Faith

CHARITIES FORUM

09.09.2026
15 Hatfields, London

Hope Beyond Today:

The role of faith charities as anchors and agents of hope

FEATURING:

- Faith, service, and volunteering – maximising participation across traditions
- Misogyny, media, and the risk landscape for faith charities
- Trust, localisation and transforming impact in global development
- Strengthening civic space: Protecting diverse voices in UK civil society

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#FaithForum

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08:30	Registration, coffee & networking	
09:20	**Chair's welcome – Siobhán Haire**, deputy recording clerk, Quakers in Britain	
09:25	**Faith, government and social cohesion: building hopeful partnerships for the common good** This session explores the role of the APPG on Faith and Society and wider cross-government engagement with faith-based organisations in shaping stronger, more cohesive communities. In the context of the new Civil Society Covenant – which recognises the vital contribution of faith organisations to society – it will consider how the sector and policymakers can work more closely together to address shared challenges, including community cohesion, inequality, and local resilience. It will consider what effective, trust-based collaboration looks like in practice, and how these relationships can be deepened to build a more hopeful, resilient society for all. **Daniel Singleton**, executive director, FaithAction and **Zöe Franklin MP**	
10:05	**Artificial Intelligence, Real Accountability** Artificial intelligence is advancing quickly, but so too are the ethical questions surrounding it. For faith-based charities, the challenge is no longer simply whether AI can improve efficiency or expand impact, but how it can be used in ways that uphold human dignity, justice and the common good. This session will consider the key areas of concern for responsible investors, including bias, surveillance, labour disruption, misinformation, energy demand and the growing concentration of technological power. It will ask what real accountability looks like when innovation moves faster than governance. **Rev Dr Andrew Harper**, deputy chief executive, Epworth	
10:45	Networking & refreshment break	
	Stream A – Ethics, risk & responsibility Chair – **Siobhán Haire**, deputy recording clerk, Quakers in Britain	**Stream B – Mission in practice** Chair – **Rob Preston**, news editor, Civil Society Media
11:10	**1A. Strengthening civic space – protecting diverse voices in UK civil society** Civic space in the UK is evolving, and some communities face barriers to being heard. Fadi Itani explores how these dynamics affect Muslim-led charities and the wider voluntary sector, highlighting the material and reputational impacts, from funding challenges to public trust. This session will provide practical strategies for charities to safeguard their credibility, engage effectively, and ensure all communities have a valued voice in shaping society. Attendees will leave inspired with a clearer understanding of how defending inclusivity strengthens the sector and democracy for everyone. **Fadi Itani**, chief executive, Muslim Charities Forum	**1B. Faith, service, and volunteering – maximising participation across traditions** Faith communities are among the UK's most powerful engines of volunteering, yet they operate through very different cultural and organisational models. This interfaith panel explores what drives volunteer engagement across traditions and identifies practical approaches charities can use to expand participation, improve retention, and build more resilient volunteering ecosystems. Panel – **Nicky Goldman**, chief executive, Jewish Volunteering Network, **Richard Harries**, director, Caritas Westminster and **Randeep Singh Lall DL**, chief executive, NishkamSWAT
11:50	Transit time	
11:55	**Anchors of hope: faith charities and the future of public services** At a time of growing complexity in public services, how do we move beyond short-term responses toward lasting change? And what role can faith charities play as trusted partners in building more hopeful, preventative systems? This session will explore the Better Futures Fund and wider public service reform, considering how faith organisations—rooted in trust, relationships, and community presence—can help shape and deliver more effective support for children, families, and communities. It will also highlight the opportunities this creates for deeper partnership and greater impact. **Ciara Campfield**, partner, transforming public services and **Lee Coley**, partner, Stone King LLP	
12:35	**The peach, the plum, the damson** Using the Buddhist metaphor of the peach, the plum, and the damson – three fruits, each distinct in flavour, form, and character – this session explores what difference can reveal within the UK's interfaith landscape. Drawing on experience across the UK's NBO (Network of Buddhist Organisations), this session explores questions of identity, relationship, and collaboration across faith communities. **Jamie Cresswell**, director, Centre for Applied Buddhism	
13:05	Lunch	

14:00	**2A. Misogyny, media, and the risk landscape for faith charities** Faith charities today operate under increasing public and media scrutiny, particularly around issues of gender and equality. High-profile reports have alleged that some organisations use religious frameworks in ways that can be seen as justifying discrimination or harm. This workshop offers a safe space to engage honestly with these critiques, understand the regulatory and reputational risks involved, and explore practical strategies for governance and communication that protect both mission and credibility. **Lucy Bushill-Matthews**, governance trainer, consultant and faculty, Faith in Leadership and **Peter Woodhouse**, partner, Stone King LLP	**2B. Investing with purpose: climate solutions for mission-driven portfolios** This session provides a hands-on guide for charities seeking to align their investments with climate goals and organisational values. Building on practical experience with church organisations, it combines research, case studies, and a Catholic Social Teaching (CST) toolkit to bridge the gap between policy and implementation. Attendees will explore actionable strategies for integrating climate solutions into portfolios, gaining insights that complement mainstream investment narratives while offering a values-driven, real-world perspective. **Clare Fussell**, campaign director, Operation Noah
14:40	Transit time	
14:45	**3A. Sacred responsibility: the case for reparative action** As debates around reparations gain momentum, this session challenges faith-based organisations and foundations to reconsider their roles. Are existing charitable models sufficient, or is a deeper reckoning required? This session will explore how one major foundation is approaching this question in practice, examining how institutions can grapple with historical harm, power, and responsibility. Attendees will be invited to reflect on what meaningful "repair" could look like in their own contexts. **Keon West**, head of reparations, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	**3B. Trust, localisation and transforming impact in global development** Drawing on recent analysis, this session explores the distinctive role faith-based organisations and local faith communities play in humanitarianism and international development. It will examine how faith networks – often deeply embedded, highly trusted, and locally rooted – contribute to reaching marginalised communities, shaping social norms, and strengthening resilience in complex contexts. Building on this, the session will focus on key learnings for all types of faith charities seeking to deepen their impact. In particular the importance of shifting from externally driven models to genuinely locally led, community-owned approaches. **Luke Martin**, programme development and innovations manager, Tearfund and **Osmawani Binti Osman**, international external relations coordinator, Islamic Relief Worldwide
15:15	Afternoon break	
15:40	**Regulation and trust: updates from the Charity Commission** Faith-based charities continue to face close public and regulatory scrutiny. This session from the Charity Commission will draw on our recent casework to highlight common issues that impact on trust and confidence in the sector. The session will also outline practical steps that charities can take to strengthen compliance, improve governance, and build public trust. **Charity Commission**	
16:10	**Closing keynote: The Power of Friendship** Every fourth person in the UK is regularly lonely, and yet friendship is our most overlooked, undervalued relationship. Faith-based charities and communities bring more people together regularly than any other sector; with intentional changes, we can bring change to these troubling loneliness statistics. In this closing session, author, broadcaster and Friendship Lab founder Sheridan Voysey will reveal why intentional friendship formation is a powerful response to isolation that nurtures hope, strengthens mental health, and transforms how we live and work together. **Sheridan Voysey**, founder, Friendship Lab	
16:50	**Chair's closing remarks**	
17:00	Networking reception	

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	Early-release tickets (before 3 July)	General release tickets (before 31 July)	Final release tickets (after 31 July)
Charity delegate	£99	£169	£249
Charity team ticket (up to 4 team members)	£249	£460	£649

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