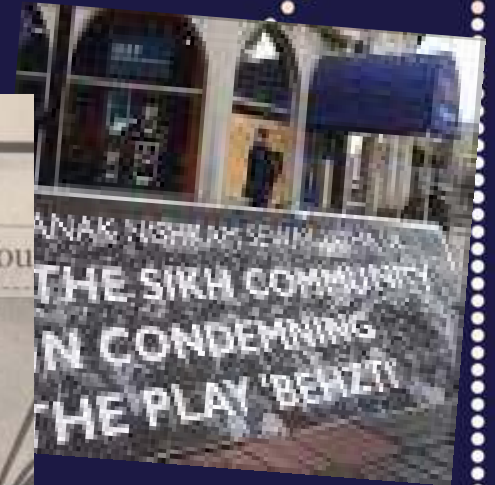
8 The Guardian Tuesday October 12 2004

National news

Britain's Islamic community is the country's most deprived faith group

Census shows Muslims' plight

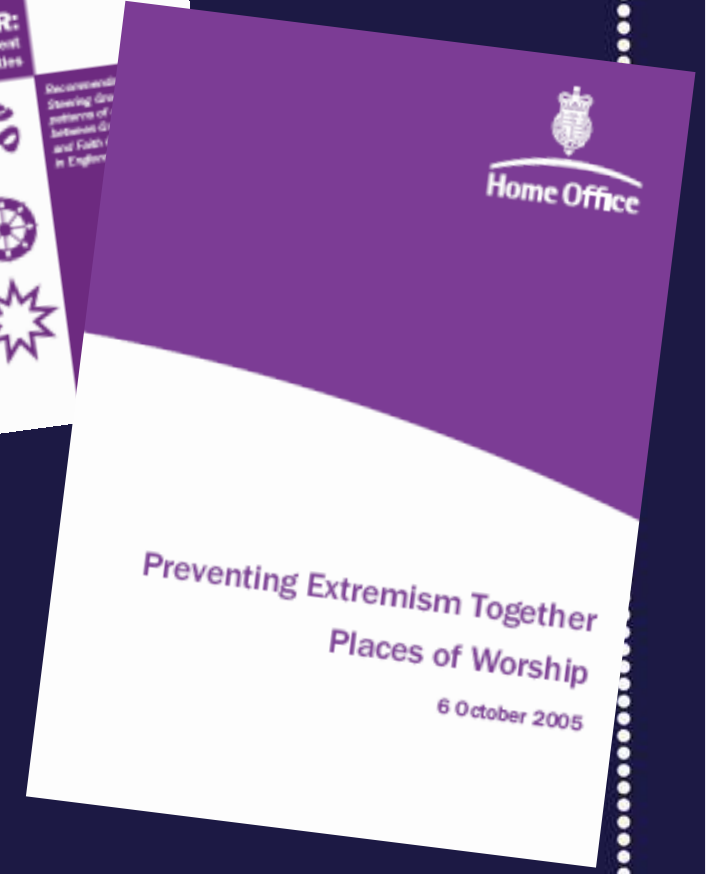
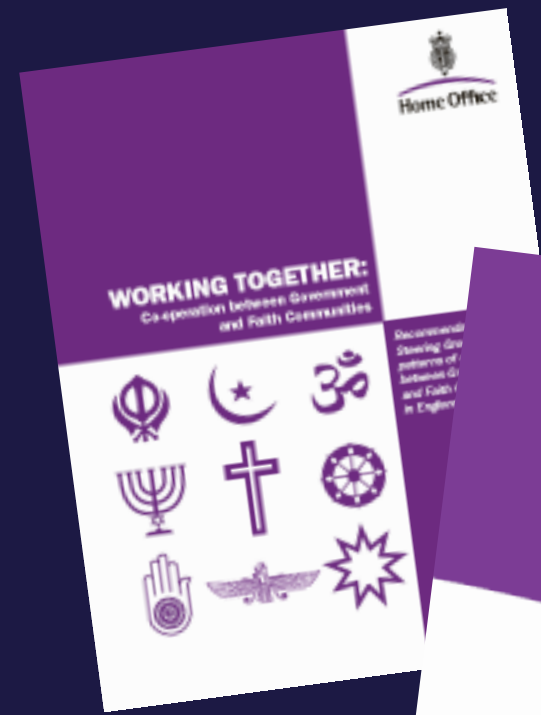
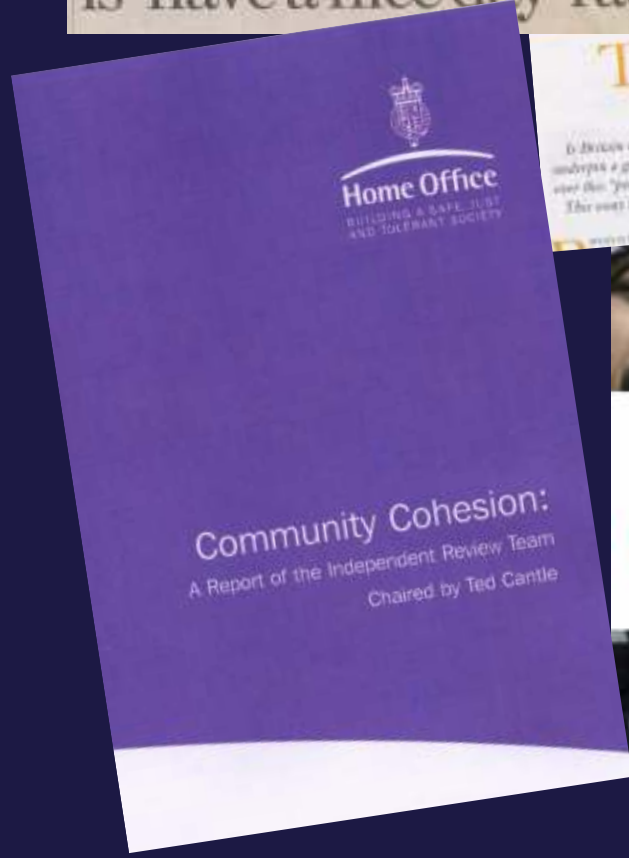
Source: ONS, Census 2001



From Multiculturalism to 'Community Cohesion'

Trevor Phillips The mere celebration of diversity does nothing to redress incoherence
Multiculturalism's legacy is 'have a nice day' racism

Too diverse?
BY DAVID GOODHART
Does Britain deserve its diverse population? The author examines the impact of immigration on the country's social cohesion and asks whether the country is becoming too diverse to remain a united nation. This report aims to draw some lessons together. Replies in the next issue.



race, equality, faith & cohesion

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Faith

Faith Communities

Multi-cultural communities are often multi- faith communities and this should be fully recognised in policies aimed at promoting diversity. Fostering understanding and respect between different faiths is vital in practically implementing community cohesion strategies.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) aims to help bring about a society in which different belief systems, whether religious or otherwise, are understood, respected and valued. The 2001 National Census shows that over three-quarters of respondents reported having some religious affiliation.

The experience and resources of the faith communities are invaluable and DCLG strives to ensure that these communities are given the opportunity to participate fully in society through voluntary activity and other faith based projects.

These pages provide a summary of our work on faith issues.

News

Preventing Extremism Together

Following the attacks in London last July, seven community-led working groups were set up under the banner of 'Preventing Extremism Together'. The working groups published their report in November 2005. The report and the Government's response to it can be seen below:

- ◆ [Membership and Remit](#)
- ◆ ['Preventing Extremism Together' Working Groups Aug-Oct 2005](#)
- ◆ ['Preventing Extremism Together' Response to Working Group reports](#)

Following the incidents in London on 7th July 2005, the following letter has been sent to all members of parliament from the Cohesion & Faiths Unit

- ◆ [Letter](#)

‘Preventing Extremism Together’

Working groups’ proposals include:

- a professional development programme for Imams and Mosque officials
- a British Muslim citizenship 'toolkit'
- an Islamic way of life exhibition to tour schools
- developing opportunities for young British Muslims to be leaders and active citizens
- a national campaign and coalition to increase the visibility of Muslim women, and empower them to become informed and active citizens
- supporting places of worship to become community 'hubs'

Some concluding thoughts

Current British case can help us consider:

- How do 'governance of religious pluralism' strategies and structures relate to other political mechanisms?
- Is – or how is – 'governance of religious pluralism' always related to other political objectives?
 - democracy/voice, social control, conflict management, social engineering, 'ethnic relations', social cohesion
- How do serious issues (and [mis]perceptions) around one religious group impact on 'governance' of all?

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