

Would YOU like to be involved?

You may wish to consider how your faith community can contribute to local regeneration schemes. Try speaking to your own local authority and voluntary and community groups; they will help to assess the needs of the local community and how you can meet those needs.

The value that faith communities bring is always greater when they work in partnership across the denominations and different faiths.

Further information on the role of faith communities in regeneration schemes can be obtained from:

Martin Miller

Manchester Diocesan Board for Ministry & Society

5th Floor, Church House, 90 Deansgate,

Manchester, M3 2GJ

0161 828 1448

The Faith in partnership series is:

- *an information resource for people of faith as they engage with their local communities in the new partnership agenda*
- *a joint enterprise, between The Partnership for Theological Education, Manchester various ecumenical partners from the North West*

Whilst we currently provide this resource for the Christian Community we welcome contributions from other faith traditions.

For copies of the FIP leaflets and further information please contact

Margaret Walsh

Partnership for Theological Education

Luther King House

Brighton Grove, Rusholme

Manchester, M14 5JP

0161 249 2533

Produced by



**Board for Ministry
& Society**

in association with



**Partnership for
Theological Education**

The Faith in Partnership Series

*An information resource for people of faith
as they engage with their local communities*

No 6. Faith Communities and Regeneration

What do Faith Communities bring to Local Regeneration Projects?

This leaflet

- Outlines why faith communities are involved
- Describes how faith communities can contribute to regeneration initiatives
- Gives some examples
- Identifies a contact person who can provide more information

Faith communities are now recognised, even by national Government, as major contributors to the renewal of local communities:

Every faith has a development worker, full or part-time, paid or voluntary. In other words, the priest or pastor, the vicar or minister, the teacher, imam, or rabbi,

Rt Hon David Blunkett, MP

We are also seeing a decisive shift in our activities from solely service providers to involvement in policy formation and implementation. In other words faith groups are becoming more active in shaping the agenda on issues of social inclusion and urban regeneration.

Angela Sarkis previously Chief executive, Church Urban Fund and part-time Adviser to the Social Exclusion Unit

What has it got to do with us?

Faith communities can find themselves involved in regeneration for a variety of reasons

- ◆ a tradition of community involvement; church halls used to provide toddler groups for example. As understanding of regeneration has developed beyond simple physical change to an area this provision of community facilities has been recognised as a key component
- ◆ in some cases attempts to access funding streams to pay for church improvements have drawn faith groups into regeneration partnerships.
- ◆ many have developed a theological understanding that compels them to engage with their local communities.

Why is the Government interested?

The government stresses the following to justify its eagerness for the involvement of faith communities:

- a value base provides extra motivation
- a long-term presence in all areas
- a channel to hard to reach groups
- a source of volunteers
- a source of community facilities (buildings for example)

How can faith communities contribute?

1. Faith groups have been identified as key participants in bodies such as Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP).

LSPs (see FiP No 7) make strategic decisions about service delivery particularly around regeneration. By taking part, as members of LSP boards/steering groups etc, faith communities can help to shape policy formation and participate in decision-making. This is particularly true if the faith communities participate in partnership with the voluntary and community sector.

Government guidance on LSPs strongly encourages the involvement of faith communities as partners.

2. They can participate in local regeneration partnerships

Representatives from faith communities can be involved in the local partnerships set up to oversee specific regeneration projects.

In Manchester for example an Anglican Priest served on the Board of an Single Regeneration Budget project - the North Manchester Initiative

3. They can deliver regeneration projects

The resources of faith communities are often used to deliver vital and imaginative facilities and services to local communities:

1. **East London Communities Organisation** (religious groups, schools and trade unions) are promoting the Living Wage, seen as more realistic than the minimum wage. The East London Mosque has promised to pay the living wage to all workers on their major construction project.

2. **"Faith Together in Leeds 11"** Christians, Muslims and secular partners have come together to jointly run health and parenting facilities for the local community. This involves a Methodist Church and an Anglican parish hall. Christian worship still takes place in the Parents Resource Centre.

*examples from Faiths, Hope and Participation
New Economics Foundation & Church Urban Fund*

3. **Roby United Reformed Church.** A Church in the Longsight area of Manchester the Roby set-up a mental health project in response to the closure of psychiatric hospitals. This project has evolved over the years and The Roby is now a core member of a city wide mental health steering group.