



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■



Faith in Local Climate Policy:

A policymaker's guide to inclusive climate resilience

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Part 1: About the Toolkit



In April 2025, the LSE Religion and Global Society (RGS) unit and Brent Council launched a 12-month policy partnership initiative called *Faith in Local Climate Policy*. Delivered in collaboration with the London Boroughs of Barnet, Southwark, Islington, Richmond upon Thames and Westminster, this project introduced a new framework for engaging faith communities in discussions on local climate adaptation and resilience. This framework explores spiritual and theological language in the context of the climate crisis and enables faith communities to play a role in co-producing local environmental policies. To find out more, please visit [the project page](#).

Part 2 of this document contextualises the interventions made in the *Faith in Local Climate Policy* project, articulates some of the theories underpinning such engagement, and spotlights cases of best practice. This section is designed to support policymakers who want to involve faith communities in their work.

Part 3 presents a toolkit that can be used as an aid for anyone interested in convening faith-inclusive consultations on climate policy. This has been created with a wide audience in mind, including practitioners, policymakers, and academics.

Part 2: Background:
Faith Communities and
Climate Policy

Part 2

Part 2: Background: Faith Communities and Climate Policy



There are many political challenges to addressing the climate crisis. Internationally, broad political coalitions across sectors, cultures, and nation states need to be built in a time of profound geopolitical uncertainty. Locally, strong trust between policymakers and communities must underpin resilient and productive partnerships, especially because the benefits of sustainability policy usually only become visible in the medium- and long-term. Individually, the crisis puts a spotlight on personal lifestyle choices and pulls individual actions into a broader framework of accountability.

Though public concern about the climate crisis remains high, recent studies show fewer people express willingness to take personal climate action in 2025 than in years past (Ipsos 2025a). Contemporary research demonstrates that distrust in the government's ability to adequately respond to the climate crisis has grown (EIPA 2025). Moreover, discrepancies between what British MPs *think* their constituents want and what constituents *actually* want are becoming more pronounced (Climate Barometer 2024).

Taken together, this evidence suggests that addressing the climate crisis depends in part on rebuilding trust between citizens and public officials. This process will require new methods of political engagement as well as the inclusion of communities previously absent from climate conversations.

2.1 Why focus on the climate?

Climate change is the major intersectional challenge of our time. Globally, its compounding social and geographic impacts are growing in severity. These effects are also being felt in the UK: flooding risks to critical infrastructure have increased in recent years, heat-related deaths are becoming more frequent, and the viability of the UK's economic growth has been deemed to be threatened by the climate emergency (Climate Change Committee 2025).

Part 2: Background: Faith Communities and Climate Policy



Local authorities play a critical role in responding to these challenges, both technically and socially. Local authorities are uniquely placed between national government and local communities and can play a central role in modernising energy infrastructure, protecting biodiversity and nature, and decarbonising the housing sector (Local Government Association 2025). In London, the Mayor and the Greater London Authority (GLA) have made the climate crisis a strategic priority for the city, demonstrated by including a 'Climate Budget' within the GLA's annual budget process and continually expressing commitment to achieve net-zero by 2030 (Greater London Authority 2025). However, meeting the ambitious climate goals requires engagement with diverse constituencies who may have not been involved in policymaking, including faith communities.



Part 2: Background: Faith Communities and Climate Policy



2.2 Why faith communities?

Religion and belief remain foundational sources of knowledge and frameworks of sense-making for billions of people worldwide. Globally, approximately 75% of the world's population profess a faith, and the percentage is expected to rise to 87% by 2050 (Pew Research Center 2025).

The role that faith communities can play in responding to the climate crisis is perhaps less immediately obvious than their influence in other political spaces such as community relations. Nonetheless, there are both practical and epistemological arguments for engaging these communities in their religious specificity:



REACH: Most of the global population is religious. Many highly religious regions are projected to face severe impacts of climate change (Skirbekk *et al.* 2020). In a world where narratives are often divisive, religion can serve as a common reference point for billions globally, including those at the forefront of the crisis.



DEMOGRAPHICS: Likewise, most UK residents belong to a faith community. According to the most recent 2021 Census, 57% of UK residents are religious: Christians, Muslims, and Hindus comprise the largest faith groups (Office for National Statistics 2022). This means that faith and belief are important lenses through which most residents make sense of the world.



ASSETS: According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), faith communities are the third-largest economic bloc on Earth, owning a combined asset portfolio double that of the United Kingdom (Roewe 2021). Managing around 10% of global financial assets, faith communities are one of the largest investment blocs globally and have been leaders in divestment from fossil fuels (Palmer and Moss 2017).

Part 2: Background: Faith Communities and Climate Policy



LAND: In addition to financial resources, faith-based organisations manage other valuable assets. Specifically, this includes ownership of at least 8% of habitable land on the planet (around 510 million hectares), 5% of all commercial forests, and tens of millions of buildings globally (FaithInvest 2025). These assets are all directly linked to important sectors for climate mitigation. Locally, we see a similar level of influence: the Church of England is one of the largest landowners in England, and faith communities own over 40,000 buildings in the UK (Footsteps 2025).



EDUCATION: Faith communities also play significant roles in shaping culture and education. Globally, faith-based organisations have founded or run 50% of schools worldwide (UNEP 2018) and 14% of community development corporations (UNEP 2020). In the UK over a third (34%) of state-funded mainstream educational institutions are faith-based (House of Commons Library 2024).



DELIVERY: Faith communities also deliver vital services, provide disaster relief, and act as community hubs around the country. Religious leaders often enjoy higher levels of trust than other official representative or community bodies and have considerable convening power (Ipsos 2025b).



THEOLOGIES: Many religions profess teachings that are directly applicable to the climate crisis and can therefore be potent in inspiring climate action. For instance, Buddhist and Catholic leaders have directly called on followers to pursue strong climate action. The Dalai Lama and Pope Francis are notable examples of religious leaders who have connected spiritual teaching with climate responsibility. Stewardship – or '*khalifah*' – of the Earth is a theme in Islam, and the Jewish concept of repairing the world – or '*tikkun olam*' – is frequently invoked in relation to the environment (NATRE 2025).



2.3 Shaping local futures together

Faith in Local Climate Policy is built on the notion that rebuilding trust between citizens and public officials requires a new approach to decision-making, which prioritises innovative and locally-rooted strategies for engagement. In framing these interventions, we draw on the academic framework of Normative Future Visioning (NFV), a policymaking process in which “*reflexive and pedagogical*” envisioning of future scenarios can be incorporated into discussions on policy interventions (Pelling et al. 2023:1). With NFV, participants in a policymaking process are encouraged to think imaginatively about the future.

The relevant question is not only ‘what is going to happen?’ but also ‘what can be done?’ The approach shifts discussions about policy interventions beyond predictive forecasting and creates space for a collective articulation of “*relevant and desired end-states*” (van Vliet and Kok 2015). It considers the processes that might bring about these visions and incorporates appraisal of past choices.

NFV carries numerous benefits as a method of democratic engagement. First, clear future-oriented visions are more effective mobilisers of action (Coulclis 2005). Second, NFV brings diverse socio-political perspectives into policymaking. This not only yields better technical outcomes but also encourages wider political participation in the democratic process. Third, as stakeholders are permitted to raise concerns about the root causes of political challenges – and bring values- and faith-based perspectives into technical discussions – a more honest conversation can take place.



2.4 Religious discourse in the public sphere

Faith communities are now recognised as valuable contributors to community cohesion and are relied on in times of crisis. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, places of worship were used as testing centres; religious communities distributed food parcels; and faith leaders were called upon to dispel misinformation. Yet despite these contributions, faith communities are frequently sidelined in decision-making processes.

In part, this stems from a lack of understanding and confidence in engaging with the belief systems at the heart of faith communities, which shape how communities and individuals interact civically (Bloom 2023). This can prove a particular challenge at the local level, where contact between communities and policymakers is more direct.

Addressing these gaps requires attention to the decision-making process, prioritising innovative and locally-grounded strategies for engagement, and incorporating new constituencies into political discussions. Local climate policymaking would therefore benefit from intentional engagement with faith communities and their theologies.





Case study: Brent Council

Brent Council is a forerunner among London's councils working with faith communities on the climate and can offer a wealth of inspiration for similar organisations. In a borough with 80% of its residents professing a faith, Brent is fertile ground for interfaith collaboration. After setting the aspiration to aim for carbon neutrality by 2030, the council began to embed community partnership, including with its significant faith communities, into its climate approach. Brent's Climate Action Partnerships Manager, explained this shift was driven by the need to involve all communities in the big changes that were needed, and ensuring that the approach and language used resonated locally and did not exclude or ignore.

Working closely with faith leaders and communities spurred the creation of the 'Faith Climate Action Plan'. The invaluable resource provides a thorough checklist of all aspects of a place of worship's environmental footprint. Brent also supports a Faith Climate Action Group led by faith leaders who are committed to caring for the planet, campaigns against the use of single-use plastics in faith centres via the 'No Faith in Plastic' campaign, leads on the 'Revive and Ride' repurposed bike scheme with faith and community groups, and co-creates projects and events with faith leaders such as regular Repairs Cafes.

Brent also uses storytelling to keep climate action relevant in civic life. The photo exhibition, 'Climate Change and my Religion' captures portraits of local faith leaders and their thoughts on care for the planet. By keeping initiatives relevant to the lived experience of residents, Brent's initiative created a resonant series that reinforces the link between stewardship and faith.



Case study: Faith for the Climate

Faith for the Climate's ambitions are global, but its efforts can be seen locally. Grounded in principles of climate justice, the group builds bridges by creating spaces where different faith traditions can collaborate in ways that feel natural and welcoming: through interfaith stalls, picnics, and public events that normalise cooperation. The fruits of this collaboration were most visible in a campaign to emphasise climate justice at COP26, which was lauded by the GLA Mayor's office as an "*unprecedented display of unity*" (Greater London Authority 2021).

Beyond fostering collaboration, the group builds capacity among local stakeholders. Its flagship 'Faiths for Climate Justice' workshops train faith leaders and activists to brainstorm solutions for climate issues ranging from fast fashion to eco-anxiety. This is complemented by regular seminars exploring the connection between faith and climate more deeply – a recent webinar conveyed how the seasons of Lent, Ramadan, and Tu Bish'vat can help inspire climate action among Abrahamic faiths. In short, Faith for the Climate has made profound contributions to climate policymaking through both building bridges between faith groups and building capacity among key stakeholders.



Case study: The Church of England (CoE), EcoSikh UK, Islamic Relief, and EcoJudaism

The Church of England (CoE) has translated its moral commitments into pro-environmental action across its buildings, investments, and missions. Framed by a theological emphasis on care for creation, in 2020 the CoE declared its net-zero by 2030 ambitions and provided a Roadmap for practical interventions promoting local climate resilience (CoE 2022). The CoE hosts a range of resources to inspire local parishes to make operational changes, and in 2024, the CoE released £600,000 to support churches to replace gas boilers with heat pumps.

EcoSikh UK is a grassroots organisation promoting environmentalism among the Sikh community. They produce numerous resources, including a guide to 'Boota Parshad', a prayerful planting of flower bulbs, suggestions for organic langars, and stories sharing the environmental legacy of Sri Guru Har Rai Ji (EcoSikh 2025). Every 14th March is World Sikh Environment Day, where they join the Sikh community in promoting environmental care.

Islamic Relief is an international aid organisation with an emphasis on disaster relief and locally-led adaptation. Its international efforts include work in Niger supporting farmer cooperatives and technical solutions to worsening climate extremes (Islamic Relief 2019). In London, Islamic Relief has supported local communities through a mosque-greening initiative, assisting places of worship with energy audits and solar panel installations to cut bills and emissions.

EcoJudaism is a charity that promotes environmental action among UK Jews. It runs age-targeting learning programmes in schools, paired with schoolwide Sustainability Action Plans. One of EcoJudaism's initiatives, JTree, achieved opt-in from local synagogues across London, and over 20,000 trees have been planted through the scheme (JTree 2025).



Case study: LSE Religion and Global Society's climate work

From 2021 to 2024, LSE Religion and Global Society (RGS) hosted Global Religious Pluralities, an interdisciplinary research project. The climate strand, led by Dr Hanane Benadi, explored how religious communities in Egypt and Jordan make sense of and respond to the effects of the climate crisis. Dr Benadi discovered a disjuncture between the scientific language used by Western policymakers and the discourse emerging from the lived experiences of the climate crisis: a narrative rooted in religious language and considerations of ethics, morality, and accountability to God. The failure of Western policymaking institutions and climate activists to engage with these narratives contributed to a perception that local communities were being instrumentalised and patronised. This undermined efforts to build the trust necessary for collaboration to address the climate crisis.

In response to these findings, the LSE RGS team developed the methodology to guide and facilitate engagement between local communities and policymakers. Its application in climate policy roundtables in Egypt, Indonesia, Rome, and at COP29 in Azerbaijan suggests that recognising and engaging with religious narratives in environmental policymaking brings wider perspectives into deliberation, clarifies motivations, and strengthens trust between stakeholders (Benadi 2024).



Part 3: Toolkit

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Rooted in the theory of Normative Future Visioning (NFV) and the international ethnographic research by LSE RGS, this toolkit introduces an innovative and empirically tested methodology for building more genuine and impactful engagement between local policymakers and faith communities in London. This methodology supports successful interfaith convening by centring trust building and ensuring that the perspectives, narratives, and opinions of those in the room are shared. It can be used as an aid for anyone interested in convening faith-inclusive consultations on climate policy.

3.1 Engaging stakeholders

Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder mapping should be conducted as a first step in event planning to better understand which communities are represented in your area and who you should be targeting. Where possible, this should be conducted with input from local communities.

The following questions can help guide participant mapping and outreach planning:

- What are the major religious communities in the area of interest?
- Who are the leaders in these communities?
- Where are the centres of worship and gathering spaces for these communities? What community organisations and charities do they run?
- Have local authorities previously engaged with these faith communities on policy questions?
 - For what purpose and in what context did this engagement take place?
 - What were the outcomes of this engagement?
 - Are there any existing dynamics to be aware of?

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- Do interfaith networks exist in the geography of interest?
 - What thematic areas do they focus on?
 - Which communities and faith leaders do they engage with?
- How representative are existing networks? How diverse are they in terms of ethnicity, disability, and gender?
- What are the major political challenges facing the communities that could impede or disrupt dialogue?

A stakeholder mapping guide can be found in Section 3.5.1.

Collaborating with trusted partners

In instances where the relationship between faith communities and local authorities is strained or undeveloped, it may help to partner with an organisation with existing relationships in the community. This could include:

- A local faith and belief forum
- A social enterprise or community business
- A local university
- A community-engagement organisation, such as Citizens UK.

To ensure relevant and impactful discussion, at least one facilitation partner should have expertise in interfaith convening and/or climate policy.

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Building a guest list

Adopting a targeted invitation strategy is the best way to ensure discussions remain concrete and that local connections can be forged.

The most successful consultations will involve a range of faith groups and community leaders who benefit directly from local policy. When building a guest list, it may be worth researching:

- Who are the leaders of your target communities? Who will bring people along?
- Who has responsibility for the buildings, facilities, and grounds at the place of worship?
- Does the place of worship run any outreach activities? Who delivers this?
- Are there any climate-related CICs or charities in your area?
- Do any schools run eco-projects? Are there parent action groups?
- Are there active residents' associations? Local campaign groups?

Picking up the phone and calling places of worship to gather this information is often most effective, especially considering some places of worship do not have email addresses that are regularly monitored.

Facebook groups, WhatsApp groups, and Instagram pages also provide effective avenues for inviting underrepresented groups. If it is difficult to find named individuals from specific organisations, Companies House and the Charity Commission websites almost always provide names, emails, and phone numbers for individuals behind specific organisations.

If this strategy fails to attract enough attendees, it may be effective to open the discussion up to the public. The event could be advertised, for instance, through mass email campaigns, social media promotion, or inclusion in newsletters.

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The guest list should also include representatives from the local authority to ensure that trust and cooperation can be built between citizens and public officials, and genuine commitment is demonstrated. Though role titles will vary from body to body, these roles could include:

- Community Engagement Officer
- Climate Emergency / Action Manager
- Climate Change Communications and Engagement Officer
- Environmental Health / Air Quality Officer
- Retrofit / Decarbonisation Lead
- Grants / Funding / Partnerships Officer
- Public Health Policy / Health Inequalities Officer

Moving beyond faith 'leaders'

Many public sector initiatives seeking to involve religious communities will target faith leaders. There are many good reasons to do so: faith leaders can lend credence and encourage other community members to participate. In some cases, participation by leaders can inspire impactful top-down doctrinal or cultural shifts. However, convenors should note that by only inviting 'leaders', other embedded voices may be missed, such as the voices of women and young people. Care should be taken therefore to ascertain which members from within a community are best placed to speak or facilitate discussions within their community. Especially in community-oriented climate discussions, it is equally important to include informal leaders – people without official titles but with real influence in the community – as well as community members with relevant interest and experience in ecology.

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Inviting participants

Once key partners, contacts, and invitees have been identified, outreach should commence.

Participants should be told specifically what the purpose of discussion is and how they are expected to contribute. The interactive, faith-informed nature of the meeting should be emphasised in invitations.

We recommend sending out invitations at least six weeks before the event takes place. Don't forget to send reminder emails as the day approaches!

Alongside written invitations, consider making graphics and posters that can be shared by community leaders via WhatsApp or Instagram.

Considering the languages spoken by your constituents is also recommended; could you offer translated invitations and materials?



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3.2 Practicalities – space, time, and hospitality

When hosting a workshop for diverse religious communities, there are some practicalities to consider.

Space

Organisers are advised to consider which religious backgrounds will be represented in the room when selecting a venue to hold discussions. Some people of faith may not feel comfortable visiting another place of worship, whereas others may feel more confident in faith spaces over government buildings.

Hosting the event within a town hall or council offices can be beneficial as it shows a commitment from the local authority. Other successful discussions have been convened within universities, schools, or community centres.

It is a good idea to allow time for those who wish to step out for prayer or meditation over long events. Many public buildings have dedicated prayer rooms; where they do not, it is vital to ensure there is a private space available.

Muslims, for instance, are typically obliged to pray five times a day at particular times. While prayer times are set, they can sometimes be accommodated within the flow of an event; where possible, provide a quiet space for prayer, access to washing facilities for ablution, and a prayer mat or clean sheet to cover the floor.

Detailed guidance can be found on the [Interfaith Network Website](#).

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Time

As well as considering Islamic prayer times, event organisers should take care to ensure that discussions will not clash with key religious periods. Organisations such as [The Shap Calendar Group](#) publish annual calendars of religious festivals.

As a rule of thumb, the main Muslim congregational prayer takes place around noon on Fridays; Jews observe the Sabbath from Friday evening to Saturday evening; most Christians worship on a Sunday morning. Many Christian clergy take Monday as their day off, which may impact their attendance. When in doubt, ask participants whether any religious obligations might affect their availability on certain dates or at certain times.

Special observances

Religious obligations, such as fasting over Ramadan, Lent, Yom Kippur, and Navratri, may affect attendees' ability to participate. Similarly, some members of Bahá'í and Jain communities fast during Naw-Rúz and Paryushana respectively. Not all religious adherents will fast during these periods: this may vary based on gender, health, and personal preference. However, it is usually considered respectful to avoid eating in front of someone who is fasting. Rotating meeting times and dates can help accommodate different observance and fasting schedules.

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Catering

Where possible, it is best to order catering from a local supplier to support local livelihoods.

It is usually reliable to opt for food with kosher, vegetarian, and vegan options. Many Muslims are comfortable eating kosher food where it avoids alcohol and prohibited ingredients; however, this varies, so check preferences in advance. Ham, beef, and shellfish are often avoided given their proscribed status in several major faiths.

Some observant Jains do not eat meat, dairy, eggs, and root vegetables – discuss with Jain participants how they can be accommodated or if they would prefer to bring their own food.

If tea and coffee are provided, offering milk alternatives like oat and soya milk is more inclusive. Whole fruit and biscuits are popular snacks suitable for participants with dietary restrictions.

Giving participants the option to share dietary requirements in advance helps ensure everyone can be accommodated. Detailed guidance for catering can be found on the [Interfaith Network Website](#).



3.3 Facilitating multifaith and secular conversation

People can be nervous about hosting conversations across religious and secular divides. But it is not dissimilar to hosting any dialogue with diverse stakeholders. The key thing is to build trust and ensure that the diverse perspectives, narratives, opinions, and languages of those in the room are welcomed. Allowing everyone to speak authentically ensures conversations remain productive and engaging rather than transactional or superficial.

Framing the event

At the outset of the meeting, event organisers should dedicate time to contextualising the gathering, setting out its purpose, and explaining how the methods or themes in the workshop are different from other climate gatherings. The interactive, faith-informed nature of the meeting should be emphasised. If presenting on behalf of the local authority, it is helpful to speak to the current strategy and targets that have been set.

The initial introduction by organisers could be followed by similar interventions from local participants or facilitators. It is beneficial to bring the voices of faith leaders or community activists into the room at an early stage. These contributors can be selected in advance and encouraged to offer spiritual or scriptural reflections on *approaches* or *interpretations* of the topic at hand as well as practical responses being adopted in their communities. This serves to legitimise religious voices in subsequent conversations.

Key to our methodology is creating a space that foregrounds collaborative policy production through interactive, facilitated small group discussions rather than presentations. Setting the context for this early on is important.

To support this exchange, participants should be seated in small, diverse groups. It is recommended that there is a facilitator to guide conversation and encourage reflection from participants, and a notetaker to record key insights. Participants should be encouraged to agree to ground rules to support a healthy dialogue. An example list of ground rules can be found in Section 3.5.4.

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It is highly recommended to bring nametags on which attendees can write their name and organisation. This makes conversations occur more fluidly and naturally between participants.

Inviting members of grassroots communities to a gathering which only platforms the perspectives of the organisers or influential attendees will make workshop participants feel like *"passive recipients of a top-down intervention"* and creates a harmful *"expert-participant"* dichotomy (Noll, 2024)



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Centring religious texts and voices

The premise behind our methodology is that the technical, political, and scientific language used by most policymakers in discussing the climate crisis fails to resonate with faith communities and may lead to disengagement. This may be perceived as apathy, but faith traditions hold a wealth of guidance and knowledge relevant to ecological care. Many are already engaging innovatively with ecological concerns but do not express it in these secular terms.

This workshop model encourages participants to explore spiritual and theological language in the context of the climate crisis through small group discussions. Small group facilitators may draw on their own traditions during discussions, as this invites participants to consider their own theology and scripture. Our experience has been that participants readily take this on board with the right framing.

Questions to guide discussion could include:

- What does your faith or belief tradition teach about our obligations to creation?
- What themes, ideas, or scriptural excerpts from your tradition inform these approaches and that you would like to share with others?
- Has the topic of climate change been approached in your religious community before? Why or why not? If so, how did that go?

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Although broad theological conversations to begin small group discussions is helpful, it is important to ensure that the thematic focus remains locally relevant. As such, discussion could then be encouraged to move into a more focused discussion of outstanding challenges.

- What challenges exist in your community navigating the issue of the climate?
- What challenges have you faced in bringing religious groups together to collaborate with local officials?

It is advisable to end the workshop on a practical note, outlining concrete next steps for collaborative action. Facilitators are encouraged to link the three discussion groups by asking questions such as:

- How do the scriptural references or theological teachings outlined in the first section lead to or encourage practical action on the [relevant topic].
- How can the Council or [other decisionmakers] support these efforts?
- How can the communities work with the Council or other local officials to advance these goals?
- What steps does your community want to take to advance these discussions further?

Efforts should be made to make this process engaging, creative, and relevant. For example, members of the clergy could be encouraged to reflect on how they would deliver a sermon in the wake of a natural disaster, while politicians could be asked to reflect on how their own beliefs or values shape the way they speak about the climate crisis. Other participants could be asked to share themes or ideas from their faith tradition which shapes their thinking on the climate crisis.

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At the end of the small-group discussion rounds, time should be allocated for facilitators (or participants if comfortable) to share the main insights and reflections from their group in an open plenary format. This allows participants in the room to hear and learn from other groups.

We have produced two sample workshop plans that can be found in Section 3.5.5.

Scriptural Reasoning

If organisers are concerned that participants will be reticent to share from their religious perspectives, Scriptural reasoning is one well-practiced tool for opening up conversation. It is a practice whereby people of different faiths come together to read and reflect on religious scripture. The objective is not seeking agreement, but exploring texts and their possible interpretations across faith boundaries.

In this context, the common theme of the chosen texts would be the environment and local faith leaders could be involved in selecting these and briefly introducing them. That said, the best Scriptural Reasoning occurs when 'experts' are not allowed to dominate the discussion.

Detailed guidance can be found on the [Scriptural Reasoning](#) Website.

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3.4 Steering conversation towards outcomes

LSE RGS research suggests that a political approach designed to scare communities into action is not effective. On the contrary, negative responses to the climate crisis such as despair, eco-anxiety, nihilism, and anti-natalism are frequently viewed as inconsistent with religious teaching and discourage participation. It is faith and hope that motivate actions and we found participants keen to propose practical outcomes of the discussions.

More important than clearly defined projects may be a stated willingness to continue engaging with local authorities and other stakeholders in developing climate resilience in the months and years ahead. The workshop may end with writing down their own “climate pledges” of this kind, providing a way for the discussions to be translated into tangible commitments and practical everyday choices.



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Follow up

Within climate discussions, avoiding a 'drop-off' in engagement is important to solidify trust and build impactful partnerships. Organisers should therefore prioritise following up with workshop participants promptly and responding to concerns raised within the discussions.

Convenors should debrief with facilitators to reflect on how the small group conversations went and identify tangible next steps. Requests from participants should be considered and actioned as appropriate. Where financial or logistical constraints might mean certain demands or requests cannot be immediately met, organisers should communicate clearly with stakeholders and be willing to explore alternative paths forward.

It may also be helpful to draft and circulate a short report setting out the main themes, key takeaways, and agreed next steps. Sharing insights and best practices with partners and media may also prove helpful for enhancing the visibility and impact of the workshop.



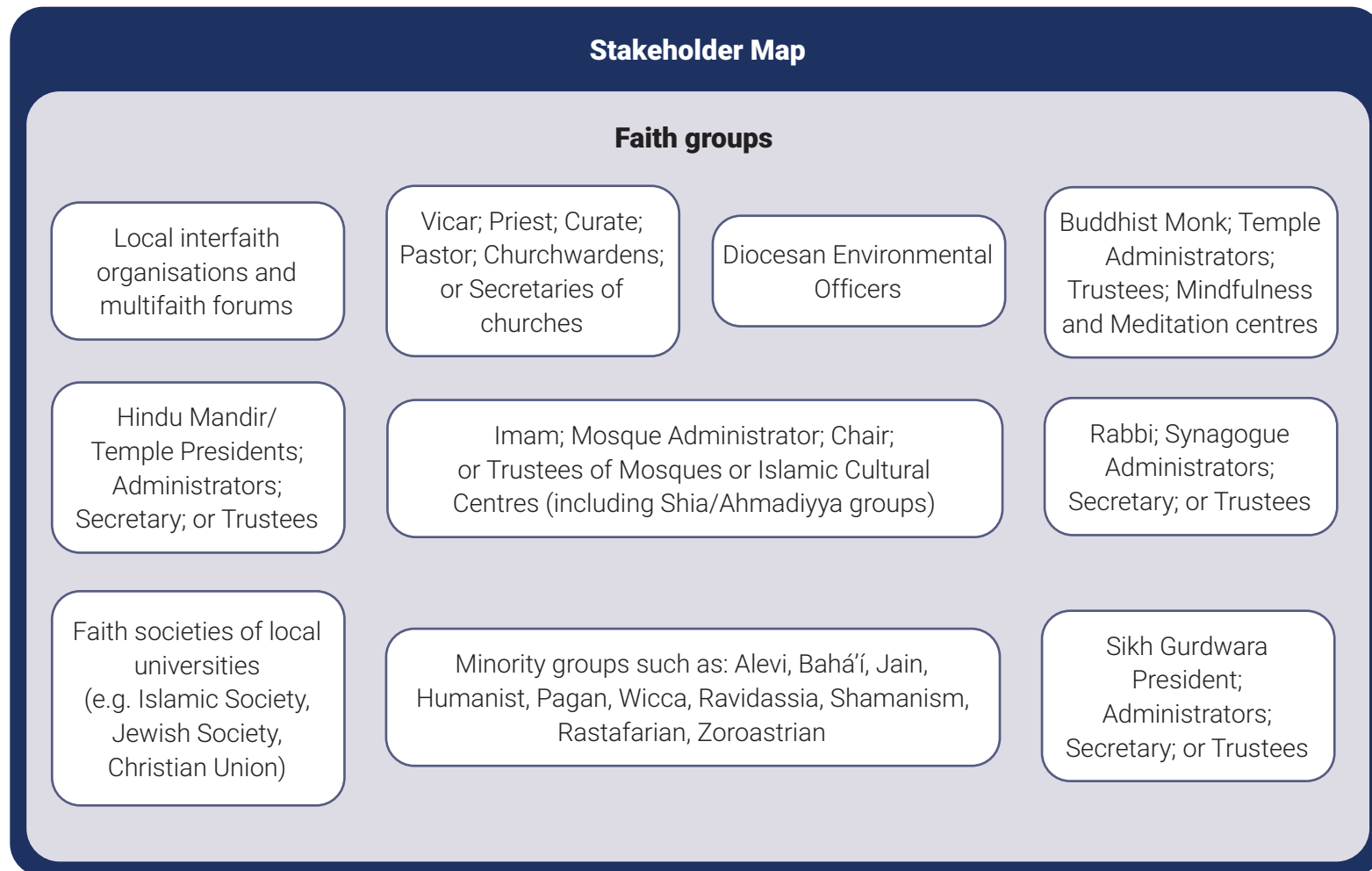
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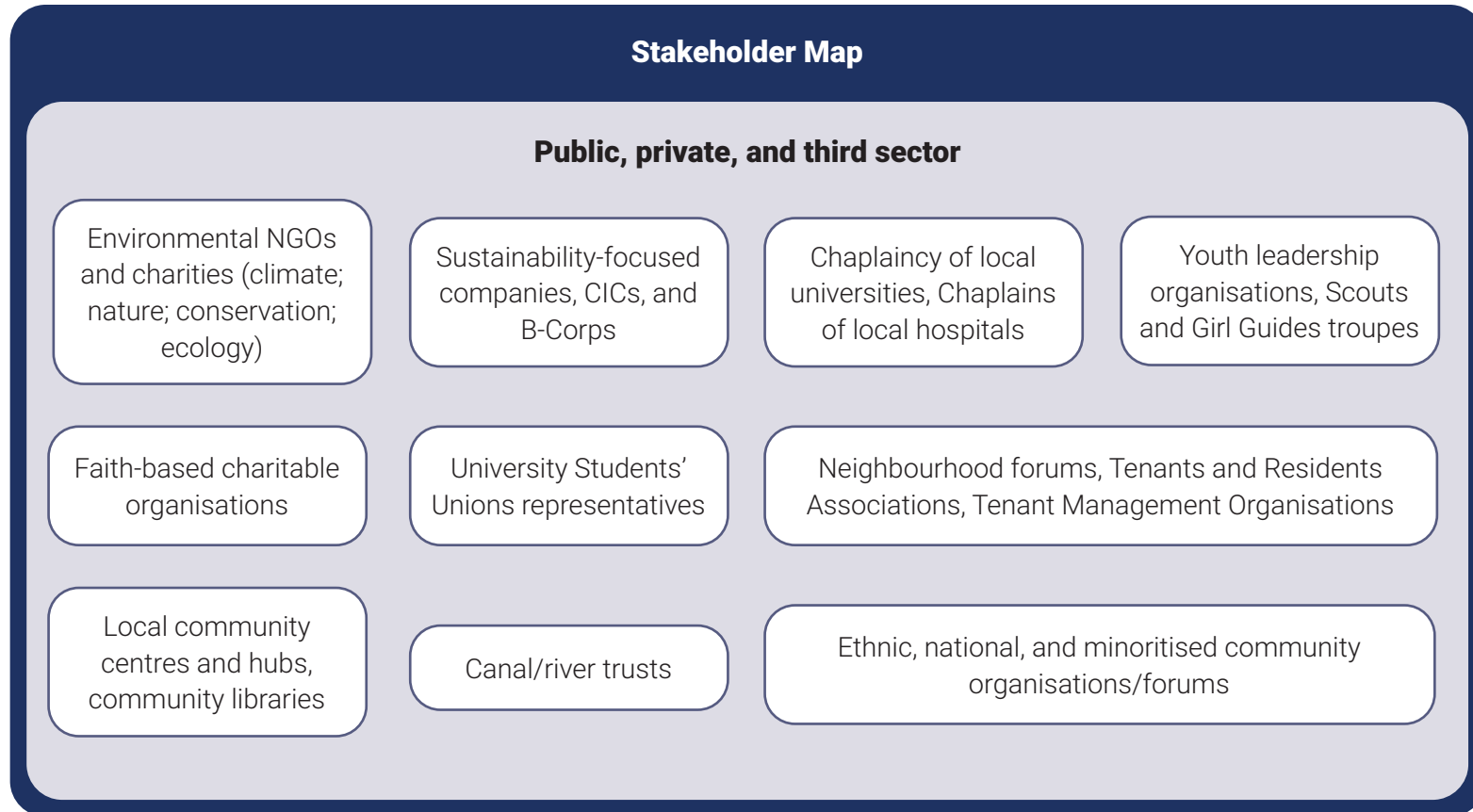
Where the room includes people of faith and people of no faith, it is important to be clear from the start that the workshop will invite faith-informed discussion. This should be stated in invitations and event materials, so participants know what to expect. At the beginning of the event, facilitators should establish shared principles of respect, openness, and attentive listening, so that everyone feels able to contribute without pressure to speak from a religious perspective. An example list of ground rules can be found in Section 3.5.4. While some questions may invite reflection on theology or scripture, they can also prompt discussion of values, moral commitments, and personal outlook. This approach helps ensure that faith-based contributions are taken seriously, while keeping the conversation open to all and allowing for a more honest and thoughtful exchange across difference.

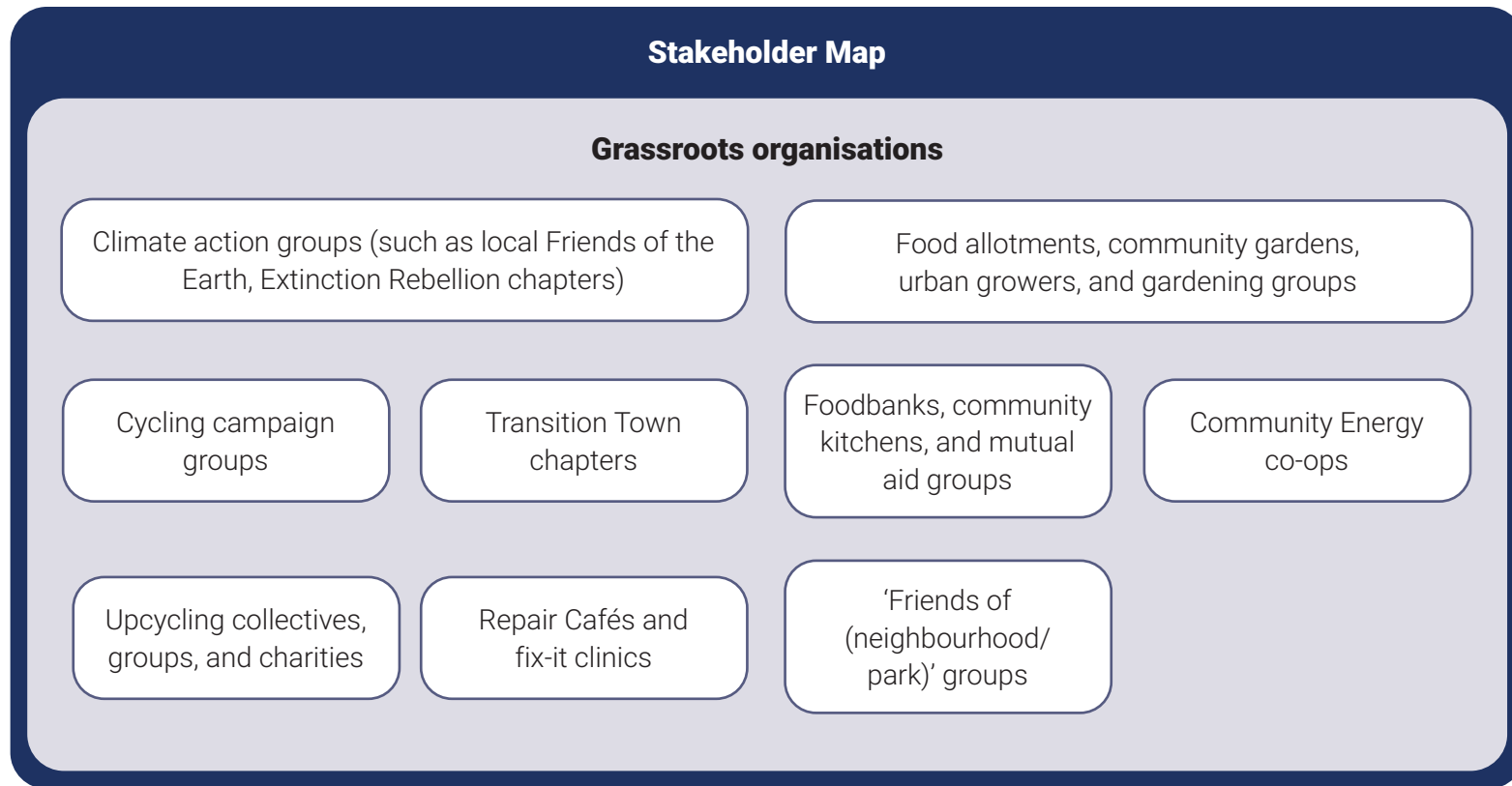


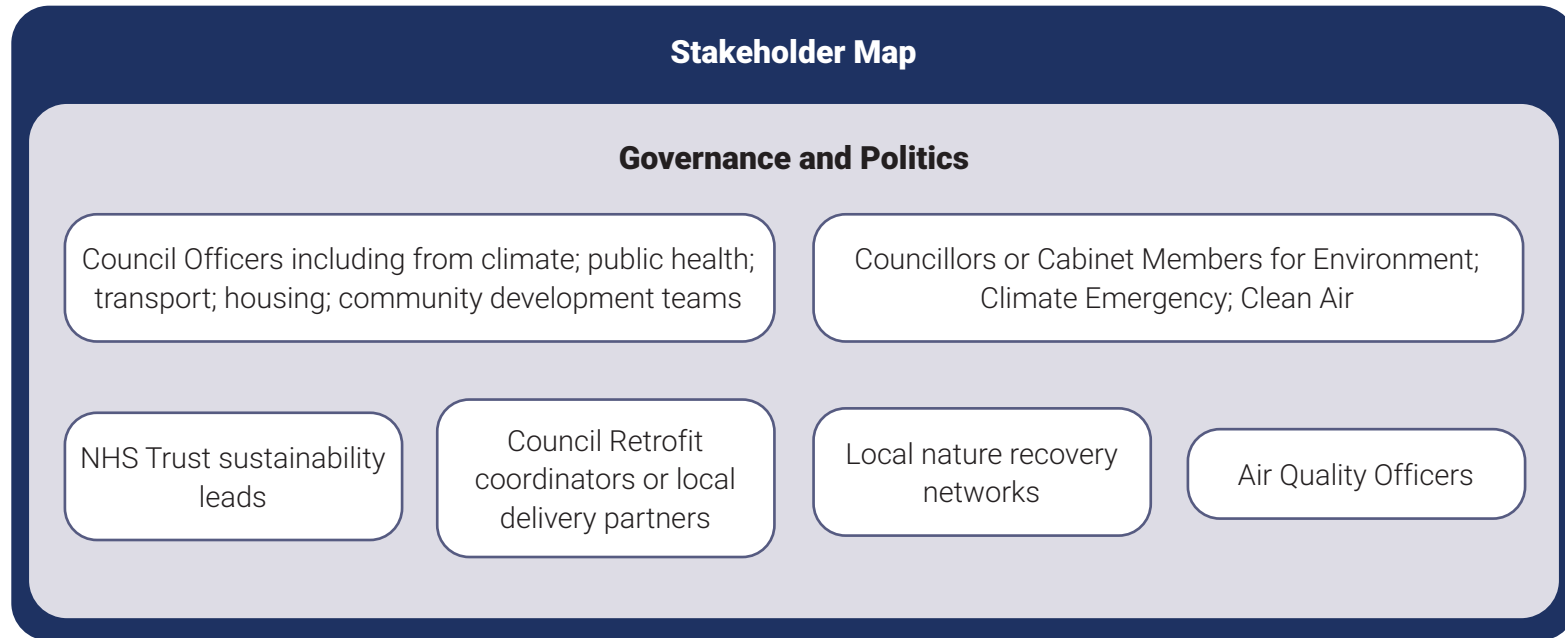
3.5 Workshop Resources

3.5.1 Stakeholder Map











3.5.2 Workshop Preparation Plan

Step	Further notes
<i>4 months before delivery</i>	
Identify coordinating partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are partners locally based and familiar with the faith communities in the area?• Do they bring complementary areas expertise and influence? Do they bring experience in climate policy and interfaith convening?• Is a local authority or government/diplomatic representative involved (for policy discussions)?
<i>3 months before delivery</i>	
Set implementation date and project timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there sufficient time allocated for workshop preparation?• Do each of the partners have sufficient time to commit to the development of the session within capacity limits?• Is the venue inclusive and appropriate for the invited guests?• Does the timing or date of the workshop clash with any major religious festivals?

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2 months before delivery

Identify community participants

Draft and send invitations

- Have significant community leaders and faith groups been included in invitation lists?
- Is the invitation clear and transparent on desired outcomes and the role participants will play?
- Have members of faith communities beyond leadership been invited?

1 month before delivery

Prepare workshop materials and workshop plan

- Do the planned discussion themes match the intended outcomes? Are they sufficiently broad to allow participants to organically shape discussion topics?
- Is the activity accessible to all participants?
- Are facilitators briefed on how to host and conduct interfaith conversations?
- Has sufficient time been allocated for the discussions?
- Has the catering considered the dietary needs of participants?
- Has space/time been allocated for participants who need to pray during the workshop (if needed)?

Part 3: Toolkit



3.5.3 Sample Invitation

{{Title}} {{First}} {{Last}}

{{Organisation}}

{{Address}}

{{Postcode}}

Invitation to workshop on Faith and Local Climate Policy

Dear {{Title}} {{First}} {{Last}},

We warmly invite you to a roundtable discussion on faith engagement in local climate policy at {{Council}} on {{Date}} from {{Time}}. The aim of this workshop is to discuss how local faith communities, and the Council can work together to shape meaningful climate action.

It will open with a presentation on {{Council's}} work with local communities to address key opportunities and challenges in becoming a net zero and climate-resilient borough and remarks from the Multifaith Forum.

Following opening remarks, attendees will participate in facilitated small group discussions on exploring shared ecological concerns, the relationship between theology and the climate crisis, and opportunities for practical collaboration with local officials moving forward.

Part 3: Toolkit



By taking part, you will have the opportunity to learn about available support for local projects, such as grants or technical advice, and to share how your faith tradition understands and responds to the climate crisis. The workshop will also provide space to build new relationships and explore opportunities for cooperation in areas such as community mobilisation, emergency response, and practical action. {{Council}} will use this session to listen and ensure that lived experience informs the design and delivery of local climate policy

No preparation is needed, though it might be fruitful to reflect on your own relationship with faith and climate in advance of the session.

Please RSVP at the following link – or by replying to this email – and share this event with people in your organisation you think might be interested.

Yours faithfully,



3.5.4 Suggested Ground Rules for Dialogue

Ground Rules for dialogue	Further notes
<i>Speak from personal experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use “I” statements.• Share your own story, community observation, or perspective.
<i>Respect difference</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants differ including in terms of age, culture, faith, ethnic and political contexts.• There is no expectation to change your belief or agree with others.
<i>No personal attacks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Critique ideas, not people.• Avoid insulting or dismissive language.• No stereotyping of religious, ethnic, or national (etc) groups.
<i>Confidentiality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal stories must not be shared outside the room without.• No recording unless explicitly agreed.
<i>Listen to understand</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Let others finish.• Avoid interrupting or speaking over people.• Respect the role of the facilitator.• Ask questions before reaching conclusions.
<i>Sharing space</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be mindful not to dominate discussion.• Leave room for quieter voices.• Acknowledge that multiple perspectives and experiences can co-exist.• The goal is understanding and reflection-not agreement.



3.5.5 Sample Workshop Plans

Workshop One: From Belief to Action: Faith and Climate Resilient Communities Hosted by Local Authority in partnership with Local Multifaith Forum		
09:40am-10:10am	Arrivals and refreshments	
10:10am-10:15am	Welcome Address	Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Community Power
10.15am-10.25am	Faith and Climate Resilience: A Theological Perspective	Chair of the Multifaith Forum or Faith Representative
10:25am-10:35am	Faith and Climate Action: Preparing for a changing environment	Senior Climate Action Officer, Brent Council
10:35am-10:40am	Introduction to workshops	Lead Facilitator
10.40am-11:30am	Discussion Session 1: Understanding Faith and Climate Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does adaptation and resilience mean to you? Are these concepts discussed in your community? • Who in your community is most vulnerable? • What ideas from your faith shape your response?
11.30am-11.40pm	Session FEEDBACK	
11:40am-11:50am	BREAK	



Workshop One: From Belief to Action: Faith and Climate Resilient Communities

Hosted by Local Authority in partnership with Local Multifaith Forum

11.55pm-12:40pm	Discussion Session 2: How can we build a more climate resilient town?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What practical actions has your community already taken (or plans to take) to develop this resilience? • What barriers exist, and how can the local authority support (resources, information, partnerships)? • And what's the right language to engage new people and form new partnerships?
12:40pm-12:50pm	Session FEEDBACK	
12:50pm-1:10pm:	Pledges and individual reflections: Moving towards resilience	<i>To be written onto board and displayed when people are leaving</i>
1:10pm-1:15pm	CLOSING REMARKS	Multifaith Forum representative
1:15pm-2:00pm:	NETWORKING LUNCH	



Workshop Two: Faith and Local Climate Policy Dialogue

Hosted by Local Authority

09:45am-10:00am	Arrivals and refreshments	
10:00am-10:05am	Welcome Address	Cabinet Member
10.15am-10.25am	Faith and Climate Resilience: A Theological Perspective	Local Faith Representative
10:05am-10:15am	Local Climate Action: Preparing for a changing environment	Senior Climate Action Officer
10:15am-10:20am	Introduction to workshops	Lead Facilitator
10.20am-10:50am	Discussion Session 1: Do we care about climate change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What themes/ideas are present in your traditions or belief systems that relate to the topic of climate change and environmental protection? Are these similar or different to those in your community? • How has the topic of climate change and sustainability been approached in your faith/belief community before? Has it been? Why or why not? • How has your faith and belief perspective on climate change led to practical actions? Or how does it influence actions that you want to take, either individually, or in your faith/belief group, or collectively as the faith & belief forum?



Workshop Two: Faith and Local Climate Policy Dialogue Hosted by Local Authority		
10:50am-11:00am	Session FEEDBACK	
11:00am-11:10am	BREAK	
11.10am-11:40am	Discussion Session 2: Opportunities for communication and collaboration moving forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you specifically interested in doing? How can the Council support that? (Focus on policy areas like retrofit, adaptation and resilience - heat resilience, biodiversity, and flooding) • What challenges do you face when engaging with climate action locally? • How can the Council better communicate, engage with and build partnerships with faith & belief groups?
11:40am-11:50am	Session FEEDBACK	
11:50am-12:00pm	Pledges and individual reflections: Moving towards resilience	<i>To be written onto board and displayed when people are leaving</i>
12:00pm-12:05pm	CLOSING REMARKS	Multifaith Forum representative
12:05-12:15pm	Networking	



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