

# MOSQUES MADE IN BRITAIN

Anya Hart Dyke



QUILLIAM

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***Mosques Made in Britain,  
Quilliam, February 2009***

This report was authored by Anya Hart Dyke, Senior Research Fellow at Quilliam. Many thanks to all those who generously gave their time to speak with me. And I am grateful to all staff members at Quilliam, in particular Ed Husain and James Brandon, for their input, as well as Catherine Fieschi, Director of Counterpoint (British Council).

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**ISBN number: 978-1-906603-06-9**

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## Foreword

On Christmas day in 1889, Abdullah William Quilliam opened Britain's first mosque in Liverpool. An ordinary terraced house in Derby Street was converted into a mosque. The building also incorporated an orphanage and a printing press. In the same year, Dr Gottlieb Leitner established a purpose-built mosque in Woking in Surrey – complete with dome and minarets. The Woking Mosque was also an educational body, awarding degrees from the University of Punjab and helping prepare British officers with cultural and linguistic skills before being posted to India. Today, there are between 1,200 and 1,600 mosques in Britain – no definite figure exists.

As in Victorian times, so it is now. Most of Britain's mosques today are converted buildings (ordinary houses, flats, pubs, churches, schools) and some are purpose-built with Eastern-style domes and minarets. British mosques have always been more than places of worship. Undoubtedly, the central focus of most mosques is to provide for daily, congregational prayers and the imams the central personalities in religious guidance, leading prayers, and addressing congregations at Friday prayers. However, the structure and community surroundings of mosques lend their facilities to a wider range of activities. For example, Qur'an classes in evenings, advice and counsel from the imam for families, as well as a regular gathering place for the elderly and religious youth. Many mosques also provide Muslim marriage registration and funeral services. And some mosques have religious study facilities for adults, makeshift gymnasia/sports facilities, and separate arrangements for women's classes in religious instruction.

Mosques are largely misunderstood by mainstream society. How many non-Muslims have set foot in a mosque and how many more than once? Would mosques welcome this? And how many Muslims are familiar with other places of worship? Britain is a multi-faith country, and yet we know dangerously little about our faiths.

The way ahead is strained with difficulties. In addition to gender-generational conflicts at most mosques, there are deep concerns surrounding the qualifications of imams, relevant training, low salaries, visa status, and the poor standards of education imparted to the 100,000 children who attend evening classes at Britain's mosques. Underlying the above is a disengaged, isolated, and highly socially conservative tendency among mosque leaders. They are physically in Britain, but psychologically in

Pakistan or Bangladesh. We cannot continue to ignore the deep malaise in Britain's mosques. The current annual output of graduates from highly conservative, literalist Deobandi seminaries in northern England will meet the Government's emphasis on 'English-speaking imams', but will fail to support British values of equality, tolerance, liberty and religious pluralism.

British mosques have a huge potential to contribute to British society and can enhance social and community cohesion by preventing tensions between communities on religious and political grounds. This requires mosques and Muslim communities to become resilient to extremist groups operating in their midst, and a strong sense of belonging to Britain in order to protect Britain's values and freedoms. Currently, mosques are far from resilient.

Our first line of defence against terrorism is the ability, commitment, and confidence of mosques and Muslim communities to root out extremism. We cannot continue to ignore the malaise in our mosques.

Maajid Nawaz

Ed Husain

Directors, Quilliam

15th February 2009

## Glossary

A note on transliteration: The different sources used in this report do not all follow the same rules of transliteration from the Arabic, but I have tried to be consistent where possible. I have also anglicized the plural of some Arabic words to make it easier to read.

<i>barelwi</i>	[also Barelvi] is a movement of Sunni Sufism, of the Hanafi school, in South Asia that was founded by Ahmed Raza Khan of Bareilly in India
<i>bayaan</i>	pre-sermon lecture [lit. declaration] (Arabic)
<i>biradari</i>	brotherhood [extended family] (Urdu)
<i>dar al-ulum</i>	seminary [lit. house of sciences] (Arabic)
<i>deobandi</i>	a Sunni Islamic revivalist movement, of the Hanafi school, which started in India and Pakistan
<i>Hizb ut-Tahir</i>	Meaning 'Party of Liberation', is an Islamist group which was founded in 1953 in Jordanian-ruled East Jerusalem by the Palestinian jurist Taqiuddin al-Nabhani
<i>Jamaat-e-Islami</i>	An Islamist political party in Pakistan, founded in Lahore, Pakistan in 1941 by Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi
<i>khandani</i>	ancestral clan [immediate family and lineage] (Urdu)
<i>khutbah</i>	in the ritual Friday sermon and other ceremonies [lit. address] (Arabic)
<i>madrassa</i>	school for religious learning [lit. school] (Arabic)
<i>masjid</i>	mosque [lit. place of prostration] (Arabic)
<i>sufi</i>	Muslim ascetic and mystic
<i>salafi</i>	a strictly orthodox Sunni Muslim sect advocating a return to the early Islam of the Qur'an and the Sunna
<i>shi'ah</i>	one of two main branches of Islam, that rejects the first three Sunni caliphs and regards Ali, the fourth caliph, as Muhammad's first true successor
<i>sunni</i>	one of the two main branches of Islam, differing from Shi'ah in its understanding of the Sunna and its acceptance of the first three caliphs
<i>wahhabi</i>	a conservative revisionist Sunni movement, which was founded by Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab in the 18th century. It is popular in Saudi Arabia and retains a non-ideological, socially conservative, austere and literalist interpretation of Islam.

## Introduction

Muslim communities in Britain are diverse, with a study undertaken by the Open Society Institute (2005) stating that “it is claimed that the Muslim community [in the UK] has 56 nationalities, speaks 70 languages and prays in more than 1,200 mosques”.<sup>1</sup> But the majority of British Muslims are from the Indian Sub-Continent, and Sunni<sup>2</sup> Islam’s Deobandi and Barelwi denominations are dominant, although Shi’ahs,<sup>3</sup> Salafis,<sup>4</sup> Sufis<sup>5</sup> and others contribute to the British Muslim landscape.

According to the Institute for Community Cohesion (April 2008), at a local level, mosques form the bedrock of British Muslim communities, with high attendance rates for Friday Prayers even amongst “nominally practising Muslims.” Mosques are dominated by the Barelwi, Deobandi and Salafi denominations and Muslims are more likely to “worship in a *Masaajid* [*sic.*] [mosque] with others from a similar ethnic background and religious practice. Accordingly, most *Masaajid* and likewise *Madrassas* [supplementary schools] are established and administered along theological and most often corresponding ethnic lines”.<sup>6</sup> In addition to offering prayer facilities and religious services, mosques often also act as community centres, offering Islamic education in the form of *madrasas* (or supplementary schools), and recreational activities.

In a survey conducted by Policy Exchange in 2007, 86 per cent of Muslims felt that “my religion is the most important thing in my life”.<sup>7</sup> Further, in 2001 approximately 50 per cent of Muslims in Britain were under 25 years of age,<sup>8</sup> and according to figures from the Office for National Statistics (September 2008), the Muslim population in Britain has grown by more than 500,000 to 2.4 million in just four years, with the highest proportion being under the age of four.<sup>9</sup> Will Britain’s existing mosques have the capacity and competence to meet the growing number of British-born Muslims’ future needs?

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<sup>1</sup> *Muslims in the UK: Policies for Engaged Citizens*, Open Society Institute, 2005, pp. 318 – 319 <http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/britishmuslims> [accessed 3rd February 2009].

<sup>2</sup> One of the two main branches of Islam, differing from Shi’ah in its understanding of the Sunna and its acceptance of the first three caliphs.

<sup>3</sup> One of two main branches of Islam, that rejects the first three Sunni caliphs and regards Ali, the fourth caliph, as Muhammad’s first true successor.

<sup>4</sup> A strictly orthodox Sunni Muslim sect advocating a return to the early Islam of the Qur’an and the Sunna.

<sup>5</sup> Muslim ascetic and mystic.

<sup>6</sup> *Understanding and Appreciating Muslim Diversity: Towards better Engagement and Participation*, Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo), April 2008, pp. 25 – 26.

<sup>7</sup> *Living apart together: British Muslims and the paradox of multiculturalism*, Policy Exchange, 2007, p. 5 <http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/libimages/246.pdf> [accessed 24th January 2009].

<sup>8</sup> *Muslims of Britain*, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2006, p.14.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Muslim population ‘rising 10 times faster than rest of society’’, 30th January 2009 [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life\\_and\\_style/article5621482.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/article5621482.ece), [accessed 2nd February 2009].

This report illustrates the potential richness and, simultaneously the under-utilization of resources in mosques. Non-inclusive management, low educational standards, and the age-gender gap between mosque lay and religious leaders (male, elderly, first generation immigrants) and their congregations (young, British born, male and female) poses real threats of disempowerment and loss of faith in existing structures, which could leave individuals vulnerable to extremists.

Quilliam conducted a poll in September 2008 of over 500<sup>10</sup> mosques in Britain, which posed five questions on women's facilities, language, evening classes for children and where the imam(s) were from and where they trained, which gives some indication of the depth of the problem. The survey found that out of 254 mosques, 97 per cent of imams came from outside of Britain, and out of 152 mosques, 92 per cent trained abroad. The religious leadership in the vast majority of Britain's mosques, therefore, are not in full command of the English language, and are likely to be ill-equipped to address the real concerns and everyday experiences of young British Muslims. Their overseas upbringing and training does not prepare them to help young British Muslims integrate into a democratic, multi-faith society, of which they have a limited understanding, and leaves them powerless to challenge Islamist extremist rhetoric propagated by young, English-speaking, and articulate Muslims.

The survey also found that out of 494 mosques, 44 per cent do not include English in any aspect of their Friday sermons and out of 501 mosques only 54 per cent say they have facilities for women. This current disconnect between young, English-speaking Muslim men and women who hold their faith to be of fundamental importance, and their insular, elder, family members who retain control of most mosques, has led to young Muslims turning to other outlets for their religion-based worldview. University Islamic societies, Muslim satellite channels, annual summer camps, conferences, exhibitions, internet chat forums, and membership-based voluntary organizations have all become viable, alternative social spaces for young, engaged Muslims.

This report will explore the above themes and highlight areas for developing better governance and improving the quality of religious leadership in mosques. Many of Britain's first generation Muslims have come from Muslim-majority countries and how mosques were run and the role(s) they played in rural areas of their home countries cannot be replicated in Britain. Moreover, the *madrasas* or supplementary schools attached to the majority of British mosques offer an Islamic education, to thousands of young Muslim children, that is characterized by rote learning and goes against

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<sup>10</sup> Not all mosques responded to all five questions posed.



mainstream educational practices of critical thinking and discussion. Moreover, this education must teach the compatibility of Islam with Britain's liberal democratic values of tolerance and equality.

The report shows that British-born Muslims are best placed to develop mosques and supplementary schools which promote an Islam that is compatible with the realities of Muslim life in Britain. Drawing on the experiences of other religious institutions as well as mosques, community-based organizations and local authorities, this report will map out a way forward. Recommendations contained at the end of the report are aimed primarily at the Government, local authorities and mosque management committees.

## Methodology

Quilliam conducted a phone poll in September 2008, which reached 512 mosques, although not every mosque responded to all five questions posed.

The questions posed were:

1. Do you have evening classes – learning the Qur'an in Arabic – for children?
2. What is the language of the Friday lecture?
3. Can women attend the mosque for prayers?
4. Which country is the [main] imam from?
5. Which country did the [main] imam train in?

Attempts were made to contact many more but mosques are often hard to reach – difficulties encountered related to incorrect contact details available via on-line mosque directories and nobody answering the telephone, but also an unwillingness to talk. In the outreach work of the Charity Commission's Faith and Social Cohesion Unit with mosques, it has taken an average of 12 attempts to make contact with mosques.<sup>11</sup> As a result, the data we have gathered is on a disproportionately high number of medium- to large-sized mosques since it is smaller ones that are often under-staffed.

This report has also incorporated a range of viewpoints on how best to address current concerns about the capacity of mosques and its leadership to meet the needs of Muslim communities in Britain. The author conducted interviews (by telephone and face-to-face) with individuals from across the UK involved in mosque management, university chaplaincy, local authorities, *dar al-ulum* and community-based organizations as well as imams, scholars, members of other faiths and others.

The mosques mentioned in this report are good examples of best practice but are by no means the only examples. Owing to lack of space in this report not all of them could be included. The individual mosques profiled were chosen on the basis of their activities and their availability and willingness to talk.

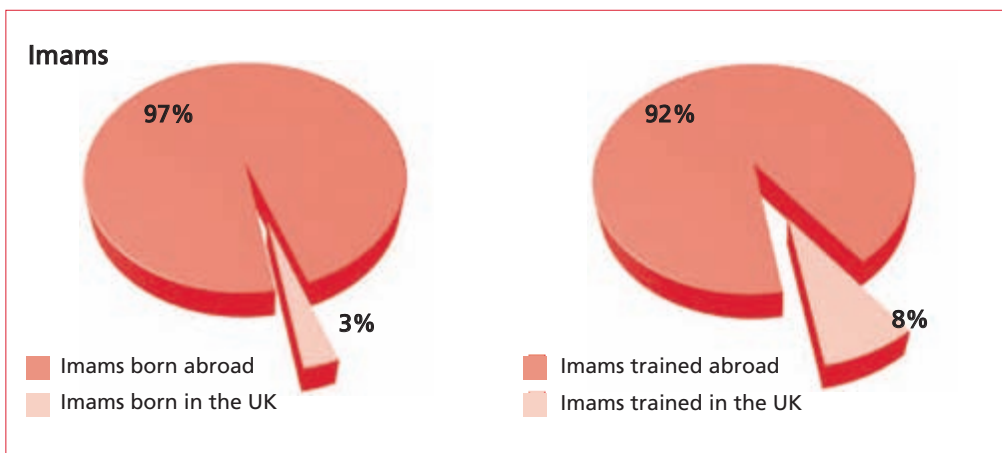
The report also draws on a range of secondary sources – studies, surveys, government papers, media reports and others.

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<sup>11</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of Faith and Social Cohesion, Charity Commission, 14th January 2009.

## 1. Who are Britain's Imams?

Imams in British mosques lead five daily prayers, Friday congregational prayers and may also conduct other religious services such as *nikah* (marriage) and funerals. They may also be involved in leading study circles, teaching in *madrassas*<sup>12</sup> attached to the mosque, and religious duties outside the mosque in hospitals, schools or prisons. Many imams also accompany members of their congregation to the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, or Hajj, speak at community events and lead ceremonies surrounding the Prophet Mohammed's birthday. In religious life the imam has a key role to play. So who are Britain's imams?



According to a poll conducted by Quilliam in September 2008, from amongst 254 mosques, 97 per cent of imams in mosques in the UK were born abroad and from amongst 152 mosques, 92 per cent of imams trained abroad.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, a survey of 300 mosques conducted by the University of Chester in 2007, showed that 45 per cent of imams had been in the UK for less than five years.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Also spelt *madrassah* or *madressah*, and also referred to as a supplementary school. See Chapter 4. Islamic Education: Children in Mosques for more details. These supplementary schools refer to classes for children that take place in the evening, at the weekend and/or during the holidays.

<sup>13</sup> The phone poll was carried out by Quilliam during the month of Ramadan in September 2008 and reached 512 mosques. Not all mosques responded to every question posed. 254 responded to the question of where the imam was from and 152 to the question of where the imam trained. Although many mosques have more than one imam, this data is for the main imam of the mosque.

<sup>14</sup> A survey of 300 mosques carried out by Chester University in 2007 (commissioned by BBC News and the BBC Asian Network) found that 8 per cent of imams preaching in mosques were born in the UK, and 6 per cent had been in the UK for less than 12 months while almost 45 per cent had been in the UK for less than five years 'Ban foreign language imams - peer', 6th July 2007 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6275574.stm> [accessed 15th November 2008].

If imams exist to serve the entire Muslim community, are these imams suitably qualified and able to meet the needs of their British Muslim congregations - both actual and *potential*? It is worth bearing in mind that according to the 2001 census, 46 per cent of Muslims were born in the UK and one third of Muslims are under the age of 16.<sup>15</sup> Where congregations are composed of older members of the community, they may feel they can better relate to imams from their home countries, but is this at the expense of the next generation of young Muslims, who may feel the imams are out of touch with issues relevant to Muslim communities in Britain in particular, and do not understand the dynamics of British society more generally?

Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra's view is that "these [foreign] imams who are fully trained in their profession must be treated as professionals in their field. Their competence in matters of theology and jurisprudence is comparable to UK trained imams and often surpasses ours. However some lack the understanding of our society and cultures and therefore may not be as effective or successful in their teaching. Lack of understanding and appreciation of the challenges and pressures our youth face in multi-cultural Britain... has led to disillusionment and lack of interest amongst many youth".<sup>16</sup> It is beyond the scope of this report to examine the individual *dar al-ulums* (religious seminaries)<sup>17</sup> that these foreign imams have trained in, but Professor Ron Geaves of the University of Chester says of such *dar al-ulums* that "by their very nature they weren't designed for a 21st Century secular democracy like Britain, where Islam is a minority religion... imams educated in them tend to see Islam as good, and everything else as bad".<sup>18</sup>

There are currently no programmes in place to make foreign imams aware of the society and culture they are entering. The Home Office runs a special visa scheme for religious ministers and since 2004, religious ministers applying for a visa in the UK have had to prove that they can speak good English.<sup>19</sup> But the requirement for English proficiency is relatively low and defined as someone who has "a general effective command of the language *despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings*" [my emphasis].<sup>20</sup> The Home Office also tried to introduce a

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<sup>15</sup> Jodie Reed, *Young Muslims in the UK: Education and Integration*, A briefing paper for the FES/IPPR seminar, Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), [www.ippr.org/uploadedFiles/research/projects/Education/Muslims%20in%20ed%20for%20FES%20FINAL.doc](http://www.ippr.org/uploadedFiles/research/projects/Education/Muslims%20in%20ed%20for%20FES%20FINAL.doc) [accessed 30th January 2009].

<sup>16</sup> Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra, October 2008.

<sup>17</sup> *Dar al-ulum* is also spelled *dar ul uloom*, and may also be referred to as a (full-time) *madrassa* or seminary.

<sup>18</sup> 'Are UK's imams modern enough?' 7th July 2007 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6280238.stm> [accessed 4th January 2009].

<sup>19</sup> 'Home-grown imams to curb hate preachers', 1st April 2007 <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article1596767.ece> [accessed 16th January 2009].

<sup>20</sup> See Entry Clearance Guidance, Chapter 18.12, 'Ministers of religion, missionaries and members of religious orders, Religious Workers in non-Pastoral Roles', <http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/ecg/ecgarchive/chapter18archived26nov/ministerofreligion/>, [accessed 13th January 2009].

'Britishness' test for foreign-born imams in 2005 but it was reportedly scrapped after "protests from the Muslim community".<sup>21</sup> Although in April 2007 the department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) acknowledged that "many imams still come from overseas; we have introduced new immigration rules... to ensure that those seeking to enter the country meet certain requirements such as basic English skills. But more urgently needs to be done to ensure that imams can connect with all parts of society, particularly young people".<sup>22</sup> Further frustrating this process of 'adaptation' is the fact that currently, to qualify for free 'English as a Foreign Language' (EFL) tuition, an individual has to have been resident in the UK for three years. Requisite criminal background checks conducted by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) for imams, since they have contact with children and potentially vulnerable people, are also a concern - where imams come from abroad these are much more difficult and resource-intensive to carry out.

But would improved language skills and the basics of 'Britishness' be sufficient for young Muslims born in the UK to be able to relate to imams from their parents' or grandparents' countries? *How can 'Britishness' be taught?* According to the 2001 Census, there are 1.6 million Muslims of which 50 per cent were born in the UK. Moreover, approximately 50 per cent of the Muslim population in Britain is under 25 years of age,<sup>23</sup> and according to statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics in September 2008, the Muslim population in Britain has grown by more than 500,000 to 2.4 million in just four years, with the highest proportion being under the age of four.<sup>24</sup> Contrast this with the vast majority of imams who have come from abroad - is there and will there continue to be, an 'authority gap' which prevents imams from equipping the Muslim youth for life in Britain?<sup>25</sup> One young Muslim academic states that "imams from abroad aren't equipped to deal with day-to-day relevant issues for British Muslims and may not know how to make religion relevant to the youth",<sup>26</sup> especially since these imams mostly come from countries where operating in consumer, liberal societies in which other faiths reside, is not an issue. A major obstacle is

<sup>21</sup> 'Preach in English, Muslim peer tells imams', 23rd July 2007

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1558149/Preach-in-English,-Muslim-peer-tells-imams.html> [accessed 3rd December 2008].

<sup>22</sup> *Preventing violent extremism – Winning hearts and minds*, Communities and Local Government, April 2007

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/320752.pdf> p.10 [accessed on 2nd February 2009].

<sup>23</sup> *Muslims of Britain*, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2006, p.14.

<sup>24</sup> 'Muslim population 'rising 10 times faster than rest of society'', 30th January 2009

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life\\_and\\_style/article5621482.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/article5621482.ece), [accessed 2nd February 2009].

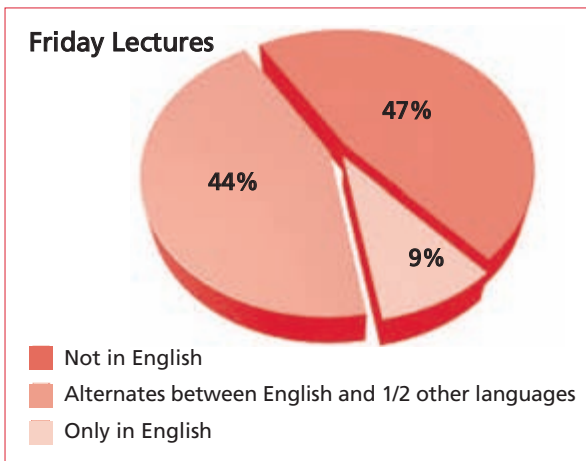
<sup>25</sup> 31 per cent of British Muslims agreed that imams are out of touch with the views of young Muslims. 'UK Muslim community statistics', MORI poll in 2005, the National Youth Agency,

<http://www.nya.org.uk/information/100582/109652/100630/108761/ukmuslimcommunitystatistics/> [accessed 21st December 2008].

<sup>26</sup> Myriam Francois-Cerrah, PhD candidate (Oxford), 23rd September 2008.

language. According to a BBC-commissioned survey of 229 young Muslims in August 2005, 65 per cent agreed that Muslim clerics should preach in English.<sup>27</sup>

Friday prayers consist of a lecture followed by the *khutbah*. The *khutbah* is delivered in Arabic, but the lecture prior to this can and should be delivered in English.<sup>28</sup> Currently, most imams deliver this lecture in Urdu or Bengali (see chart below). Knowledge of English is instrumental in both communicating with Muslims who don't understand the mother tongue of the imam but also in understanding local context. An imam cannot be tuned into British social, political and cultural life when he can't follow local and national news (print or broadcast) and can't communicate effectively with British people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. For young Muslims and also converts who don't speak Urdu or Bengali, they cannot gain from a Friday lecture conducted in a language they do not understand, nor can they hope to build a relationship with their imam, if he is either unable to speak, or lacks proficiency in English. One British Muslim convert said that "British Muslims should be giving more back to Britain and the least they can do is open up the mosque to English speakers".<sup>29</sup> Moreover, where mosques hold the Friday lecture in a language other than English, you risk creating and perpetuating ethno-linguistic ghettos by limiting those who can attend the mosque for prayer, to those who speak, for example, Urdu. This further impedes the integration of that particular community.



According to a poll conducted by Quilliam in September 2008, amongst 494 mosques, 44 per cent do not hold the Friday lecture in English. Even where English is used, it may be once in every two or three weeks: 47 per cent of mosques conduct the lecture in English *and* one or two other languages (mostly Urdu and Bengali, but also Arabic, Punjabi and Gujarati).<sup>30</sup> Further, a survey of 300 mosques carried out by Chester University in

2007 found that only 6 per cent of imams speak English as a first language.<sup>31</sup>

So foreign imams need both 'Understanding Britain' training (the political, social, legal and economic system), and proficiency in the English language. But Mehmood

<sup>27</sup> 'Multiculturalism Poll', MORI/BBC, 10th August 2005

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/multiculturalism\\_poll\\_11\\_08\\_05.pdf](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/multiculturalism_poll_11_08_05.pdf) [accessed 28th December 2008].

<sup>28</sup> This weekly lecture is sometimes referred to as a *bayaan*.

<sup>29</sup> A convert, participant, Mosques Seminar, Hounslow, 21st October 2008.

Naqshbandi states that "basic knowledge of English is more useless than no English because mediocre English skills merely bury the problem".<sup>32</sup> And it is simply not enough for imams to merely 'understand' Britain; where are the mechanisms for ensuring that they *believe in* and seek to *uphold* Britain's liberal, democratic principles? In 2004 The Guardian reported that attendance rates at primary schools in an east London borough had increased since the imam at the East London Mosque began to emphasize the importance of children's education to parents at Friday prayers, thus acting as a bridge between the British educational system and parents who do "not have same appreciation of the importance of regular primary school attendance as of attendance at secondary school, often believing education at younger levels was 'about playing with sand and water and not so much learning'".<sup>33</sup> Imams are more likely to act as bridges between their congregants (young and old) and British society where they are British-born, and have undergone suitable training in the UK. They will be both proficient in English, well-acquainted with British society, and more likely to understand, appreciate and believe in British values of tolerance and pluralism, in no small part because they will be more *emotionally* connected to aspects of British life, having grown up, and been educated here.

There are approximately 25 *dar al-ulums*<sup>34</sup> in the UK, with most having been established in the last 30 years.<sup>35</sup> *Dar al-ulums* offer traditional courses on Islam, *hadith*, Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and theology. Some also offer GCSE subjects, whilst others just focus on further education and may offer A Level subjects.<sup>36</sup> Although amongst the Barelwis, which is the largest of the Muslim communities in the UK, demand for

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<sup>30</sup> The phone poll was carried out by Quilliam during the month of Ramadan in September 2008 and reached 512 mosques. Not all mosques responded to every question posed and not all mosques hold Friday prayers. 494 mosques responded to the question of the language of the lecture held before Friday prayers.

<sup>31</sup> The survey was commissioned by BBC News and the BBC Asian Network, 'Ban foreign language imams - peer', 6th July 2007 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6275574.stm> [accessed 21st December 2008].

<sup>32</sup> Mehmood Naqshbandi, Chapter 4 'The Mosque or Masjid', *Muslims in Britain - A Guide for Non-Muslims* <http://guide.muslimsinbritain.org/guide4.html> [accessed 12th January 2009].

<sup>33</sup> 'Mosque improves pupils' attendance', 5th July 2004 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2004/jul/05/schools.faithschools> [accessed 3rd February 2009].

<sup>34</sup> Figures vary but there are 25 according to Dr Ataullah Siddiqui's report, *Islam at Universities in England. Meeting the Needs and Investing in the Future*, 10th April 2007, p. 71 [http://www.islamic-foundation.org.uk/pdfs/siddiqui\\_report2007.pdf](http://www.islamic-foundation.org.uk/pdfs/siddiqui_report2007.pdf) [accessed 26th January 2009].

<sup>35</sup> Phillip Lewis, *Young, British and Muslim*, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007, pp. 99 – 100.

<sup>36</sup> Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui, *Islam at Universities in England. Meeting the Needs and Investing in the Future*, 10th April 2007, p. 32, 71 [http://www.islamic-foundation.org.uk/pdfs/siddiqui\\_report2007.pdf](http://www.islamic-foundation.org.uk/pdfs/siddiqui_report2007.pdf) [accessed 26th January 2009].

Barelwi imams cannot be met by the number of UK-trained graduates,<sup>37</sup> given that the majority of the *dar al-ulums* in the UK are Deobandi, Sheikh Usama Hassan says there is "in fact a surplus of *dar al-ulum* graduates every year".<sup>38</sup> Moreover, Muslim scholar Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad has said that, "there is twice the number of Muslims currently training in *dar al-ulums* compared with Christians of all denominations".<sup>39</sup>

According to Mufti Abdul Kadir Barkatulla, a teacher in Ebrahim Community College *dar al-ulum* in Whitechapel, "*dar al-ulums* are managed by first generation immigrants who don't want to reform and who are reproducing the curriculum from the Sub-Continent".<sup>40</sup> Dr Musharraf Hussain, Founder and Director of the Karimia Institute, has stated that "too many seminary [*dar al-ulum*] students studied a narrow syllabus and inhabited a cocooned world that left them ill-equipped to connect with the 21st-century concerns of young British Muslims".<sup>41</sup>

At Ebrahim Community College they run a course on British society and global politics. Mufti Barkatulla says, "currently, *dar al-ulum* world views are frozen in the past. It is not enough for these students to source the media for their understanding of domestic and global politics." Ebrahim Community College is in contact with other *dar al-ulums* in the UK, though no formal network exists, and as far as Mufti Barkatulla is aware, his *dar al-ulum* is the only one running such a course.<sup>42</sup> However, although students may graduate with GCSE or A Level qualifications, their training in Islamic studies is not recognized by colleges and universities. "Ebrahim Community College runs at a deficit of £100,000 - £150,000 per annum, although the college has a full-time fundraiser". This is a vicious circle; "*dar al-ulums* suffer from low standards owing to limited resources".<sup>43</sup>

Sheikh Usama Hassan states that "these *dar al-ulums* also don't teach trainees technical, managerial, professional and communication skills",<sup>44</sup> but are graduates able to gain these skills at graduate and post-graduate level? Muslim scholar Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, of the Muslim Academic Trust in Cambridge suggests taking "the top 10 per cent of *dar al-ulum* graduates and giving them an additional one-year training on British Law, society, health, immigration etc. These *dar al-ulum* graduates should not be dismissed but rather supported; add to their training, and you will have strong

<sup>37</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Charity Commission, 14th January 2009.

<sup>38</sup> Sheikh Usama Hassan, Imam, mosque in Leyton, September 2008.

<sup>39</sup> Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, also known as T J Winter, Mosques Seminar, Hounslow, 21st October 2008.

<sup>40</sup> Mufti Abdul Kadir Barkatulla, Teacher, Ebrahim Community College, Whitechapel, 23rd January 2009.

<sup>41</sup> 'British imams 'failing young Muslims'', 7th January 2008  
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/faith/article3142525.ece> [accessed 26th January 2009].

<sup>42</sup> Mufti Abdul Kadir Barkatulla, Teacher, Ebrahim Community College, Whitechapel, London 23rd January 2009.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Sheikh Usama Hassan, Imam, mosque in Leyton, September 2008.



leaders".<sup>45</sup> There are currently two institutions in the UK which have already developed graduate and post-graduate Islamic Studies programmes: the Muslim College in London and the Markfield Institute for Higher Education in Leicestershire. For the Muslim College, "Muslims living in the West have for long felt the need for [sic] establishing a religious academic institution specialising in the study of Islam, its culture and history. It is not difficult to recognize that religious education and guidance in Western societies requires a type of scholarship that is in many ways different from the scholarship available in Muslim countries".<sup>46</sup> It ran a part-time programme on 'imamship' training for one year, as part of the Islamic Studies programme, but according to a staff member at the College "it was discontinued owing to a lack of students".<sup>47</sup> The Muslim College is primarily funded by the Libya-based World Islamic Call Society.<sup>48</sup> The Markfield Institute in Leicestershire was established in 2000 as an affiliate body of the Islamic Foundation.<sup>49</sup> The Institute has a Management of Mosques, Trusts and Endowments module, led by Dr Fatma Amer as part of its postgraduate Islamic Studies and its Muslim Community Studies programmes.<sup>50</sup> (See Chapter 3: Who Governs Britain's Mosques? for practical capacity-building initiatives for those already involved in mosque religious and lay leadership).

Students might also benefit from gaining practical experience by doing a sandwich year working in a professional environment whether it is with a community-based organization, with the local authorities, in counselling or another sector. This year could take place one or two years before graduating from undertaking further education in a *dar al-ulum* or could be part of a post-graduate Islamic Studies programme. Additionally, graduates could gain experience leading young people in prayer at universities where they have prayer facilities, thus exposing themselves to dealing with a range of ethnic groups, nationalities and schools of thought, such is the diversity of the university's Muslim student body. Mosque imams should also visit *dar al-ulum*s to speak with students about the reality of being an imam in a UK mosque. What would be beneficial is for both younger and older imams to come in and speak with students about their experiences including day-to-day responsibilities and challenges mosques face in the

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<sup>45</sup> Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, also known as T J Winter, Mosques Seminar, Hounslow, 21st October 2008.

<sup>46</sup> Muslim College, London <http://www.muslimcollege.ac.uk/> [accessed 19th January 2009].

<sup>47</sup> Staff member, Muslim College, London, 22nd January 2009.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Mandaville, 'Islamic Education in Britain: Approaches to Religious Education in a Pluralistic Society' In Robert W. Hefner & Muhammad Qasim Zaman (eds), *Schooling Islam, The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*, Princeton University Press, 2007, p.233.

<sup>49</sup> Prof. Khurshid Ahmad is Chairman of the Islamic Foundation and also Vice President of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* party <http://www.jamaat.org/leadership/> [accessed 10th February 2009]. *Jamaat-e-Islami* is an Islamist political party in Pakistan. Founded in Lahore in 1941 by Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi.

<sup>50</sup> The Markfield Institute of Higher Education <http://www.mihe.org.uk/mihe/detail.php?c=11&what=course> [accessed 20th January 2009].

community. Where imams understand the role of the mosque in modern Britain, and the myriad of statutory and voluntary bodies (be it local councillors, Youth Offending Teams, state schools, or community-based, non-governmental organizations etc) that the mosque can benefit from coordinating with, they will see the *benefits* of engagement and have the *confidence* to do it.

Some feel that all imams, whether they are British *dar al-ulum* graduates or recruited from abroad, could benefit from additional, on-the-job training in areas such as handling the media and public relations, Information Technology (IT) skills (to respond to e-inquiries from congregation), public speaking skills and presentation skills, interpersonal skills, and awareness on social ills such as substance abuse and domestic violence. Certified courses that imams and other staff have attended could be displayed in the mosque. These courses could also be opportunities for imams to network and build relations with other mosques in the area or further afield.

But this may not be feasible where imams are full-time or where they are part-time and supplementing their low incomes with other work, so are unable to make themselves available for training opportunities. This has been the experience of the Christian Muslim Forum with their residential weekends during which clergymen from all Christian denominations and imams and Muslim chaplains are paired up to share best practice. The Forum's Director said that they had been "able to involve chaplains who have Continuous Professional Development (CPD) allowances which enable them to take time away from their duties to attend such programmes, but have only been able to engage a few imams".<sup>51</sup>

In the Jewish community, the Rabbinical Council of the United Synagogue (RCUS) "has developed a programme called 'Promoting Excellence In Rabbis' (P'eir) which is the United Synagogue's in-service training, skills enhancement and support programme for Rabbis and is funded principally by its membership.<sup>52</sup> It proposes several methods, one of which is an Induction Programme for Newer Rabbis. In addition to support for training in the above-identified areas, training is also envisaged that will embrace how to effectively connect to secular congregants, as well as learn how to deal with controversial topics. P'eir proposes that these controversial topics are decided upon by a Rabbinic Panel, drawn from a representative sample of communities, who would identify the most urgent and relevant issues".<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Julian Bond, Director of the Christian Muslim Forum, 22nd December 2008.

<sup>52</sup> Synagogues pay a percentage of the funds they raise locally to the United Synagogue.

<sup>53</sup> Rabbi Mordechai Ginsbury, Chairman of P'eir (Promoting Excellence in Rabbis) and former Chairman of the Rabbinical Council of the United Synagogue, 27th January 2009.

<sup>54</sup> Ruqaiyyah Waris Maqsood, *The Role of the Mosque in Britain*, Muslim Parliament of Great Britain, July 2005, p.4  
<http://www.muslimparliament.org.uk/Documentation/RoleofMosque.pdf> [accessed 3rd November 2008].

<sup>55</sup> The survey was carried out by Sisters magazine and Ummah Foods, 'Inside the world of UK Muslim women', 1st June 2008 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/jun/01/britishidentity.islam> [accessed 2nd January 2009].

For the Muslim communities, these might be issues of forced marriage, an increase in the number of divorces amongst Muslims, educational underachievement, political representation and so on. According to research done for the Muslim Parliament of Great Britain in 2005, some mosques “carry far too much cultural baggage - noticeable in disapproval of certain types of clothing amongst the Muslims themselves, segregation issues”.<sup>54</sup> Mosque imams must try to address these and other issues to compete with extremist groups who attract new members, in part because they claim to address these concerns (see Chapter 5: Undermining Extremism in Mosques).

According to a survey of 1,000 Muslim women carried out in 2008, 70 per cent of Muslim women said that “matters affecting Muslims in their own community or in the UK were a priority” with 21 per cent saying that the Middle East was the most important issue facing Muslims today.<sup>55</sup> So the Friday lecture should focus more on Muslim life in the UK than on Palestine, Kashmir and Iraq. The Muslim Public Affairs Council UK (MPACUK),<sup>56</sup> in its work looking at mosque reform, suggests a weekly ‘Current Events Bulletin’.” This would aim to inform the mosque congregation in layman’s terms about the technical details of local and national current affairs and how it affects them on a regular basis, for example making a simple announcement on a Friday, before Prayers, about current affairs that affect Muslims around the world and in the UK.”<sup>57</sup> But issues that ‘affect Muslims around the world and in the UK’ should be based on concerns from a human rights perspective, and not be exclusively about Muslims, focusing also on issues that affect them as *British citizens*. Any such ‘news bulletins’ must be written and directed by English-speaking imams and mosque members who are able to follow domestic national and local news in particular through the eyes of English-language British media to better understand the myriad of British viewpoints.

The approach of the Bristol Muslim Cultural Society is to “encourage young people, through group discussions and leaflets, to question their imams and engage them in a critical analysis of Islam in the UK and in the World”.<sup>58</sup> Such a process would be aided by IT (Information Technology) literate imams, both in terms of awareness of the role the internet plays in educating young people on Islam (particularly extremist and jihadist material)<sup>59</sup> but also so that they would be able to respond to e-mail queries from young people.

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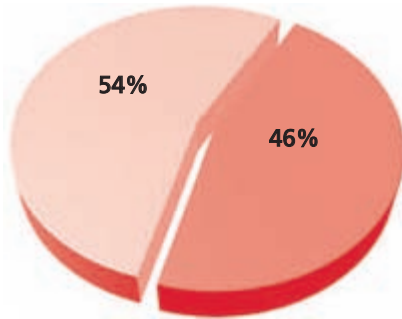
<sup>56</sup> MPACUK has been criticized for alleged anti-Semitism. *Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism* (2006) <http://www.thepcaa.org/Report.pdf> [accessed 10th February 2009].

<sup>57</sup> Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK <http://www.mpacuk.org/content/view/3892/81/> [accessed 22nd November 2008].

<sup>58</sup> Aslam Sarwar, Bristol Muslim Cultural Society, 16th December 2008.

<sup>59</sup> Discussion, ‘Community Action to Tackle Radicalization of the Internet’, Home Office Conference, 9th October 2008.

### Prayer Facilities for Women



■ No prayer facilities for women  
■ With prayer facilities for women

It is evident that young British Muslims need stronger (religious) leadership than currently mosques are likely to be able to provide. But although young Muslims may feel discouraged from attending the mosque where the religious leadership is out of touch, Muslim women often do not even have a choice.

According to a poll conducted by Quilliam in September 2008, of the 501 mosques polled, just under half of them do not offer prayer facilities for women.<sup>60</sup>

If women have no space to pray in the mosque, they cannot access the imam for spiritual guidance and advice. According to Habib Umar bin Hafiz, "it is not forbidden for women to speak to imams".<sup>61</sup> Yet, as one female Muslim academic points out, "even where there are women's prayer facilities, they don't always have access to imams - they are often up in the gallery behind glass".<sup>62</sup> An assessment of the nature and quality of the 'facilities' available to women (for example, does this include adequate ablution facilities as well as a comfortable space in which to pray?), which may vary greatly from one mosque to another, particularly between purpose-built mosques and those which are converted houses), would necessitate visiting individual mosque premises.

Sheikh Usama Hassan says "there is enormous interest amongst women in attending the mosques. The argument used to go that if women were at home then it's an effort for them to come out to the mosque hence them not being required to do so. But if women these days are usually out and about anyway (studying, working etc) then this surely no longer applies".<sup>63</sup> Although, as one young, female Muslim PhD student

<sup>60</sup> The phone poll was carried out by Quilliam during the month of Ramadan in September 2008 and reached 512 mosques. Not all mosques responded to every question posed. 501 responded to the question of whether they have prayer facilities for women and 54% said they had prayer facilities for women.

<sup>61</sup> Habib Umar bin Hafiz, Mosques Seminar, Hounslow, 21st October 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Amra Bone, Lecturer on Islamic Studies at Warwick University, Mosques Seminar, Hounslow, 21st October 2008.

<sup>63</sup> Sheikh Usama Hassan, Imam, mosque in Leyton, September 2008.

iterates, "Friday prayers are compulsory for men but not for women... [so] it's not unreasonable that smaller mosques can't accommodate women when the priority is the men";<sup>64</sup> Dr Musharraf Hussein argues that "... the Merciful Master did not make it compulsory for them to visit the *masjid* [mosque] but ... he kept telling them not to stop them".<sup>65</sup> Ghulam Rasool suggests "a split prayer timetable", which he has seen operating in some mosques. "This entails organizing for women to use the prayer room between prayer times, either limited just to weekends or managed on a daily basis".<sup>66</sup> This would be determined by what proves manageable and what the demand is from women for worship in the mosque.

According to Julie Siddiqi of the Islamic Society of Britain, "even basic equality issues are simply not being met by most mosques. It's partly the women themselves to be honest that become their own worst enemy in this agenda saying they don't want to come to the mosque. Even a few reminders and lessons in how things were in the mosques at the time of the Prophet will help people to realise that what we have now is not following his example, peace be upon him".<sup>67</sup> Education, including religious education, is of vital importance for all Muslims, including women. Significantly, according to a survey conducted in Leicester in 2008, mosques are places where husbands and fathers feel happiest about their daughters and wives going to partake in community activities.<sup>68</sup>

The report goes on to say that "in order to ensure that women are treated equally they must be allowed access to suitable prayer and worship facilities. This is primarily a matter of spiritual self worth, but beyond this, this could also allow them to play a fuller role in social and community networks and enhance their contribution to the community and society at large. Furthermore, this would allow having a greater input into informal education in the community".<sup>69</sup>

According to a young, female Muslim PhD student, if born and trained abroad "imams may have imported chauvinistic attitudes and present them as Islamic",<sup>70</sup> further hindering the opening up of mosques to women.

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<sup>64</sup> Myriam Francois-Cerrah, PhD candidate (Oxford), 23rd September 2008.

<sup>65</sup> Dr Musharraf Hussain, *The Right of women to attend the Masjid In Light of Prophetic traditions*, Karimia Institute <http://www.karimia.fortnet.co.uk> [accessed 1st February 2009].

<sup>66</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Charity Commission, 14th January 2009.

<sup>67</sup> Julie Siddiqi, Vice-President of the Islamic Society of Britain (ISB), 14th October 2008. The Islamic Society of Britain is not a monolithic organization and is represented by liberal as well as more conservative individuals.

<sup>68</sup> *Mapping Muslim Women's Involvement in Community Initiatives*, A Report for the Leicester Partnership, Policy Research Centre, Islamic Foundation, June 2008, p. 13.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* p.18.

<sup>70</sup> Myriam Francois-Cerrah, PhD candidate (Oxford), 23rd September 2008.

## 2. Qualifications, Backgrounds and Challenges

UK-based *dar al-ulums* are often not recognized by Muslim communities in the UK, according to Mufti Barkatulla, for being too “new”.<sup>71</sup> In as far as they are relatively newly-established, this may be understandable according to a *dar al-ulum* graduate “when compared with institutions in the Middle East and the Indian Sub-Continent”.<sup>72</sup> But as we have seen, the curricula taught in these *dar al-ulums* is anything but ‘new’, in the sense of being modern and appropriate for the British context. According to Ghulam Rasool, Head of the Faith and Social Cohesion Unit at the Charity Commission, management committee members “often don’t have the ‘faith literacy’ to recognize the quality of the imam because they are not well-acquainted with the Islamic sciences”,<sup>73</sup> so a recognized qualification of the imam is paramount, one which must be accepted by the Muslim communities. It is beyond the scope of this report to examine in greater detail the curricula of these *dar al-ulums*, or what alternatives there could be to these institutions. But it is crucial that the curricula in these *dar al-ulums*, institutions which are currently training thousands of students every year, is examined in greater detail.

Of additional concern is that at present, there are more students graduating from these *dar al-ulums* than there are posts for them to take up, partly because mosques do not consider them adequately qualified and prefer imams trained in more well-established *dar al-ulums* on the Indian Sub-Continent or in the Middle East. What happens to this surplus of UK *dar al-ulum* graduates? They emerge into society under-qualified for any (other) form of employment owing to what Mehmood Naqshbandi describes as the “dire secular education” in these *dar al-ulums*,<sup>74</sup> yet are deemed unqualified, by mosques and the Muslim communities they would serve, to practise as imams in Britain’s mosques. The socio-economic consequences of this may be far-reaching and warrant further inquiry.

A male mosque member from Leeds says that what needs to be emphasized to older members of the congregation is that “younger, UK-born and educated imams play a vital role in mosque life because they are better placed to reach the younger members of the congregation”.<sup>75</sup> One young imam in Leeds believes that “a solution may be to employ two imams, even if only one is full-time whilst the other is part-time”.<sup>76</sup> This

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<sup>71</sup> Mufti Abdul Kadir Barkatulla, Teacher, Ebrahim Community College, Whitechapel, London 23rd January 2009.

<sup>72</sup> Graduate (2006), Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiya, (*dar al-ulum* for further education), Kidderminster, 19th January 2009.

<sup>73</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Charity Commission, 14th January 2009.

<sup>74</sup> Mehmood Naqshbandi, London, 6th February 2009.

<sup>75</sup> Staff member, Abu Huraira Masjid, Leeds, 16th December 2008.

<sup>76</sup> Qari Asim, Imam, Makkah Masjid, Leeds, 20th December 2008.

would be especially constructive where an imam who is inexperienced, but British-born, young and fluent in English, may gain experience assisting the lead or main imam - the roles could be complementary with each able to relate to a different section of the community. Sheikh Usama Hassan says that in any case "there are usually two or three imams who share the work load as daily prayers are 5 times a day and this is a big responsibility and time commitment".<sup>77</sup> According to Iftikhar Awan from the Islamic Cultural Centre in Altrincham, Greater Manchester, at their Mosque, "there is no employed or permanent imam. Prayers are led by individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds and schools of thought".<sup>78</sup> Moreover, there's a real benefit in imams having a range of professional backgrounds as this shapes perspectives on the day-to-day living out of one's faith based on contact with a range of different people in a variety of capacities. But according to Mehmood Naqshbandi, as an employee of the mosque's management committee, the committee "will inevitably have selected an imam who maintains their doctrines" and who "meets their financial, ethnic and doctrinal constraints".<sup>79</sup>

So how can Muslim communities ensure that the mosque management committee upholds its commitment to recruit the most *suitably* qualified imam(s)? According to one Baptist, in their church they recruit by "establishing an Appointment Committee when a new pastor is required, composed of a cross-section of *community members* - elders, younger people and women. They may advertise in the Baptist Times but otherwise rely on word of mouth. The committee then recommends individuals who are subsequently invited to visit the Church and meet the congregation. A vote is then taken (1 person, 1 vote) by all members of the Church".<sup>80</sup> This would not be feasible where imams are recruited from abroad as community members would not be able to meet the imam before deciding on who is best suited for their particular community. But at a minimum, this process would enable a cross-section of the community, including *potential* congregants as well as existing worshippers, to agree on the most appropriate individual(s) required.

But do young, UK-born and educated imams *want* to join British mosques? A disincentive may be the power struggle that can exist between mosque management committees (who employ the imam) and community members (whose contributions pay the imam's salary), where, in the view of one young imam, the imam is "caught between trying to meet the needs of his congregation and meeting the expectations of his employers".<sup>81</sup> According to a community-based organization in Bristol, particular to mosques where imams are recruited from abroad, there is a risk that management

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<sup>77</sup> Sheikh Usama Hassan, Imam, mosque in Leyton, September 2008.

<sup>78</sup> Iftikhar Awan, Altrincham Muslim Association, Manchester, 15th October 2008.

<sup>79</sup> Mehmood Naqshbandi, Chapter 4 'The Mosque or Masjid', *Muslims in Britain - A Guide for Non-Muslims* <http://guide.muslimsinbritain.org/guide4.html> [accessed 12th January 2009].

<sup>80</sup> Kim Walker, Information and Research Officer (Evangelical Alliance), member of Holland Road Baptist Church, Hove, 6th January 2008.

<sup>81</sup> Qari Asim, Imam, Makkah Masjid, Leeds, 20th October 2008.

committee members may “coerce imams by threatening them with the removal of their visas”, for example, “where committee members run off-licences, the imam may be less likely to discourage drinking or the sale of drink”.<sup>82</sup> This is problematic as it undermines the religious authority of the imam. Moreover, where a foreign imam is relatively new to the community, their support network and influence will be limited compared to those of longer-serving committee members.

In the Jewish community, the United Synagogue’s P’eir programme has developed a role for a professional Rabbinic Counsellor. “This Counsellor is a senior Rabbi, who is available to offer legal advice and pastoral support to both lay leaders (management committee members) and Rabbis (imams) and arranges to mediate between the lay and religious leadership where disputes arise”.<sup>83</sup> However, more immediately, Sheikh Aftab Malik suggests that “imams could form an e-network”.<sup>84</sup> This could function as a peer-to-peer mentoring scheme, to share ideas, resources, and lessons learned from training courses, but also to offer moral support. Such a network could even lead to a union of imams.

The role of this network would be particularly important given the fact that imams often do not have contracts of employment, only verbal agreements which are negotiated by the imam’s representative and the mosque’s management. Mehmood Naqshbandi states that “the imam’s tenure depends utterly on conforming to the expectations of the management committee”.<sup>85</sup> A contract should also contain a job description which serves the purpose of managing expectations between all parties - the imam, the management committee and the community. This does not exist at present.

In the Church of England, clergy are not employees but rather office holders. In the view of the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Secretary for Interfaith Relations, “this means that the Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) do not have the power to remove them from office. This ensures continuity as it safeguards against ‘warring factions’ at the local level pushing the vicar out (a practice which goes back to the sixteenth century). Where there is community discontent with the vicar, there is a provision for ‘pastoral breakdown’ whereby congregations may petition the Bishop of the Diocese,<sup>86</sup> explaining their concerns. This leads to an investigation with a final decision being

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<sup>82</sup> Muslim community activist, 16th December 2008.

<sup>83</sup> Rabbi Mordechai Ginsbury, Chairman of P’eir (Promoting Excellence in Rabbis) and former Chairman of the Rabbinical Council of the United Synagogue, 27th January 2009.

<sup>84</sup> Sheikh Aftab Malik, ‘Community Action to Tackle Radicalization of the Internet’, Home Office Conference, 9th October 2008.

<sup>85</sup> Mehmood Naqshbandi, Chapter 4 ‘The Mosque or Masjid’, *Muslims in Britain - A Guide for Non-Muslims*, <http://guide.muslimsinbritain.org/guide4.html> [accessed 12th January 2009].

<sup>86</sup> Within the Church of England’s structure, the Diocese is the area for which a Bishop is responsible.



made by the Bishop".<sup>87</sup> In addition, as with all professionals who undergo periodic reviews, there may be a case for more a systematic review of the work of imams in the same way that members of the clergy are reviewed within the Church of England. "This is known as a 'ministerial review' which all clergy members are subject to, which occurs at least every three years and is conducted at the level of the Diocese. There may also be peer reviews or self-assessments in between. These assessments can and do consider evidence gathered from Church members".<sup>88</sup> Do mosques, operating outside such a clerical hierarchy, need to rethink the value of being so decentralized and independent of one another, and weigh up the benefits of pooling resources, especially funds?

Low salaries for imams may act as an additional disincentive for young, UK-born imams to take up service in a mosque, save for the largest of the mosques with the most resources. Mosques depend mostly, and often exclusively, on donations from the congregation, gathered by *ad hoc* contributions (mostly on Fridays during prayers) or via standing orders. In recent years, mosque committees have also started fundraising on community satellite channels. These donations are controlled by the committee, including the imam's salary. According to an imam in Leeds, "an imam who trained abroad typically earns between £12,000 and £15,000",<sup>89</sup> which may be low enough for imams to claim social welfare. Although in some mosques the imams aren't paid, where they work full-time and have no alternative sources of income, according to Sheikh Usama Hassan "at least between £15,000 and £20,000".<sup>90</sup> Many imams supplement their incomes with private teaching of Arabic at weekends, delivering public speeches at religious events and charging for counselling. Where imams are forced to supplement their salary by working outside the mosque, this may give them a degree of economic independence from the mosque committee. But how does this fit around their duties to lead the five daily prayers; how aware and flexible are employers?

Lord Ahmed, Britain's first Muslim peer in the House of Lords, stated in April 2007 that "mosque committees have plenty of money - cost is not a problem".<sup>91</sup> Where larger mosques have bigger donations and the capacity to fundraise, perhaps these funds could be shared with other mosques, especially where public money is concerned. According to the Archbishop of Canterbury's Secretary for Interfaith Relations, the Church of England clergy "are paid a standard salary (called a stipend in view of their non employed status) of approximately £24,000 per annum, together with a rent free vicarage, and this stipend is funded solely by members of the church, receiving no

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<sup>87</sup> The Revd Canon Guy Wilkinson, National Inter Faith Relations Adviser & Secretary for Inter Faith Relations to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lambeth Palace, 17th December 2008.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> Qari Asim, Imam, Makkah Masjid, Leeds, 20th December 2008.

<sup>90</sup> Sheikh Usama Hassan, Imam, mosque in Leyton, September 2008.

<sup>91</sup> 'Preach in English, Muslim peer tells imams', 23rd July 2007  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1558149/Preach-in-English,-Muslim-peer-tells-imams.html> [accessed 3rd February 2009].

public money from the Government. Contributions from the churches are pooled at the level of the Diocese and then redistributed, in this way ensuring that all clergy are paid the same amount, regardless of the size of their Parish".<sup>92</sup> A similar system for mosques in the view of one female Muslim PhD student, could take the form of "a central, independent body e.g. 'The centre for British imams', which could be funded both by private individuals and organizations and be eligible for public funding. This would enable smaller mosques to offer a better salary than they would otherwise be able to afford and thus attract a top-quality imam. This body could also sponsor imams to take courses".<sup>93</sup>

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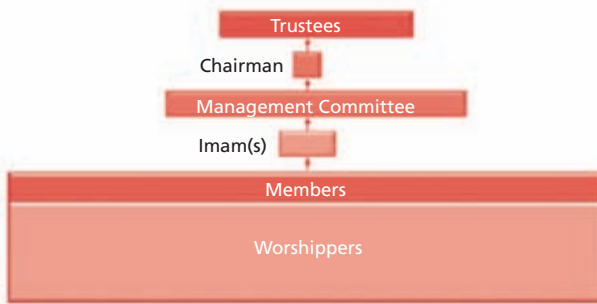
<sup>92</sup> The Revd Canon Guy Wilkinson, National Inter Faith Relations Adviser & Secretary for Inter Faith Relations to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lambeth Palace, 17th December 2008.

<sup>93</sup> Myriam Francois-Cerrah, PhD candidate (Oxford), 4th October 2008.

### 3. Who Governs Britain's Mosques?

Mosques will generate individual and community-level engagement and investment if the community has confidence in the mosque and has ownership over it. The late Dr Zaki Badawi, former Head and Founder of London's Muslim College, argued that "democratic elections for mosque management committees would strengthen communities".<sup>94</sup> What mosques need is a system of management which incorporates individuals who are both accepted by the community as their representatives, but who also have the skills to effectively govern the mosque's finances, services and activities. Committee members' profiles should be made available to the community, which is particularly important where community members do not know the members personally, but which would also encourage accountability.

#### Structure of Mosques



Does mosque governance reflect the make-up of the community as a whole (the potential congregation and/or users of mosque facilities) or only the worshippers and members (those who financially contribute to the running of the mosque)? Or do mosque management committees reflect neither? There are different models available

for governing mosques and the Charity Commission has three standard models of governance available on its website.<sup>95</sup> The Commission's Faith and Social Cohesion Unit is currently in the process of getting all mosques, which have a turnover of more than £5,000 per annum (as membership-based bodies the vast majority have), to register as charitable organizations with the Commission since religious and education advancement are considered charitable objectives.<sup>96</sup> And where mosques have already registered, the Commission is seeking to improve their adherence to models of good governance and to encourage mosques to take advantage of the numerous benefits of

<sup>94</sup> 'British bombers: Worst fears true,' 12th July 2005 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4677209.stm> [accessed 2nd January 2009].

<sup>95</sup> Charity Commission <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/> [accessed 20th January 2009].

<sup>96</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of the Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Charity Commission, 14th January 2009.

registering.<sup>97</sup> According to Mehmood Naqshbandi, "more often, the committee is appointed by an annual general meeting that is made up of whomsoever troubles to come to the venue. Because of the potential instability of this arrangement, many *masjids* [mosques] make their meeting arrangements discreetly e.g. by word of mouth, and thus become very inaccessible".<sup>98</sup>

So what is the reality of mosque governance? According to the Institute of Community Cohesion (April 2008), Sunni Deobandi and Barelwi mosques are mostly run by elderly, all-male management committees of the dominant ethnic group.<sup>99</sup> These elders are often the founding members of the mosque and remain members for life until they move away from the area, or become too old or infirm to carry out their duties. According to a Muslim community activist, "few management committees have members from different ethnic backgrounds".<sup>100</sup> And according to the Charity Commission, only 1 per cent of trustees of Muslim charities (including the mosques that have registered with the Commission) are women.<sup>101</sup> But there are examples of mosques which have endeavoured to include women, different ethnic groups and young people in their structures of governance.

The Bradford Madni Jamia Masjid has three women on its management committee of 20-25 individuals and according to one of them, "one is a social worker, another a teacher and the third a community youth worker. They were brought on board on the basis of their professional expertise".<sup>102</sup> But there is a need to attract more women to join committees. According to Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra, "this may not always be possible for a variety of reasons. Although a few places have women on their committees, many will simply not entertain the idea. For a few others it is a struggle to recruit women. Some women have cited the difficulty of meeting the demands of such volunteering whilst trying to carry out their domestic duties. Others just about cope with their family commitments whilst holding on to a paid full-time or part-time job. It is hoped that the success and results achieved by places where women participate will encourage others to bring women onto management committees".<sup>103</sup> Dr Musharraf Hussein's view is that

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<sup>97</sup> There are numerous benefits, including tax relief, 80 per cent council tax reduction, Gift Aid, access to grant-makers, training of trustees, buddy mentoring and sharing of best practices. Ghulam Rasool, Head of the Charity Commission's Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Mosques Seminar, Hounslow, 21st October 2008.

<sup>98</sup> Mehmood Naqshbandi, Chapter 4 'The Mosque or Masjid', *Muslims in Britain - A Guide for Non-Muslims* <http://guide.muslimsinbritain.org/guide4.html> [accessed 12th January 2009].

<sup>99</sup> *Understanding and Appreciating Muslim Diversity: Towards better Engagement and Participation*, Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo), April 2008, p. 27.

<sup>100</sup> Muslim community activist, 16th December 2008.

<sup>101</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of the Charity Commission's Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Mosques Seminar, 21st October 2008.

<sup>102</sup> Female, Steering Group member, Madni Jamia Masjid, Bradford, 16th January 2009.

<sup>103</sup> Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra, October 2008.

“women raise children and run homes, why are they not on the mosque committees?! But the vast majority of women are not interested in getting involved”.<sup>104</sup> One female mosque member thought that the “running of the mosque is a man’s job”.<sup>105</sup> It may also be quite daunting for a woman to sit on an all-male committee. But where women are interested in being part of the mosque’s decision-making structures, where they acquire external funding for their activities, they may have more leverage with the existing management.

“At the Makkah Masjid in Leeds, there was an initiative whereby the women’s sub-committee took over the running of the entire mosque for three days, running women-only activities ( with men only allowed to enter the mosque for prayer), for the following purposes: a) to make the women feel part of the institution; b) to give the women an idea of what goes into running the mosque; and c) to generate some ideas from the women on new activities that the mosque could run”. *Qari Asim, Imam, Makkah Masjid, Leeds, 20th December 2008.*

“In Hounslow Central Mosque there is a women’s sub-committee which was established about two years ago. It has six members who meet every Friday and the committee is responsible for women’s activities in the mosque, funds for which are then requested from the management committee. Women approach them with ideas for activities - they may be more reluctant to approach the all-male management committee where no women’s sub-committee exists”. *Kishwar Rai, Hounslow Central Mosque, 13th January 2009.*

According to Ghulam Rasool, mosques seem hesitant to formalize their denominational identity in their governance and membership criteria as “they are Muslims first and adherents of a particular school of thought second”.<sup>106</sup> So, in theory, there shouldn’t be a problem with different individuals representing different schools of thought, and possibly different ethnic groups, sitting on management committees which seek to be representative of the Muslim communities they serve.

“Altrincham Muslim Association in Altrincham, Greater Manchester is run as a charity. At our mosque and community centre, the Islamic Cultural Centre, we neither prescribe which branch of Islam you should come from, nor which country, nor that you must wear the *hijab* and have a beard because everyone is at a different stage on their journey and the mosque is there to facilitate that journey. We have a Board of ten trustees, and our constitution stipulates that a minimum of three must be women, but there is no maximum limit. The Executive Committee is made up of 18 individuals, eight out of 18 are women, including converts and individuals from different schools of thoughts.

<sup>104</sup> Dr Musharraf Hussain, Karimia Institute, Nottingham, 12th November 2008.

<sup>105</sup> Female mosque member, London, January 2009.

<sup>106</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Charity Commission, 14th January 2009.

The committee is meant to reflect *the make-up of the community, not the worshippers* [my emphasis]. It was open to anyone who wanted to join when we established it<sup>97</sup>. *Iftikhar Awan, Altrincham Muslim Association, Manchester, 15th October 2008.*

However, the Altrincham Muslim Association's example of inclusivity in mosque governance may be the exception rather than the rule. Although concerned to promote themselves as Muslims to the non-Muslim mainstream, denominational identity *within* the Muslim communities in Britain can be extremely important and this applies to mosques. According to Mehmood Naqshbandi, mosques are often highly sectarian (see Chapter 5: Undermining Extremism in Mosques). The following case studies illustrate the lengths some mosque management committees will go to, to preserve the dominance of their denomination: the first operates a discriminatory mosque membership policy and the other has resorted to imposing a ban on a mosque user. How widespread such practices are is unknown, but they are at the expense of promoting diversity within Muslim communities, since Muslims may limit themselves to residing in an area where the local mosque allows them to worship, and become members of that mosque.

“I had been going to a local mosque to pray for many years, called Masjid-e-Noor-ul-Islam (mainly Indian Gujarati) in Bolton. The mosque decided to do an extension and made an announcement for people that pray at the mosque, to come forward and become members of the mosque by paying a fee. I asked a senior committee member whether I could become a member. He replied saying that the mosque does not accept members of Pakistani origin. The mosque, registered as a Place of Worship but operating like a charity, has a Constitution which states that membership is open to all Muslims over the age of 18 who share the same views as the mosque. Members have priority access to the *madrassa* [supplementary school] and services (e.g. funeral, wedding) for half price. I have now been banned from the mosque for raising the issue with the management. The mosque has accepted £26,000 of public money. It was also given permission by the local authority to use additional land next to the mosque to build a car park, which was given at a discounted price, on the condition that it would be for ‘community use’. Moreover, there is a provision for equality in the government’s grant, but they [the government] won’t enforce it. This mosque is a member of the Bolton Council of Mosques (BCOM), and some members of the BCOM’s Executive Committee also uphold this policy of discrimination. The Council of Mosques has received £558,000 of public money to date, including two contracts which relate to the promotion of equality, and there is funding for community cohesion<sup>97</sup>. *Male, Bolton, 1st February 2009.*

“There has been an ongoing dispute in the mosque for more than 10 years. The mosque is controlled by Mawdudi-sympathisers<sup>107</sup> and they have a particularly staunch

<sup>107</sup> Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi founded Jamaat-e-Islami, an Islamist political party in Pakistan, founded in Lahore, Pakistan in 1941.

position on Barelwis whereby their 'heretic' practices have been banned e.g. '*durood*' (loud recitations upon the Prophet) and celebrating the Prophet's birthday. Matters came to a head when the Barelwis tried to take over the management committee via the electoral process, which led to an all-out dispute. I believe the management was successful in securing a court injunction barring one of the Barelwi leaders from the mosque because there was an actual physical fight between them. Behind this there has been ongoing frustration and thousands spent on legal costs<sup>99</sup>. *Male, mosque in Southend, 9th February 2009.*

There also need to be more young people involved in mosque governance to empower those who are drifting away from mosques and breathe life into them. According to the Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK (MPACUK), "old men and cronyism cannot continue... [and] young Muslim men relate better to young Muslim committee members.<sup>108</sup> Ghulam Rasool believes that "succession planning" is needed, taking into account inter-generational tensions: "in some cases there is anecdotal evidence that elders feel that their achievements in building mosques from scratch when they initially came to Britain have not been fully appreciated by younger people who haven't had to face the same challenges. This generational divide is yet to be fully bridged; however, there are already examples of some trust and confidence-building in working relationships within some mosques between the elderly and the young".<sup>109</sup> According to one young imam from Leeds, "there needs to be trust-building between the two generations. Young people need to prove themselves before they can reasonably expect to participate in governing the mosque. They need to show commitment. Elders for their part need to provide opportunities for young people to take on some responsibility for activities and support them".<sup>110</sup> Where young people are charged with devising programmes for youth within mosques, they are both better placed to decide on what the youth want, but also learn the demands of, and gain the skills needed for running a British mosque.

"At the Madni Jamia Masjid in Bradford we have a Youth Steering Group which has approximately 30 young people between the ages of 18 and 25 and is responsible for youth activities. The Group's objectives in 2008 were inter-faith work, setting up a library and adult education. Adult Islamic education is open to anyone over the age of 14, is in English, is optional (unlike education in supplementary schools for children), and involves organizing speakers, workshops, conferences (usually in English) on various aspects of Islam<sup>99</sup>. *Female, Youth Steering Group member and management committee member, Madni Jamia Masjid, Bradford, 16th January 2009.*

<sup>108</sup> Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK <http://www.mpacuk.org/content/view/824/39/> [accessed 18th November 2008].

<sup>109</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Charity Commission, 14th January 2009.

<sup>110</sup> Qari Asim, Imam, Makkah Masjid, Leeds, 20th December 2008.

Such sub-committees and steering groups are positive initiatives and good starting points for building up relations between members of the mosque or congregation, who hitherto have largely existed outside of governance structures, and the management. But the longer-term objective of a management committee that integrates young and old, men and women, must be kept in focus and these sub-structures of governance should not become permanent fixtures to the detriment of sharing full control at a higher level. Ghulam Rasool says that "as women are becoming more independent, affluent and more in tune with their faith they wish to participate proactively in mosques, but due to a lack of real involvement of women in the mosque executive and decision-making processes, it is not inconceivable that in the future we may see women-only 'mosques' appearing in the future in the form of community centres, or large independent prayer areas exclusively run by women".<sup>111</sup>

Aside from the models of governance developed by the Charity Commission, and certain mosques that have effected their own restructuring of mosque governance, what training programmes exist on what these structures mean *in practice*?

On the basis of a survey 'Voices from the Minarets' conducted in May 2006, the Muslim Council of Britain developed a training programme for 100 mosques in Britain called the 'Mosques 100 Project (M100 Project)', which began in January 2007. The 6-month course was estimated to cost £10,500 per group, funded by Muslim Aid, to combine "work place learning, distant/remote project work and workshops", examining mosques' governance structures, the leaderships' training needs, and providing information on how to access funds and how to pass on what they have learned.<sup>112</sup> The advantage of running training sessions which bring together mosque management from "ethnically-different" mosques is that you build bridges and encourage the "informal sharing of good practice". One participant "expressed his surprise that Western managerial ideas on child behavioural management appeared to have an authentically Islamic pedigree. Thus the project has been able to embed managerial ideas within the context of Islam". Another participant said he felt that "the Islamic context helped Muslim elders hear and digest the language of management". *'The Mosque is the Hub of the Community'; the Muslim Council of Britain Champions the Cause of British Mosques, Matthew Wilkinson, <http://www.mcb.org.uk> [accessed 11th January 2009]*

“Based in Manchester, OAK Community Development has developed a 76-page 'Management Guide for Mosques and Islamic Centres' in 2007. It contains nine chapters on various aspects of mosque management including governance, staffing, fundraising, communications, transparency, and community development, as well as templates and

<sup>111</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Charity Commission, 14th January 2009.

<sup>112</sup> 'Capacity Building of Mosques & Islamic Organisations', Muslim Council of Britain, 25th July 2007 [http://www.mcb.org.uk/article\\_detail.php?article=features-140](http://www.mcb.org.uk/article_detail.php?article=features-140) [accessed 5th January 2009].



useful contacts. OAK had identified a gap in training provision for Muslim organizations especially in the area of basic infrastructure and management procedures. Since completing the Guide, they have distributed it to more than 300 mosques across the UK. They offer tailored training programmes to mosques and where mosques are unable to cover more than the basic costs, OAK sources local authority funds, be it from the community cohesion budget, capacity-building of faith communities or preventing violent extremism. Thus far the training, directed at trustees, management committee members and imams, has been 'well-received'. Ahead of delivering training, OAK does a 'health check' - an assessment of the mosque's organizational capacity. If the mosque is in the Greater Manchester area, OAK can conduct an in-person assessment, otherwise an Assessment form is sent out for the mosque to complete. There is post-training on-going support available, whereby trainees can call, write or e-mail OAK for follow-up advice<sup>113</sup>. *Kashaff Feroze, co-Author of Management Guide, OAK Community Development, 23rd January 2009.*

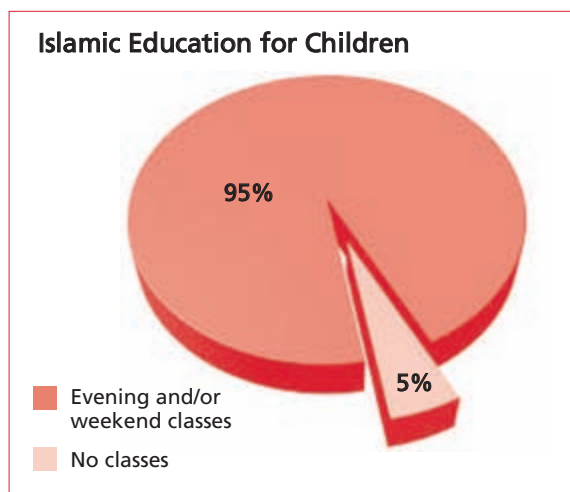
Given the need to tailor capacity-building and training packages for mosque members to the needs of the beneficiaries, and the need for an approach which both asserts the need to improve mosque management whilst simultaneously emphasizing the benefits of professionalizing, are there any *locally-led* initiatives which combine quality standards with an understanding of mosques and Islam, as well as the communities which they serve?

The Bradford Madni Jamia Masjid and Islamic Culture and Education Centre has taken matters into its own hands and is currently leading on the development of an 'Excellence in Mosques' capacity-building CD toolkit as part of its Leadership Development programme.<sup>113</sup> It is funded by Preventing Violent Extremism money, targets those in leadership roles in mosques (imams, management committee members, trustees and staff), will be in the English language with an Urdu voice over, is interactive, and will be promoted amongst mosques in the Bradford area upon completion in the coming months. It includes a self-evaluation to identify where the individual is at in terms of his/her competencies and skills, then explains six key areas of management work including leadership, planning, quality standards and organizational structure and contains an appendix of relevant contacts. One of the developers of the toolkit thinks "there is the necessary will amongst mosques to use the toolkit" but they also envisage recruiting 'mentors' who will talk mosque members through it. "You've got to start somewhere, although the toolkit is 5-10 years ahead of where the community actually is". So the toolkit may be subject to revision and depending on its success in the Bradford area, might be promoted further afield. What the toolkit has not included is case studies of best practice. *Toolkit Developer, Bradford Madni Jamia Masjid, 15th January 2009.*

<sup>113</sup> Madni Jamia Masjid / Islamic Cultural and Educational Association  
<http://www.icea.org.uk/Events/toolkit.pdf> [accessed 13th January 2009].

## 4. Islamic Education: Children in Mosques

It is important to support young Muslims, both men and women, in exploring their faith, else according to A. Sahin (2005), they may “lose interest in applying Islam in their lives, or become ‘foreclosed’, thereby believing that situations must adapt to Islam, and not the other way around”.<sup>114</sup> So in addition to the need for strong, religious leadership within mosques in the form of imams who are both attuned to the everyday realities and concerns of young British Muslims, but who also understand and support the values and norms of the society within which young Muslims interact, what educational role do mosques play in the lives of young Muslim children?



According to a poll conducted by Quilliam in September 2008, the majority of mosques in Britain offer Islamic education for children in *madrasas* (supplementary schools). In a survey of 487 mosques conducted during Ramadan in September 2008, 86 per cent were found to run evening classes during the week, with 23 per cent of mosques offering weekend activities. Only 5 per cent of mosques have no classes at all.<sup>115</sup>

Approximately 100,000 children<sup>116</sup> attend *madrasas* in Britain. These *madrasas* are fully independent of government.<sup>117</sup> Although the exact number of these *madrasas* is not known, the majority of mosques have a *madrasa* located either within the building or annexed to it. Children typically receive such schooling in Islam from the age of four or five up to the age of 13 or 14. They learn Arabic for the purposes of Qur’anic recitation and study the basic principles of Islam. These classes take place in the evening, at weekends and/or during the holidays.<sup>118</sup> Children are thus spending a significant amount of time in mosques where imams, teachers and other mosque

<sup>114</sup> A Sahin in Philip Lewis, *Young, British and Muslim*, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007, p. 44.

<sup>115</sup> The phone poll was carried out by Quilliam during the month of Ramadan in September 2008 and reached 512 mosques. Not all mosques responded to every question posed. 487 responded to the question of whether they run evening and/or weekend classes.

<sup>116</sup> *Child protection in Faith-Based Environments. A Guideline Report*, March 2006 <http://www.muslimparliament.org.uk/Documentation/ChildProtectionReport.pdf> [accessed 23rd December 2008].

<sup>117</sup> ‘Imams to give citizenship lessons’, 17th May 2007 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6665317.stm> [accessed 2nd January 2009].

members have the opportunity to influence, and a large responsibility to guide the next generation of Muslims in Britain. Do *madrasas* demand too much of children, intellectually and time-wise, so that they struggle with their school workload?<sup>119</sup> “Weekend classes rather than evening classes appear to be on the increase, in recognition of the need for children to focus more on their school work”.<sup>120</sup> Another key concern, and one warranting further inquiry, is whether these evening or weekend activities take young Muslims away from the wider community and thus act as an additional obstacle to integration?<sup>121</sup> Although sports and other such activities run by mosques, which are not associated with Islamic education, are often if not usually open to non-Muslims as well, in practice non-Muslim participation is likely to be minimal. This is most likely because non-Muslims may not know about the activities, and assume that such activities either don’t exist or that they wouldn’t be open to non-Muslims.

These supplementary schools are not regulated by the local authorities and so authorities may not even know how many of these schools exist in the area. *Madrassa* teachers need to know the basic elements of Islam as well as be qualified to teach. But currently there is no infrastructure to regulate these teachers and no way of measuring their ability to teach. According to Dr Siddiqui of the Muslim Institute, they are “motivated by noble causes” which isn’t sufficient.<sup>122</sup> The Open Society Institute (2005) reported that “teaching is often provided by local imams, who may be unfamiliar with current educational thinking and who may actually have received their training in *madrasahs* on the Indian Sub-Continent, or in other cultural contexts outside the UK”.<sup>123</sup> And “[teaching] methods, which include rote learning and strict discipline, are often out of tune with contemporary educational thinking and practice”.<sup>124</sup> The Muslim Parliament of Great Britain has suggested the creation of a National Register of *madrasas*.<sup>125</sup> According to Kirklees’ Supplementary Schools Coordinator, “local authorities, including Local Safeguarding Children Boards, should be aware of where all the mosques and *madrasas* are in order to engage them. They have a statutory duty to advise and support all community and faith-based organisations... Significantly

<sup>118</sup> *Muslims in the UK: Policies for Engaged Citizens*, Open Society Institute, 2005, p.133  
<http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/britishmuslims> [accessed 3rd February 2009]

<sup>119</sup> Ruqaiyyah Waris Maqsood, *The Role of the Mosque in Britain*, Muslim Parliament of Great Britain, July 2005, p.4  
<http://www.muslimparliament.org.uk/Documentation/RoleofMosque.pdf> [accessed 3rd November 2008].

<sup>120</sup> Ghulam Rasool, Head of Faith and Social Cohesion Unit, Charity Commission, 14th January 2009.

<sup>121</sup> *Youth Matters: a report from Muslim Youth Helpline and the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services*, 2005, p.11 <http://www.myh.org.uk/attach/Youth%20Matters%20-%20MYH-NCVYS.pdf> [accessed 6th January 2009].

<sup>122</sup> Dr Ghayasuddin Siddiqui, Director, the Muslim Institute, 13th January 2009.

<sup>123</sup> *Muslims in the UK: Policies for Engaged Citizens*, Open Society Institute, 2005, p.144  
<http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/britishmuslims> [accessed 3rd February 2009]

<sup>124</sup> *Muslims in the UK: Policies for Engaged Citizens*, Open Society Institute, 2005, p.134  
<http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/britishmuslims> [accessed 3rd February 2009]

management committee members, imams and teachers should be provided with Behaviour Management and Child Protection training so that they are better able to fulfil their legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children".<sup>126</sup>

But there are councils who are already working with *madrasas* and are focusing efforts on improving teaching practices as well as ensuring compliance with child protection policies.

“The way to approach these *madrasas* is to offer a benefit (capacity-building) whilst emphasizing the need for teachers to be trained on key issues such as Child Protection. There is a council-led initiative in Tameside, which has involved six local imams in developing guidelines on Child Protection policies in seven *madrasas* in the area. Guidance was drawn up by Tameside’s Local Authorities to inform *madrasas* in mosques what child protection policies are about but also to aid social workers in carrying out their assessment in a sensitive manner. Launched in November 2006 and inspired by Kirklees’s example, the Guidelines are a simplification of the authorities Child Protection policies, which were initially viewed with suspicion, and include scriptural references explaining Islam’s view on the protection of children”<sup>127</sup>. *Anisa Patel, Author of the Guidelines, Tameside Local Authorities, 19th December 2008.*

“Birmingham City Council has been supporting supplementary schools in the Birmingham area for more than ten years. Coordinated out of the Schools Effectiveness Division, and funded by the Children’s fund (from March 2009 by the Community Cohesion fund), Birmingham City Council has been working with Pakistani and Bangladeshi *madrasas* since 2005 on a project entitled ‘Supporting safe and effective education in *madrasas*’. A needs assessment was conducted with children, parents, teachers and management committee members, a training programme was then developed and approved by those consulted, training was conducted on behaviour management, health and safety, child protection and so on, and then follow up visits to see how the training was being implemented, and finally consultations with children, teachers and parents to see whether they felt that anything had changed. The needs assessment and evaluation were then given to the management committee. Additional training has been developed, as requested, on Information and Communication Technology (ICT), First Aid and other topics. We have now built up a network of approximately 45 mosques and three times a year (once a term) two mosque representatives (the *madrasa*’s Head Teacher and a member of the management committee) attend an event where a speaker is invited to address a particular topic (e.g. preventing extremism, shared values)”<sup>128</sup>. *Nargis Rashid, Senior Adviser, School Effectiveness Division, Birmingham City Council, 5th February 2009.*

<sup>125</sup> Dr Ghayasuddin Siddiqui, Director, the Muslim Institute, 13th January 2009.

<sup>126</sup> Shakeel Hafez, Supplementary Schools Coordinator, Kirklees Children and Young People Service, West Yorkshire, 9th January 2009.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> ‘Multiculturalism Poll’, MORI/BBC, 10th August 2005  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/multiculturalism\\_poll\\_11\\_08\\_05.pdf](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/multiculturalism_poll_11_08_05.pdf) [accessed 18th January 2009].

In addition, Kirklees' Supplementary Schools Coordinator says that "working closely with local schools to share resources and good practice should be encouraged. This can involve exchange visits between staff of *madrasas* and schools, observing lessons, organizing joint training and celebrating events together. For example, I am currently establishing partnerships between Heckmondwike Grammar School (HGS), which was awarded Training School status in April 2007, and some *madrasas* in the West Yorkshire area. As HGS is already training school teachers, it makes sense to invite them to support *madrasa* teachers who would greatly benefit from their expertise. In return the *madrasas* will support induction training of HGS teaching staff around Islamic culture and Muslim practices".<sup>127</sup>

Kirklees Council's Children and Young People Service set up a '*Madressahs* and Supplementary Schools Project' in 2002 to promote good practice in *madrasas* by providing "further support and skills to trustees, committee members, teachers and volunteers (male and female) to ensure effective governance, improved links with public sector organisations, better awareness of health and safety issues and stimulated teaching and learning in the classrooms and an enjoyable safe experience for children and young people". Much of the training took place in the mosques or *madrasas*, to ensure a higher number of attendants, with training being jointly held with a number of different mosques and *madrasas* which may have aided communication between mosques in the area. *Madrasas* can benefit from cooperation with mainstream schools in the following ways: "Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills, highly educated (to degree level) and qualified (trained) teachers, extensive resources and engaging and interesting lessons for children of all abilities and those with disabilities"; and schools from *madrasas*: "behaviour management, and developed relationships between teachers and parents". Aisha Ali, '*Capacity Building of Staff in Mosques and Madressahs (Islamic Schools)*', Kirklees Council, August 2008.

In terms of what children and adolescents are taught about their faith, much needs to be done. In a BBC-commissioned survey carried out in August 2005, 18 per cent of Muslim respondents thought that Islam is incompatible with the values of British democracy.<sup>128</sup> One issue is Islamic teaching in the *madrasas*. In the *madrasa* of the Islamic Cultural Centre in Altrincham, Greater Manchester, "the pupils are taught to read and recite the Qur'an in Arabic, but it is also explained to students in English, so that they can understand what they read. In addition, they are taught Islamic studies so that they have a broad understanding of their faith".<sup>129</sup> Otherwise students can feel stifled and bored by their faith. Children may feel particularly frustrated with this method of 'rote' learning when in their mainstream education they are taught to be analytical and ask questions. According to the department of Communities and Local Government (CLG), "a lack of religious literacy and education appears to be a common feature among those that are drawn to extremist groups".<sup>130</sup> Inadequate Islamic

<sup>129</sup> Iftikhar Awan, Altrincham Muslim Association, Manchester, 15th October 2008.

<sup>130</sup> *The Role of Muslim Identity Politics in Radicalisation (a study in progress)*, Communities and Local Government, April 2007, p. 6  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/452628.pdf> [accessed on 10th February 2009].

education for children risks playing into the hands of extremists who depend in part on both young Muslims' lack of Islamic knowledge and their frustration with the inability of imams and *madrasa* teachers to satisfy questions related to being Muslim in Britain and in the West more generally (see Chapter 5: Undermining Extremism in Mosques).

The department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) announced in December 2008 the launch of a citizenship course,<sup>131</sup> created by the Bradford Council for Mosques (BCFM) and developed by the Schools and Development Support Agency (SDSA). It is designed to challenge "the notion that there is any conflict between being a good Muslim and a good citizen" and has been launched in approximately 30 *madrasas* in London, Bristol, Bradford / Kirklees, Leicester and Oldham / Rochdale. Through class discussion, role play and written exercises, the children are "learning through Islamic tradition, the importance of tolerance and respect, how to be better neighbours, the importance of volunteering and how to play an active part in their schools and communities". Sadiq Khan MP has said that British Muslim communities have identified that improving young Muslims' understanding of Islam and its compatibility with wider shared values via mosque *madrasas* is "an important way of building resilience to extremist ideologies".<sup>132</sup> The question remains as to whether imams and teachers are equipped to deliver this curriculum. Mosques should coordinate with local school teachers who run the statutory citizenship classes, for guidance. And this might have the added benefit of influencing any 'Islam and citizenship' component in the statutory citizenship classes. But ultimately, those who deliver these citizenship classes must both believe in the aims of the programme and the values according to which the programme was developed.

Mosques might also contribute to how Islam is taught to Muslim and non-Muslim children in mainstream schools, to facilitate interfaith understanding and discussion amongst pupils and students. An obvious place to start is having an input on the Islam component (especially where it relates to Muslims in Britain) of the Religious Education (RE) curriculum in local schools but also be involved more generally in schools. For example, at the Altrincham Muslim Association's mosque, mosque members are invited to speak at the Annual Founders' Day at a local school and the mosque hosts an annual Eid dinner to which head teachers, as well as local councillors and members of other faiths are invited.<sup>133</sup> Community organizations can facilitate this relationship. The Green Light Muslim Youth Forum has held workshops for school children in a mosque in Dudley as part of the local school's RE curriculum.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Islam and Citizenship Education <http://www.theiceproject.co.uk> [accessed 10th February 2009].

<sup>132</sup> 'New citizenship classes for mosque schools', 3rd December 2008 <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1085869>, [accessed 12th December 2008].

<sup>133</sup> Iftikhar Awan, Altrincham Muslim Association, Manchester, 15th October 2008.

<sup>134</sup> Ataf Sabir, Chair, Green Light Muslim Youth Forum, Dudley, 5th January 2009.

## 5. Undermining Extremism in Mosques

As we have seen, mosques are not just centres for worship but are also places of religious learning. In addition to the classes for children run in the *madrasas*, mosques also host study circles on a variety of topics, although such study circles take place elsewhere in community centres or people's homes as well. These study circles may be led by imams, mosque members, volunteers or guest speakers; in short, anyone.

According to a study conducted by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence and Kings College London in 2007, the mosque may be considered a "legitimizing space" for extremist groups to recruit. According to the above-mentioned study, extremist groups apply a cost-benefit analysis when planning methods of recruitment; one drawback is opposition from community leaders (religious) opposed to violent extremism.<sup>135</sup>

A Channel Four documentary "Undercover Mosque, Part II" broadcast in August 2008, gave the example of a women's study circle at Regent's Park Mosque in London. The leader of the circle had been secretly filmed in the mosque stating to participants that homosexuals should receive capital punishment. The Director-General of the mosque said he had refused her permission to teach there owing to a lack of adequate references but she still managed to hold her circle on the premises. If women are on the mosque committees then they can access the women's areas to monitor activities otherwise the women's areas are off limits to male management members, especially since such study circles may be organized spontaneously without the mosque's consent. Another example, according to the co-Director of Quilliam, is of Regent's Park Mosque "refusing to grant official permission to the Islamist group *Hizb ut-Tahrir*'s<sup>136</sup> weekly events in the main hall of the mosque. But the group has been holding sessions there every weekend for over 10 years".<sup>137</sup> How can mosques exert greater control over the purposes for which mosque premises are used?

“Three to four years ago, Greenwich Islamic Centre spent tens of thousands of pounds getting a court injunction to remove young extremists spreading their message of hate and intolerance in the mosque. Omar Bakri [radical preacher banned from the UK] gave lectures once or twice a week at the mosque for a few years before the management realized he was poisoning young minds and banned him. But this was not the solution

<sup>135</sup> *Recruitment and Mobilization for the Islamist Militant Movement in Europe*, ICSR/KCL, December 2007, p.15

[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/fsj/terrorism/prevention/docs/ec\\_radicalisation\\_study\\_on\\_mobilisation\\_tactics\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/terrorism/prevention/docs/ec_radicalisation_study_on_mobilisation_tactics_en.pdf) [accessed 12th December 2008].

<sup>136</sup> *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, meaning 'Party of Liberation', is an Islamist group which was founded in 1953 in Jordanian-ruled East Jerusalem by the Palestinian jurist Taqiuddin al-Nabhani.

<sup>137</sup> Ed Husain, co-Director, Quilliam, 30th January 2009.

because his young audience had already been brainwashed. The mosque tried to re-educate these young people but that didn't work; they distributed literature and videos, and held study circles on the mosque's premises, which propagated 'hatred of infidels'. The mosque gave them a written warning, which had no effect, before they had to seek an injunction. The court ruled that these young people should be banned for life. What a mosque needs is a dedicated team to monitor what goes on in the mosque. Greenwich has trustees, caretakers and other staff members keeping an eye on activities in the mosque. These extremist ideas need to be spotted and addressed early on, and young, educated management members, who understand the nature of young British Muslim rebellion, are best placed to do this. The Government should recognize such examples of the good work done by mosques in support of the Government's preventing violent extremism agenda<sup>137</sup>. *Dr Tariq Abbasi, Director, Greenwich Islamic Centre, 5th February 2009.*

In order to prevent the above scenario whereby a mosque had to resort to banning young extremists who were too 'brainwashed' to be reasoned with, a longer-term strategy is needed. Mosques should be supported in trying to tackle radical youths and not push them out of the mosque, as a knee-jerk reaction, for fear of being labelled a mosque that harbours extremists.<sup>138</sup> Mehmood Naqshbandi states that mosques will "not tolerate open debate" on Islam and "in the absence of the moderating influence of open, critical debate" young Muslims, converts and newcomers are targeted by advocates of "religious hyperbole and absolutist rhetoric" with no counter influence available.<sup>139</sup>

"We have been running the 'Ambassadors for Islam' programme for about a year now. Omar Bakri left his legacy here in Luton - the young people he influenced had no-one to challenge them. The programme targets 14 - 21-year-olds in the Luton area and teaches them how to challenge these young people who hold extremist views, and also to reach out to non-Muslims to show them that not all Muslims are extremists. The programme is three evening classes per week on theology, promoting a normative, mainstream Islam, religious pluralism and the rights of non-Muslims and one evening per week on 'enrichment' with visiting speakers, both non-Muslims and Muslims from 'civil' life. There are about 25 - 30 young people involved in the programme and participants share their experiences having to deal with extremists in the area during these sessions. The programme is partly funded by the Government's Preventing Violent Extremism funds and partly by the mosque."<sup>140</sup> *Tariq Mahmood, General Secretary, Luton Central Mosque, 19th February 2009.*

<sup>138</sup> Marieke Sloomman (MS), Jean Tillie (PhD), *Processes of Radicalisation. Why some Amsterdam Muslims become radicals*, Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies, Universiteit van Amsterdam, October 2006, p. 6.

<sup>139</sup> Mehmood Naqshbandi, '2. The Process – Rivalry over Neophytes', *Muslims in Britain – Isolating Extremism* <http://politics.muslimsinbritain.org/politics2.html> [accessed 6th February 2009].

<sup>140</sup> 'Faithful and Proud', Maurice Irfan Coles, September 2005, Leicester.



Even where extremist individuals and organizations focus their methods of propagating their message via the Internet and discussion forums, or via institutions of higher education, mosques still need to be equipped to challenge extremist views, whether young people hear such views in mosques or elsewhere. Moreover, where mosque imams avoid talking about extremism and terrorism (because they are ill-equipped to address the issue and/or do not recognize the need to do so), this “risks pushing discussion underground”.<sup>140</sup> According to Muslim scholar Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, there is a sense amongst many older imams and elders that “the youth have been lost to criminalization and radicalization”,<sup>141</sup> issues which again Britain’s existing imams may not feel equipped to deal with.

But the first step is being able to identify extremist rhetoric on mosque premises. Mehmood Naqshbandi suggests that a Muslim adaptation of the Christian church wardens’ model might be the answer. These individuals could be drawn from those who regularly attend the mosque and who “understand its security needs, its politics and its challenges better than anybody”. Ideally they would be relatively young, conscientious Muslims who are closely involved with the mosque (as regular users), who are able to recognize the potential susceptibility of individuals to extremism, have authority within the community, and an understanding of how to deal with the police and other local authorities. Naqshbandi puts forward various methods for developing these roles, for example through First Aid training or Special Police Constables, which bring trainees/volunteers into contact with service providers in the wider community and gives them the self-confidence to tackle a crisis as well as a sense of personal responsibility.<sup>142</sup> Imams and mosque members need to be equipped with the necessary social skills to know how to spot, handle, channel (and refer where necessary) youth frustration, anger and disaffection and these skills can be learned from local community leaders and youth workers. Where imams, mosque members and users feel unable to handle angry, frustrated Muslim youth, they should consider referring them to the relevant competent bodies, be they statutory or voluntary, which necessitate the above-mentioned working relationships with such bodies (see Chapter 4: Islamic Education: Children in Mosques for ways in which to develop these relationships constructively).

Imams can also reach out to young Muslims in the community who do not attend the mosque and thus may lie just out of sight of the mosque. At a Promoting Community Cohesion event in Lambeth on the ‘Disenfranchisement of Muslim Youth’ in December 2005, participants identified a need for mosques to establish a working relationship

<sup>141</sup> Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, also known as T J Winter, Cambridge, 4th December 2008.

<sup>142</sup> Mehmood Naqshbandi, ‘Appendix 2: The ‘Church Warden’ model of community engagement’, *Muslims in Britain – Isolating Extremism* <http://politics.muslimsinbritain.org/politics2.html> [accessed 6th February 2009].

<sup>143</sup> *Promoting Community Cohesion Event, Disenfranchisement of Muslim Youth*, A Briefing Paper, 14th December 2005, p. 9 <http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/94B1E3FA-9775-497A-9EE9-072253DBC270/0/CommunityCohesionEvent.pdf> [accessed on 2nd December 2009].

<sup>144</sup> A conservative revisionist Sunni movement, which was founded by Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab in the 18th century. It is popular in Saudi Arabia and retains a non-ideological, socially conservative, austere and literalist interpretation of Islam.

with the Youth Offending Team so that when a young person is about to convert, mosques can help “ensure that the approach to conversion is balanced”.<sup>143</sup>

Organizations like STREET in Brixton, which currently employs the expertise of two imams from Brixton Mosque (a note of caution: Brixton Mosque has strong Wahhabi<sup>144</sup> leanings), who offer advice to vulnerable young people in the community on what it means to be a Muslim in British society, are a possible resource for this.<sup>145</sup> An initiative called “We Can Kick It” in Batley involved Muslim professionals and mosques in devising training where drug abuse was put in the context of Islamic teachings, targeting Muslim children from the age of 11 and taking place in mosques, as well as community centres and schools.<sup>146</sup> How willing (see it as their role) and able (time- and capacity-wise) are imams to give time to do outreach work in their community?

Where mosques are slow to engage young people, Muslim scholar Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad suggests “nurturing parallel institutions which would be alternative places for worship and learning. Rather than spend too much energy on dislodging conservative, older imams in local mosques, support Muslim chaplains in universities and have them work with university Islamic Societies to reach the Muslim student body. These chaplains could encourage joint activities with the local mosque through for example sharing new speakers they invite to the university, and show mosques what young people are interested in and how much more they could be doing to engage with young Muslims”.<sup>147</sup> However, according to a young imam in Leeds, “university chaplains don’t have the same status in the community as imams since they serve the student population of the university concerned, and not the community as a whole, so their influence in the community may be limited”.<sup>148</sup> But imams would greatly benefit by learning from university chaplains’ experiences dealing with a young, diverse Muslim student body, comprising both young men and young women. According to a report on Islam at Universities published in April 2007, there are approximately 30 Muslim chaplains working in Universities in England. Their role is varied, with duties ranging from meeting “the spiritual needs of the student body, their counselling and emotional needs, their educational (religious specific) needs” to acting as “a point of contact

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<sup>145</sup> Faheem Byrne, Youth Work Coordinator, STREET (Strategy to Reach Empower and Educate Teenagers), 16th December 2008.

<sup>146</sup> Philip Lewis, *Young British and Muslim*, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007, p.109.

<sup>147</sup> Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, also known as T J Winter, Cambridge, 4th December 2008.

<sup>148</sup> Qari Asim, Imam, Makkah Masjid, Leeds, 20th December 2008.

<sup>149</sup> Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui, *Islam at Universities in England. Meeting the Needs and Investing in the Future*, 10th April 2007, p. 10  
[http://www.islamic-foundation.org.uk/pdfs/siddiqui\\_report2007.pdf](http://www.islamic-foundation.org.uk/pdfs/siddiqui_report2007.pdf)  
 [accessed 26th January 2009].

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.* p. 44.

between students, the university authorities and the local Muslim community".<sup>149</sup> One chaplain explained that his role was to "help students at all levels, whether they face economic crisis, family and relationship problems, or anxieties and worries in other areas..."<sup>150</sup> This pastoral role has most likely developed in response to a demand from young Muslims for such a service.

Community group Coventry City Circle, based in Coventry,<sup>151</sup> organizes regular talks with Muslim speakers which attracts mixed crowds, including young Muslims who don't feel "plugged into the mosque communities" and who often do not speak the languages of local mosques in Coventry: namely Urdu or Bengali.<sup>152</sup> Although the internet offers alternative sources for guidance and discussion on Islam, current affairs etc, and is consulted widely, especially amongst the younger generation, in the absence of what the organization the Radical Middle Way describes as "snappy, persuasive, authoritative (e-)voices on Islam",<sup>153</sup> speakers' tours are invaluable. There is also no substitute for interactive discussions in person, with the opportunity to both approach reputable individuals who've been invited to speak, but also to discuss with fellow attendants. Mosques should team up with respected Muslim religious leaders from Muslim communities throughout the UK, who represent a range of competencies and viewpoints to show what it means to be an observant Muslim in the UK. This is especially important given that there exists in Britain a "wide network of qualified scholars... ranging across ethnic and national heritage, including African Caribbean and white English converts".<sup>154</sup>

It might also be worth considering sharing best practices with imams from the United States of America or other European countries. In October 2008 the Birmingham Post reported that American imams were being brought across to the UK to "show how Islam can be taught within a Western context". The initiative was launched on the premise that "American imams, who have assimilated into US society, are able to provide a counter balance to European imams, many of whom have come to Europe to preach from other parts of the world".<sup>155</sup>

How can this best be facilitated?

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<sup>151</sup> Coventry City Circle <http://www.coventrycitycircle.org/> [accessed 1st February 2009].

<sup>152</sup> Dawud Bone, Muslim Chaplain, Warwick University, 7th January 2009.

<sup>153</sup> Abdul Rahman Malik, Radical Middle Way, Discussion, 'Community Action to Tackle Radicalization of the Internet', Home Office Conference, 9th October 2008.

<sup>154</sup> *Understanding and Appreciating Muslim Diversity: Towards better Engagement and Participation*, Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo), April 2008, p. 25.

<sup>155</sup> 'Imams come to UK to teach Islam in a Western world', 7th October 2008 <http://www.birminghampost.net/news/west-midlands-news/2008/10/07/imams-come-to-uk-to-teach-islam-in-a-western-world-65233-21988054/> [accessed 21st January 2009].

<sup>156</sup> The survey was carried out by Sisters magazine and Ummah Foods, 'Inside the world of UK

## 6. Mosque Coordination and Representation

What level of communication and coordination exists between mosques in local areas, regions and nation-wide? In a survey of 1,000 Muslim women conducted in 2008, half of the women polled stated that they never go on holiday in Britain, in part because of "uncertainty over where the nearest mosque would be".<sup>156</sup> And presumably also uncertainty over whether or not they will be allowed in, what languages the imams speak, and what other facilities there may be (especially for children). This also applies to Muslims who are looking to identify a mosque which best suits their needs when moving to a new area. Many mosques are hard to reach and may not have a telephone number, or at least one that is manned, so in addition to mosques advertising on posters and their websites, directories should pool this information as a one-stop-shop and users should be able to search by language. Directories exist - a nationwide on-line one called the Muslim Directory holds information on the largest number of mosques in the UK,<sup>157</sup> but has no information on language and denomination. By comparison, the Church of England's 'a church near you' website, gives a brief history of the church and whether it has crèche facilities.<sup>158</sup>

Furthermore, statutory and voluntary agencies need to engage with all local organizations in their area, including mosques, and establish an appropriate mechanism for identification of, and communication with mosques since it is resource-intensive to engage with mosques one-by-one. What mechanisms exist for identification of mosques? There are various national organizations in Britain which may be loosely described as umbrella groups but only two that have a number of mosques amongst their affiliated organizations. These are the British Muslim Forum (BMF) and the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB). But what's happening at a more local level?

<sup>156</sup> Lancashire Council of Mosques, established in the late 1990s, currently has a membership of 60 mosques.<sup>159</sup> The Council has as its objectives to both promote a better understanding of Islam within the Muslim communities as well as in wider society, but also to provide capacity-building for mosques. This capacity-building aims to improve mosques' service provision by getting them to work more closely with local service providers (through the local authorities as well as the voluntary sector). The Council plays

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Muslim women', 1st June 2008

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/jun/01/britishidentity.islam>  
[accessed 2nd January 2009].

<sup>157</sup> The Muslim Directory contains information on capacity, women's facilities and services provided, and is searchable by mosque name, city or postcode. It also contains contact details and the address of the mosque.

<http://www.muslimdirectory.co.uk/searchmosques.php> [accessed 3rd January 2009].

<sup>158</sup> <http://www.achurchnearyou.com/> [accessed 12th December 2008].

<sup>159</sup> Each mosque pays a membership fee of £50 for a two-year period and puts forward two nominees from each mosque (drawn from members of the mosque, not just management committee members or imams) to sit on the Executive Committee of the Council. An

a vital role in mediating between local authorities and the voluntary sector and mosques, as well as channelling the needs of mosques and the Muslim communities more generally, to donors, schools, service providers and so on. The Council acts as a 'gatekeeper' - it is easier for the local authorities to have as a contact point the Council rather than consulting each mosque individually. One of the Council's achievements was successfully lobbying for the introduction of *halal* food in schools, on behalf of the mosques and Muslim communities it represents. Moreover, mosques are more trusting of the Council. And the Council has been effective in pressuring mosques to, for example, recognize the need to tackle substance abuse amongst young people, by speaking on behalf of many of the mosques within its remit. <sup>9</sup> *Nasrullah Anwar, Director, Lancashire Council of Mosques, 5th January 2009.*

However, one mosque member in Bradford said that his council of mosques (Bradford Council of Mosques) only acts "when something bad happens [situation in Gaza] and does nothing in between". Moreover, "these Councils may appear to represent all mosques in the area but in reality may not, having excluded some on the basis of local politics".<sup>160</sup> And as discussed in Chapter 4: Undermining Extremism in Mosques, denominational identity is one factor which to consider. In addition to awareness of the important role religious denomination plays within Islam, local authorities also need to be aware of additional traditional and cultural leadership structures. The Institute for Community Cohesion (April 2008) touches on the role that these structures play particularly within the Pakistani and Indian Muslim communities. These are known as *Birardari*, meaning brotherhood, and *Khandani*, meaning ancestral clan.<sup>161</sup> The leadership within such structures should be taken into account when considering engagement with Muslim communities in the local area.

Kirklees' Supplementary Schools Coordinator thinks that the local authorities might want to designate someone who is specifically tasked with "engaging all (and not just Muslim) ethnic and religious minorities within the community as a key component of galvanising mutual confidence and trust. Statutory agencies in particular should dedicate certain individuals to engage community and faith-based organizations. Within local authorities, with an appropriate job description, such an individual may well be based in a major service area, such as Learning or Community Cohesion".<sup>162</sup> However, where responsibility for engagement with faith-based organizations and religious communities more generally, resides with only one individual, there risks the influence of 'faith bias'. A male Muslim from London explained that "one Muslim

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Honorary Committee of seven Officers is elected every two years by the Executive Committee to oversee the activities of the Council. The Council has also recruited five Strategic Directors who work with the Honorary Committee; three out of five of these Directors are women. Interview with the Council's Director, Nasrullah Anwar, 5th January 2009.

<sup>160</sup> Male mosque member, Bradford, January 2009.

<sup>161</sup> *Understanding and Appreciating Muslim Diversity: Towards better Engagement and Participation*, Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo), April 2008, p. 28.

<sup>162</sup> Shakeel Hafez, Supplementary Schools Coordinator, Kirklees Children and Young People Service, West Yorkshire, 9th January 2009.

Community Cohesion Officer, a Barelwi, consistently blocked cooperating with the Deobandi mosques in his London borough".<sup>163</sup> A solution might be a *team* of staff, rather than a single individual, with shared responsibility for such engagement.

What representation do mosques have at national level? Under the department for Communities and Local Government, (CLG), the Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB) was formed in June 2006, under the joint auspices of the Muslim Council of Britain, British Muslim Forum, the Muslim Association of Britain, and the Al Khoie Foundation.<sup>164</sup> MINAB is "a community led initiative to facilitate good governance in mosques in the UK by promoting a system of self regulation... [and] is also committed to improve the performance of imams and Islamic teachers working in mosques". MINAB has set out five standards on Governance, Qualifications of Personnel, Youth Participation, Women's Participation and Civic Responsibility.<sup>165</sup> According to one MINAB representative, these Standards were developed "after extensive consultations with over 2,000 mosque representatives".<sup>166</sup> MINAB's Project Director states that "the implementation of the standards depends on mosques voluntarily signing up as members and expressing a commitment to comply".<sup>167</sup> MINAB, for its part, will provide advice and guidance.

Councils of Mosques, and MINAB itself, might consider looking at how the Evangelical Alliance (EA) operates,<sup>168</sup> which is *multi-denominational* and seeks to address the training needs of church members as well as act in advisory capacity on a range of issues. "The EA was established in 1846 and is governed by a Council composed of individuals who are drawn from their membership, reflecting the regions, denominations, political spectrum, ethnicity, and with an age and gender balance. The Council is elected each year. Its membership is drawn from across all the denominations and composed of approximately 3,500 churches, 700 - 750 Christian charities and 20,000 individual members. Membership fees for charities have no minimum as it depends on what they can afford to give, churches pay a minimum of £80 p.a. and individuals a

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<sup>163</sup> Male Muslim, London, February 2009.

<sup>164</sup> It is worth noting here that members of two of the founding organizations of MINAB do not unequivocally condemn suicide bombings in Israel. See comments made by MAB's Dr Azzam Tamimi [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/4681857.stm#Bunglawala](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4681857.stm#Bunglawala) [accessed 10th February 2009] and MCB's spokesperson Inayat Bunglawala <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1496621/Top-job-fighting-extremism-for-Muslim-who-praised-bomber.html> [accessed 10th February 2009].

<sup>165</sup> MINAB <http://www.minab.org.uk> [accessed 4th January 2009].

<sup>166</sup> Mokhtar Badri, Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) Vice Chairman, Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB) representative, 5th December 2008.

<sup>167</sup> Basic mosques (who conduct prayers) will pay £25 p.a. and Standard mosques (who offer other religious and also educational services) will pay £50 p.a. Judge Drabu, Project Director, MINAB, 6th January 2009.

minimum of £25 p.a. The EA both offers support for its members, and in the cases of churches this means amongst other things, training for church leaders, as well as legal advice (from how to register as a charity to whether they are within their rights not to hire out their Church space to other religious groups). The EA sends out monthly e-newsletters to the membership to keep them up to date and received regular feedback from members on their local concerns and needs".<sup>169</sup>

But why would a mosque pay for membership with MINAB or a similar body when it can get capacity-building advice for free from other mosques? Idea-sharing between mosques outside of an umbrella organization is happening. The Islam Channel's<sup>170</sup> Model Mosque Award (2007) winner Madni Jamia Masjid in Bradford says that "they have been approached by other mosques who request to come and see what they're doing to learn from their experiences. Their website also serves as a way to promote what they have achieved".<sup>171</sup>

MINAB also claims to be "an independent body which aims to work with and *represent* all Muslim traditions and schools of thought" [my emphasis].<sup>172</sup> Dr Ghayasuddin Siddiqui of the Muslim Institute thinks striving to be representative is not helpful. "Issues need to be tackled at grassroots level first and no organization will be able to claim representation at national level for a long time yet to come. A lot of energy has been wasted on organizations fighting over who can claim to be more representative but Muslim communities are not ready for this. Perhaps after a couple of generations have passed when mosques have been professionalized. There is a need for regional and national representation but the priority is capacity-building".<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> The Evangelical Alliance may be a model, in an organizational sense, worthy of closer examination but the author does not necessarily agree with its views, for example opposing gay marriage. See <http://www.eauk.org/media/high-court-decision-on-gay-marriage.cfm> [accessed 10th February 2009].

<sup>169</sup> Based in South London with 40 staff, the EA also has small offices in Belfast, Cardiff and Glasgow. Kim Walker, Information and Research Officer, Evangelical Alliance, 6th January 2009.

<sup>170</sup> The Times reported in December 2008 that the Islam Channel's Chief Executive Officer Mohamed Ali Harrath was wanted by Interpol because of his links to an alleged terror organization. 'Sack Mohamed Ali Harrath, Scotland Yard urged', 16th December 2008 <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/crime/article5349169.ece> [accessed 9th February 2009].

<sup>171</sup> Abdul Rashid, Madni Jamia Masjid, Bradford, 12th January 2009.

<sup>172</sup> Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB) <http://www.minab.org.uk/> [accessed 3rd February 2009].

<sup>173</sup> Dr Ghayasuddin Siddiqui, Director, the Muslim Institute, 13th January 2009.

# Recommendations

## 1. Government (Central)

### *Granting Visas:*

- 1.1 The imam's proficiency in both understanding and communicating in English, must be of a higher standard.
- 1.2 The mosque must prove that no UK-born and UK-educated imam is able to fulfil the role, and provide adequate grounds for this.
- 1.3 The mosque, which the imam is recruited by, must demonstrate a commitment to facilitating the imam's integration into the wider community as well as supporting him, in particular, in building relationships with younger Muslims (see 3.13 – 3.16).

### *Funding:*

- 1.4 Future funding for imam training should consider incorporating the recommendations for imam training (see 3.13 – 3.16) and learning from other faiths (see 3.5) in the terms of reference for tender bids.

### *Training:*

- 1.5 Share lessons learned from the Continuous Professional Development Programme for faith leaders employed by the state, with mosque management committees, and facilitate their take up. Ensure that the mosques with religious leadership most in need of such professional development, are reached (see 2.1 – 2.8 for how to identify and make contact with them).
- 1.6 Oversee an evaluation of the Islam and citizenship programme currently being piloted in 30 *madrasas* (supplementary schools), for it to be rolled out in other *madrasas*. Ensure consultation with the beneficiaries of the programme (the children) as well as its compatibility with the citizenship programme taught in mainstream education.
- 1.7 Ensure that mosques, particularly the smaller ones, understand the *benefits* (training, tax relief and access to grant makers) as well as the legal requirement to register as charities with the Charity Commission where their annual turnover exceeds £5,000.

### *Engagement with mosques:*

- 1.8 Via regional and local authorities (see 2.1 – 2.8 for ways in which to build these relationships to facilitate this).
- 1.9 Via other faiths e.g. the Church of England has regional Inter-Faith Advisors.



## 2. Government (Local Authorities)

### *Engagement:*

- 2.1 Where engaging with Councils of Mosques be aware that such Councils do not always represent every mosque and every shade of Islam in the area.
- 2.2 Identify and map, where they exist, those additional mosques in the area which are not represented by the Council.
- 2.3 Source community- and faith-based organizations, as well as other faith institutions that work with mosques for additional channels of communication with mosques, bearing in mind that some community-based Muslim organizations may be more representative of a particular religious denomination than of all Muslims in the area.
- 2.4 Nominate appropriate points of contact within local authorities for ethnic and religious minorities, either in the form of a *team* of staff or incorporate it within the job description of existing staff members who work in e.g. Community Cohesion, Equality, Education, Social Services, Health and Safety, Employment and Careers. A team of staff members from a range of backgrounds will minimize the risk of any 'faith bias'.
- 2.5 Bear in mind that there are other channels through which to contact Muslim communities, and that the lay and religious leadership of mosques are not the only representatives of Muslims in the area.
- 2.6 Familiarize relevant staff with the range of religious denominations that exist within Muslim communities across the UK and those which reside in the local area.
- 2.7 Familiarize relevant staff with the different traditional and cultural leadership structures that exist within the Muslim communities. These structures will be specific to different communities and vary in their structure and influence e.g. amongst the Pakistani and Indian Muslims, there are *Biradari* (Brotherhood) and *Khandani* (Ancestral Clan) systems.
- 2.8 Work through local schools, other service providers and other faiths to reach all Muslims in the area.

### *Funding:*

- 2.9 Enable mosques and Councils of Mosques to access community cohesion, Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) and other funds, but ensure that:
  - 2.9.1 Mosque activities and services benefit the entire community and in particular do not discriminate between Muslims on the basis of race or ethnicity or on any other grounds.
  - 2.9.2 Mosques demonstrate cooperation with other mosques (particularly larger mosques reaching out to smaller mosques), other faiths, community-based organizations and local service providers e.g. through organizing joint activities.
  - 2.9.3 Mosques demonstrate inclusivity of youth, women and different ethnic groups in governance and membership e.g. a youth steering group; a minimum number of women and young people on the management committee; inclusive mosque membership.
  - 2.9.4 Mosques have at least one imam (part-time or full-time) preaching in English who is supportive of liberal democratic principles of tolerance, equality, inclusion and participation.
  - 2.9.5 Consultations to determine the above-mentioned criteria must include local community-based organizations, especially those that work with youth and women.

*Planning Permission:*

- 2.10 Where planning permission is sought by mosques to build or add an extension to an existing mosque, provisions for women and youth must be included in the planned structure.

*Regulations:*

- 2.11 Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) should ensure that their child protection strategy covers all faith-based organizations, including *madrasas* and mosques.
- 2.12 Establish a register of *madrasas* (supplementary schools) and map where they are, and include essential information for each *madrasa* on religious denomination, size of classes, language of instruction, frequency and duration of classes, teachers' backgrounds and qualifications and so on.

*Capacity-building:*

- 2.13 Share best practice with other local authorities on capacity-building for staff in mosques and *madrasas* – e.g. Kirklees, Tameside, Birmingham.
- 2.14 Facilitate coordination between local schools and mosque *madrasa* staff to help provide them with access to the training opportunities, resources and facilities that state school teachers have as well as sharing best practices.
- 2.15 Facilitate coordination between mosque *madrasa* staff and imams who qualify for state-funded training for mosque and *madrasa* staff.
- 2.16 Facilitate accredited training for *madrasa* teachers by encouraging local Further Education colleges and universities to work with *madrasas*.
- 2.17 Encourage state schools to source mosques and *madrasas* for input into school curricula e.g. comparing the Citizenship school curriculum and the citizenship programme being piloted in *madrasas* and the Islam component of the Religious Education school curriculum, particularly where it relates to Islam in the UK, and possibly in History and Science as well.

*Recognition:*

- 2.18 Integrate positive programmes undertaken by mosques into the work of statutory agencies and mainstream service providers such as the NHS and prison service, in particular where a mosque develops an effective program to tackle community-level issues, in order to acknowledge and build upon the work done by mosques in their community.
- 2.19 Where mosques and *madrasas* do not meet minimum criteria of inclusivity in governance, membership and activities, local authorities should not feel obliged to support them.

### 3. Mosque Management Committees

*Governance:*

- 3.1 By law, mosques must register with the Charity Commission as charities if they have a turnover of more than £5,000, and maintain the accountability that is embedded in good practice and the governance that is expected of charities.
- 3.2 Make use of the resources and free advice the Charity Commission offers.

- 3.3 Invite young people to establish a youth steering group, which can be charged with organizing activities for young people including school visits and speakers.
- 3.4 Invite women in the local community to express their interest in setting up a women's sub-committee and sitting on the management committee, and consult local women's groups as well as use informal social networks, to reach women in the community.

*Learning from other faiths:*

- 3.5 The Jewish community's Promoting Excellence in Rabbis (P'eir) programme (the United Synagogue's in-service training, skills enhancement and support programme for Rabbis).
- 3.6 The appointment procedure of the decentralized Baptist church.
- 3.7 Consider the Church of England's complaints procedure and mechanism of ensuring equal pay for all clergy.

*Sharing best practice with other mosques:*

- 3.8 Encourage imams to establish a peer-to-peer mentoring network.
- 3.9 Seek guidance and advice from other mosques, especially those who are piloting new initiatives.

*Including women:*

- 3.10 Encourage women to set up and join sub-committees and as a starting point assume responsibility for the women's area of the mosque.
- 3.11 Encourage women to seek external funding for their activities.
- 3.12 Consider operating a split timetable between the genders where there is not enough space to have separate facilities for women.

*Training:*

- 3.13 Establish Continuing Professional Development (CPD) allowances for imams so they can take advantage of available training opportunities and partnerships.
- 3.14 Set up a mentoring scheme with *dar al-ulums* and post-graduate institutions between (young and older) imams and students.
- 3.15 Establish contact with the local university's chaplaincy and see where imams can learn from the experiences of Muslim chaplains' more pastoral role, dealing with a diverse young Muslim student body.
- 3.16 Pair up imams and mosque staff with youth groups to learn from their experiences dealing with young, especially vulnerable, Muslims.

*Islamic education:*

- 3.17 Organize visits to local schools and build a working relationship with head teachers to show willingness to have an input into how the Religious Education curriculum is taught.
- 3.18 Facilitate *madrasa* teachers' cooperation with local schools and thus their access to state-funded resources and teacher training opportunities.
- 3.19 Organize for non-Muslims to speak in mosques, possibly after Friday prayers. Such speakers might be other faith leaders, community leaders, public service providers or councillors.

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## Appendix: Survey of British Mosques

Faizane-E-Madina (Accrington)	Al-Hijra Mosque (Birmingham)
Gousia Razvia Jamia Mosque & Islamic Centre (Accrington)	Anjuman-E-Farooq Azam (Birmingham)
Madni Masjid- Madrassa Taleem-ul-Quran (Accrington)	Anjuman-E-Naqeebul Islam (Birmingham)
Raza Jamia Mosque & Islamic Centre (Accrington)	Bangladesh Islamic & Social Organisation & Madina Mosque (Birmingham)
Musalla As-Salaam (Alloa)	Bangladesh Islamic Centre (Birmingham)
Madrassa Arbia Taleemul Quran & Mosque (Ashton Under Lyne)	Bangladesh Welfare Association & Mosque (Birmingham)
Banbury Madni Mosque (Banbury)	Birmingham Central mosque (Birmingham)
Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ibn Bazz (Banbury)	Central Jamia Mosque Gamkol Sharif (Birmingham)
Muslim Welfare Association Of The Vale Of Glamorgan (Barry)	Clifton Mosque (Birmingham)
Basildon Islamic Centre (Basildon)	Ghausia Mosque trust (Birmingham)
Al-Birr Masjid (Basingstoke)	Hamza Mosque & Islamic Centre (Birmingham)
Bath Islamic Society (Bath)	Hazrat Sultan Bahu Trust jamiah Islamiah Mosque (Birmingham)
Saraji Islamic Studies Centre (Bathgate)	Idara Maarif-E-Islam Hussainia Mosque & Community Centre (Birmingham)
Jame Masjid & Madressah Talimuddin (Batley)	Islamic Education & Cultural Centre (Birmingham)
Jumma Masjid (Batley)	Islamic Education Centre (Birmingham)
Madrassah Al Shafia Al Islamia (Batley)	Jalalabad Mosque & Islamic Centre (Birmingham)
Masjid & Madresa Noor-UI-Islam (Batley)	Jalalabad Mosque & Madrassa (Birmingham)
Masjid-E-Noor & Madressa Anwarul Islam (Batley)	Jame Masjid Aston (Birmingham)
Mount Pleasant Medina Islamic Trust (Batley)	Jami Mosque & Islamic Centre (Birmingham)
Pakistan Muslim Welfare Society & Jamia Mosque Batley (Batley)	Jamia Masjid Bilal (Birmingham)
Bangladesh Islamic mission (Bedford)	Jamia Masjid Minhaj-UI-Quran (Birmingham)
Bedford Jamee Masjid & Islamic Cultural Centre (Bedford)	Jamia Mohiul Salaam Siddiqia (Birmingham)
Jamia Masjid Gulshani Baghdad (Bedford)	Jamia Mosque Mehr-UI-Millat (Birmingham)
Jamia Masjid Hanfia Ghausia (Bedford)	Jamia Naqshbandia Nawabia Aslamia (Birmingham)
Belfast Islamic centre (Belfast)	Madina Mosque (Birmingham)
N.I Muslim Family Association (Belfast)	Madni Mosque (Birmingham)
Wirral Islamic Centre & Shah Jalal Mosque (Birkenhead)	Madrassa Darbar Ali Gamkol Sharif (Birmingham)
Ahl-E-Sunnat-Wa-Jamaat Bareilvi of Birmingham Jamati Islamic Centre (Birmingham)	Madressa Islamia Rizvia (Birmingham)
	Makki Masjid & Madrassa (Birmingham)

Markazi Masjid Ahl-E-Hadith UK (Birmingham)	Masjid-E-Rizwan (Blackburn)
Masjid Ummar (Birmingham)	Masjid-E-Zainabia (Blackburn)
Masjid-E-Aman Islamic Educational Centre (Birmingham)	Muslim Youth Centre (Blackburn)
Masjid-E-Noor (Birmingham Trust Ltd) (Birmingham)	Central Mosque & Community centre (Blackpool)
Masjid-E-Quba (Birmingham)	Al Falah Mosque (Bolton)
Mohammedi Islamic Centre (Birmingham)	Al Rahman Masjid & Daubhill Muslim Society (Bolton)
Mosque Noor-UI-Uloom (Birmingham)	Aleef Mosque (Bolton)
Mosque Raza - Islamic Educational & Cultural Centre (Birmingham)	Darul Uloom Bolton (Bolton)
Muath Welfare Trust (Birmingham)	Farnworth Mosque (Bolton)
Muslim Foundation Mosque (Birmingham)	Jamia Alavia (Bolton)
Paigham-E-Islam Trust (Birmingham)	Jamia Zakariyya Masjid (Bolton)
Qamarulislam Mosque (Birmingham)	Makkah Mosque & Muslim Community Centre (Bolton)
Shah Jalal Jami Masjid & Jamea Qur'ania Madressa (Birmingham)	Makki Mosque (Bolton)
Shah Jalal Jamia Masjid Bengali school & Islamic Centre (Birmingham)	Masjid-E-Noor-UI-Islam (Bolton)
Shahporan Islamic Centre (Birmingham)	Taiyabah Mosque (B.C.I.Society) (Bolton)
Tennyson Road Mosque (Birmingham)	Bournemouth Islamic Centre (Bournemouth)
UKIM- Sparkbrook Islamic Centre (Birmingham)	Bracknell Jumma Prayer Hall (Bracknell)
Washwood Heath Muslim Centre (Birmingham)	Abu-Bakar Mosque (Bradford)
Witton Islamic Centre (Birmingham)	Al Hira Islamic Centre / Marshfield Muslim Community (Bradford)
Herts & Essex Mosque & Islamic Cultural Centre (Bishops Stortford)	Anjuman-e-Haideria (Bradford)
Hanfi Sunni Muslim Circle - Masjidi Reza (Blackburn)	Faizan-E-Madinah (Bradford)
Hanfi-Sunni Jamia Masjid Eraza & Muslim Association (Blackburn)	Girlington Muslim Welfare Association (Bradford)
Islamic Cultural Centre & Jaame Mosque (Blackburn)	Hussainia Islamic Mission (Bradford)
Kokni Muslim Welfare Society & Masjidal Momineen (Blackburn)	Islamic Cultural & Educational Association- Madni Jamia Masjid (Bradford)
Madni Mosque (Blackburn)	Jalalabad Islamic Centre & Jamia Mosque (Bradford)
Madressa Taleemul Islam (Blackburn)	Jame Masjid Ahl-e-Hadith (Bradford)
Makki Masjid (Blackburn)	Jamia Islamiyah Hazarat Sultan Bahu Trust Mosque (Bradford)
Masjide Tauheedul Islam Mosque (Blackburn)	Jamiyat Tabligh-UI-Islam Mosque (Bradford)
Masjid-E-Anisul Islam (Blackburn)	Madinatul Uloom & Islamic Centre (Bradford)
Masjid-E-Hidayah (Blackburn)	Madni Masjid (Bradford)
Masjid-E-Noor (Blackburn)	Madrassah Madania Tahfeezul Quran (Bradford)
	Madressa Rashidiya (Bradford)
	Masjid-E-Usman (Bradford)
	Minhaj-UI-Quran Centre (Bradford)



Muslim Association of Bradford - Jamia Masjid (Bradford)	Madina Jamia Mosque (Colne)
Noor-UI-Islam Mosque (Bradford)	Hazrat Dewan Hazoori Centre (Coventry)
Shahjalal Islamic Society (Bradford)	Jalalabad Masjid (Coventry)
Sufat-UI-Islam UK Association (Bradford)	Jamia Mosque Eagle Street (Coventry)
Rizvia Mosque & Muslim Welfare Association (Brierley Hill)	Masjid-E-Zeenat-UI-Islam (Coventry)
Masjid Al Quds (Brighton)	Jamia Masjid Quba (Cradley Heath)
Shahjalal Muslim Cultural Centre (Brighton)	Crawley Islamic Centre & Mosque (Crawley)
Easton Islamee Darsagah (Bristol)	Crawley Mosque (Crawley)
Jamia Easton Masjid (Bristol)	Al-Khair Masjid (Croydon)
Ghausiah Mosque (Burnley)	Al-Hudaa Islamic Centre (Dagenham)
Jamia Masjid Abu-Baker (Burnley)	Jamia Mosque & Islamic Society (Darlington)
Jamia Masjid-E-Farooq-Azam (Burnley)	N.W. Kent Muslim Association (Dartford)
Shah Jalal Mosque & Madrassa (Burnley)	Derby Jamia Mosque (Derby)
UKIM-Masjid Ibrahim (Burnley)	Islamic Centre- Derby Ltd (Derby)
Jamiat-Ahl-E-Hadith Masjid- Burton (Burton Upon Trent)	Jame Masjid Salafiyah Centre (Derby)
Makki Masjid (Burton Upon Trent)	Jamia Hanfia Taleem-UI-Islam (Derby)
Darul Uloom Al-Arabiya Al-Islamia (Bury)	Jamia Nizamia (Derby)
Khizra Mosque (Bury)	Dewsbury Markazi Masjid (Dewsbury)
Noor-UI-Islam (Bury)	Ilaahi Mosque (Dewsbury)
Al-Kharafi Islamic Centre (Camberley)	Jame Masjid Ahl-E-Hadith & Salfia Centre (Dewsbury)
Cambridge Muslim Welfare Society & Abu Bakar Siddiq Mosque (Cambridge)	Madrassah-E-Islamiyah (Dewsbury)
Al-Manar Centre (Cardiff)	Markazi Jamia Masjid Anwar-e-Madina (Dewsbury)
Grange Town Muslim Cultural Centre (Cardiff)	Masjid & Madressa Muslim Association - Dewsbury Moor (Dewsbury)
Jalalia Mosque & Islamic Education Centre (Cardiff)	Masjid Al-Hidayah (Dewsbury)
Jamia Masjid-Bilal (Cardiff)	Zakaria Mosque (Dewsbury)
Masjid Noor (Cardiff)	Sulthania Mosque (Doncaster)
Masjid-E-Umar (Islamic Centre) (Cardiff)	Dorking Muslim Community Association (Dorking)
Shah Jalal Mosque & Islamic Cultural Centre (Cardiff)	Dudley Mosque (Dudley)
Shahjalal Jamea Mosque (Carlisle)	Islamic Centre - Dudley (Dudley)
Kent Islamic Centre Mosque (Chatham)	Dumfries Islamic Society (Dumfries)
Masjid-UI-Abraar (Chatham)	Jamaa Masjid - Dundee Islamic Society (Dundee)
Chelmsford Mosque (Chelmsford)	Jamia Masjid Billal (Scottish Islamic & Cultural Centre) (Dundee)
Masjid Al Madina- Bangladeshi Community Centre (Cheltenham)	Central Mosque & Islamic Centre (Edinburgh)
Central Jamia Mosque Anjuman UI Muslameen Ltd (Chesham)	Idara Taleem-UI-Quran (Edinburgh)
Shah-Jalal Mosque & Islamic Centre (Chester)	Mosque & Islamic Community Centre (Edinburgh)
Colchester Islamic Centre (Colchester)	

Pakistan Community Centre & Mosque (Edinburgh)	East London Mosque And London Muslim Centre (London)
Shahjalal Mosque & Islamic Centre (Edinburgh)	Eshaatul-Islam Mosque, Madrassa & Cultural Centre (London)
Enfield Jamia Masjid (Enfield)	Fatih Mosque (London)
Mosque & Islamic Centre for the South West (Exeter)	Forest Gate Mosque (London)
Falkirk Islamic Centre (Falkirk)	Imam Hussain Mosque (London)
Fife Muslim Educational and Cultural Centre (Fife)	Imam Khoei Islamic Centre (London)
Gillingham Mosque (Gillingham)	IPO Chiswick Prayer Room (London)
Ahl-Al-Bait Society (Glasgow)	Islamic Centre England (London)
Dawat-UI-Islam (Glasgow)	Islamic Centre Upton Park (London)
Glasgow Islamic Centre & Central Mosque (Glasgow)	London Central Mosque Islamic Cultural Centre (Regent's Park Mosque) (London)
Jamia Islamia (Anjaman-Ehya-e-Islam) (Glasgow)	Islamic Cultural Centre Finchley (London)
Madrassa Alarabia Al-Islamia (Glasgow)	Masjid & Madrassah Al-Tawhid (London)
Madrassa Taleem-UI-Islam (Glasgow)	Masjid At-Taqwa (London)
Madrassa Zia-UI-Quran (Glasgow)	Masjid Gows-UI-Azam (Dulwich Islamic Cultural Centre) (London)
Masjid Noor (Glasgow)	Masjid Khalil (London)
Masjid-E-KHazra (Glasgow)	Masjid-e-Quba North London Mosque Trust (London)
UKIM Glasgow Islamic Centre (Masjid Al-Furqan) (Glasgow)	Muslim Welfare Association (London)
Fife Islamic Centre (Glenrothes)	Muslim Welfare House (London)
Jamia Al Karim Mosque & Gloucester Islamic Trust (Gloucester)	Muslim World League (London)
Masjid-E-Noor Gloucester (Gloucester)	Nasrul-lahi-il-Fathi Society of Nigeria (London)
Gravesend & Dartford Muslim Association (Gravesend)	Noor-UI-Islam Mosque (London)
Thurrock Jame Masjid (Grays)	North Brixton Islamic Cultural Centre- Masjidul qudus (London)
Masjid At-Tauwheed (Great Yarmouth)	North London Central Mosque (London)
Al-Madina Mosque, Barking (London)	Shepherds Bush Mosque & Cultural Centre (London)
Anjuman-E-Islamiya Jamia Mosque (London)	South London Mosque and Islamic Centre (London)
As Sunnah Islamic Centre (London)	Suleymaniye Mosque (London)
Azhar Masjid (London)	Sunni Muslim Association (London)
Azizye Mosque (London)	Al Manaar Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre (London)
Battersea Islamic Centre (London)	Al-Hira Education Centre (London)
Bricklane Jamia Masjid trust (London)	Al-Huda Cultural Centre & Mosque (London)
Brixton Mosque (London)	Al-Muntada Al-Islami Trust (London)
Dockland Madina Masjid & Muslim Community Centre (London)	Al-Muzzammil Mosque (London)
East End Islamic Centre (London)	Al-Nehar Mosque & Education Centre (London)
East Ham Markaz-Ud-Dawat Wal Irshad (London)	

An-Noor Masjid & Community Centre (London)	Bengali Mosque & Community Centre (Halesowen)
BWA Muslim Cultural Centre & Mosque (London)	Blackheath Jamia Mosque Trust & Islamic Cultural Centre (Halesowen)
Central Mosque of Brent (London)	UKIM - Blackheath Islamic Community Centre & Mosque (Halesowen)
Coventry Cross Mosque & Islamic Community Centre (London)	Al Jamia Al Zahra (Halifax)
Darul Uloom Qadria Jalani (London)	Central Jamia Mosque Madni (Halifax)
Darul Ummah Jame Mosque (London)	Elland Mosque Association (Halifax)
Greenwich Islamic Centre (London)	Markazi Jamia Masjid Ghosia (Halifax)
Gretra Mosque (London)	Harlow Islamic Centre & Mosque (Harlow)
Hendon Mosque & Islamic Centre (London)	Harrow Central Mosque (Harrow)
Hussaineyyat-al-Rasul al-A'dham (London)	Sri Lankan Muslim Cultural Centre UK (Harrow)
Hyderi Islamic Centre (London)	Haverfordwest Mosque (Haverfordwest)
Ibrahim Mosque (London)	Jamia Mosque - Heckmondwike (Heckmondwike)
Islamic Cultural Centre & Mosque (London)	Makki Mosque (Heckmondwike)
Jamme Masjid - Westminster Islamic Centre (London)	Wycombe Islamic Mission & Mosque (High Wycombe)
Lewisham Islamic Centre (London)	Jam-e Masjid Abu Bakr (Huddersfield)
Leytonstone Mosque (London)	Jamia Masjid Osman (Huddersfield)
Markuzul Uloom London (London)	Markzi Jame Mosque Riza & Islamic Centre (Huddersfield)
Masjid-e-Usman (London)	Masjid Anwar-e-Madina (Huddersfield)
Mayfair Islamic Centre (London)	Jame Masjid & Madrasah Darul Marif Al Islamia (Hull)
Mosque & Islamic Centre of Brent (London)	UKIM - Hull Mosque & Islamic Centre (Hull)
Mosque & Islamic Centre (London)	Shah Jalal Mosque (Ipswich)
Musallaa An-Noor (London)	Isle of Man Islamic Association (Isle of Man)
Muslim Community & Education Centre (London)	Isle of Wight Jame-e-Mosque Islamic Community Centre (Isle of Wight)
Muslim Community Centre & Mosque (London)	Al-Amin Talimul Islamic Society (Keighley)
Muslim Cultural Society Mosque (London)	Keighley Markazi Jamia Mosque (Keighley)
Poplar Central Mosque (London)	Shahjalal Jame Mosque & Bangladesh Islamic Organisation (Keighley)
Qurani Murkuz Trust (London)	UKIM - Madina Mosque (Keighley)
Salahuddin Islamic Centre (London)	Kidderminster Madani Masjid (Kidderminster)
Shah Jalal Jame Masjid Euston Mosque (London)	Kingston Jamia Masjid (Kingston-upon-Thames)
Tottenham Mosque - Islamic Community Centre (London)	Kirkcaldy Islamic Education & Cultural Society (Kirkcaldy)
UKIM West London Islamic Centre & Jamia Masjid (London)	Raza Masjid (Lancaster)
United Islamic Association (London)	
Waltham Forest Islamic Association - Jamia Masjid Ghosia (London)	
Wimbledon Mosque (London)	

Ahlul Bayt Islamic Centre (Leeds)	Manchester Central Mosque & Islamic Cultural Centre (Manchester)
Al Madina Mosque / Makkah Jamia Masjid (Leeds)	Masjeed Billal & Islamic Centre (Manchester)
Ghousia Mosque (Leeds)	Masjid-e-Imdadiah (Manchester)
Kashmir Muslim's Community Centre & Jamia Masjid Abu Huraira (Leeds)	Masjid-e-Noor (Manchester)
Leeds Islamic Centre (Leeds)	North Manchester Jamia Mosque & Ibadur Rahman Trust (Manchester)
Masjid-e-Umar & Muslim Association (Leeds)	Shah Jalal Mosque & Islamic Centre (Manchester)
Shah Jalal Mosque - Bangladesh Islamic Society (Leeds)	UKIM - Jamia Masjid Khizra (Manchester)
UKIM - Iqra Centre (Leeds)	Zakaria Masjid & Tablighi Centers Trust (Manchester)
Dar-us-Salam Mosque (Leicester)	Margate Mosque (Margate)
Hamidiye Mosque (Leicester)	Madrasa Zia-ul-Quran (Middlesbrough)
The Islamic Centre - Leicester Central Mosque (Leicester)	Muslim Federation Cleveland Abu-Bakr Mosque & Community Centre (Middlesbrough)
Leamington Spa Mosque & Muslim Community Centre (Leamington Spa)	Al-Karam Mosque & Community Centre (Milton Keynes)
Dar-us-Salam Mosque (Livingston)	Milton Keynes Jamee Mosque (Milton Keynes)
Bury Park Jamia Masjid (Luton)	Ahlul Sunnah wal Jamah Morden Islamic Centre (Morden)
Islamic Cultural Society Luton Central Mosque (Luton)	Central Mosque Lanarkshire (Motherwell)
Jalalabad Jame Masjid (Luton)	Ghousia Jamia Mosque (Nelson)
Jamia Al-Akbaria (Luton)	Jamia Masjid Minhaj-ul-Quran (Nelson)
Jamiatul-Uloom-Al-Islamia & Baitul Abrar Jami Masjid (Luton)	UKIM - Madina Mosque Nelson (Nelson)
Masjid Al Ghurabaa (Luton)	Heaton Mosque & Islamic Centre (Newcastle Upon Tyne)
Masjid-e-Noor (Luton)	Madina Masjid (Newcastle Upon Tyne)
UKIM - Madinah Mosque (Luton)	Muslim Welfare House (Newcastle) (Newcastle Upon Tyne)
Zakariya Masjid (Luton)	Newcastle Central Mosque (Masjid at-Tawheed) (Newcastle Upon Tyne)
Al Falah Islamic Centre (Manchester)	Newcastle Mosque and Islamic Centre (Newcastle Upon Tyne)
Al-Farghana Institute & Minhaj-ul-Quran Mosque (Manchester)	Al-Noor Mosque (Newport)
Al-Quba Mosque & Shahporan Islamic Centre (Manchester)	Hussaini Mission (Newport)
Altrincham Muslim Association (Manchester)	Newport Islamic Society for Gwent (Newport)
Dar-ul-Uloom Islamia Education & Cultural Centre (Manchester)	Shah Poran Bangladeshi Jame Mosque (Newport)
Darus Salam Mosque & Islamic Centre (Manchester)	Al Jamaat-ul-Muslimin (Northampton)
Hadayat ul Muslimeen Society & Masjid-e-Hidaya (Manchester)	Al Jamaat-ul-Muslimin (Northampton)
Islamic Academy of Manchester (Manchester)	Medina Masjid & Community Centre (Northampton)
Jamia Islamia of Manchester - Central Mosque (Manchester)	
Jamia Rasoolia Islamic Centre (Manchester)	

East Anglian Bangladeshi Islamic Centre (Norwich)	Redhill Islamic Centre (Redhill)
As-Shifa & Karimia Mosque (Nottingham)	Al-Amin Jame Mosque (Rochdale)
Jameah Fatimiah (Nottingham)	Bilal Jamia Mosque & Islamic Teaching Centre (Rochdale)
Jamia Masjid Sultania (Nottingham)	Dar-ul-Uloom Jamia Chashtiah Monir Ul-Islam (Rochdale)
Madni Masjid (Nottingham)	Golden Mosque (Rochdale)
Madrasah Talim ul Quran (Nottingham)	Jalalia Jame Mosque (Rochdale)
Nuneaton Mosque (Nuneaton)	UKIM - Neeli Masjid Rochdale (Rochdale)
Al Hassan Jamia Masjid (Oldham)	Havering Islamic Cultural Centre (Romford)
Al-Khazra Markazi Masjid (Oldham)	Masjid-e-Bilal (Rossendale)
Bilal Jamia Mosque & Madrassa (Oldham)	Shah Jalal Masjid & Islamic Centre (Rossendale)
Jame Masjid Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith (Oldham)	Jame Masjid & Community Centre (Rotherham)
Jamia-Al-Jalaliah Madrasah & Noorani Mosque (Oldham)	Muslim Association of Salisbury (Salisbury)
Madina Mosque & Islamic Centre (Oldham)	Bangladeshi Sunni Mosque (Scunthorpe)
Madrassa Talemul Islam (Oldham)	Scunthorpe Central Mosque & Madani Madrassa (Scunthorpe)
Minhaj-ul-Quran Islamic Education Centre (Oldham)	Shah Jalal Jam-e Mosque & Islamic Centre (Scunthorpe)
Nagina Jamia Masjid (Oldham)	Hanfia Mosque & Islamic Cultural Centre (Sheffield)
UKIM - Oldham Mosque (Oldham)	Jamia Mosque Gulzar-E-Habib & Education Centre (Sheffield)
Bangladeshi Islamic Education Centre & Mosque (Oxford)	Jamiyate Tablige Islam Masjid (Sheffield)
Madina Mosque & Muslim Welfare House (Oxford)	Makki Jamia Masjid (Sheffield)
Oxford Central Mosque (Oxford)	Muslim Welfare House (Sheffield)
Perth Islamic Centre (Perth)	Sheffield Allyah Jame Mosque & Islamic Cultural Centre (Sheffield)
Dar Assalaam Mosque (Peterborough)	Sheffield Islamic Centre & Madina Mosque (Sheffield)
Masjid Khadijah & Islamic Centre (Peterborough)	UKIM - Sheffield Branch (Sheffield)
Islamic Centre Plymouth & Cornwall (Plymouth)	Jamia Ghausia Mosque (Slough)
Gujarat Sunni Muslim Community Centre (Preston)	Bangladesh Islamic Centre (Smethwick)
Masjid-e-Aqsa Preston Hanfi Sunni Muslim Society (Preston)	Chashma-e-Rahmat Mosque (Smethwick)
Masjid-e-Salam (Preston)	Jamia Mosque Anwar-ul-Uloom Trust (Smethwick)
Preston Muslim Society - Jamea Masjid (Preston)	Al-Azhar Mosque (South Shields)
Raza Mosque (Preston)	Central Jamia Masjidx (Southall)
Anjuman Muhibban-e-Rasool Jamia Masjid (Reading)	Islamic Educational & Recreational Institute (Abu Bakr Mosque) (Southall)
Central Jamme Mosque (Reading)	Jamia Masjid Islamic Centre (Southall)
Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith (Reading Branch) (Reading)	Abu Bakr Masjid (Southampton)
Masjid Noor (Redditch)	

Shah Jalal Mosque and Islamic Centre (Southampton)	Jamia Sawafia Mosque (Wakefield)
Southampton Medina Mosque Trust (Southampton)	Markazi Jamia Mosque (Wakefield)
Essex Jamme Masjid (Southend)	Masjid Zakaria (Wakefield)
UK Islamic Mission Southend Branch (Southend)	Aisha Mosque & Islamic Centre (Walsall)
Southport Mosque & Islamic Cultural Centre (Southport)	Bangladesh Islamic Assoc. Jami Mosque, Madrasa & Islamic Centre (Walsall)
	Ghausia Qasmia Trust Mosque & Community Centre (Walsall)
	Jamia Masjid Ghausia (Walsall)
Mosque & Bangladesh Islamic Centre (St. Albans)	Masjid Abu Bakr (Walsall)
Masjid Al Haque (St. Leonards on Sea)	Shah Jalal Jame Masjid & Madrasa (Walsall)
Husseini Islamic Centre (Stanmore)	Jamait-ul-Muslemeen Jamia Masjid (Warrington)
Central Scotland Islamic Centre (Stirling)	North Watford Mosque (Watford)
Muslim Welfare Trust (Stockton on Tees)	Watford Jamia Mosque (Watford)
Thornaby Muslim Association and Mosque (Stockton on Tees)	Al-Amin Mosque (Wednesbury)
Gilani Noor Mosque (Stoke on Trent)	Muslim Welfare Society (Masjid-e-Umar) (Wednesbury)
Islamic Centre (Stoke on Trent)	Al-Amin Mosque (Wednesbury)
Islamic Cultural Centre & Mosque (Stoke on Trent)	Islah-ul-Muslimeen Mosque & Islamic Centre (Wellingborough)
Madina Mosque (Stoke on Trent)	Islamic Cultural Centre (Wembley) (Wembley)
Makki Masjid (Stoke on Trent)	Wembley Mosque & Islamic Centre (Wembley)
UK Turkish Islamic Cultural Centre (Stoke on Trent)	West Cumbria Muslim Society (Prayer Room) (Whitehaven)
Ghausia Jamia Mosque & Welfare Association (Stourbridge)	Masjid Tooba & Islamic Cultural Centre of Wigan (Wigan)
Sunderland Jami Mosque (Sunderland)	Muslim Community Centre (Woking)
Muslim Cultural & Welfare Association (Sutton)	Shah Jehan Mosque (Woking)
Imam Khoei Islamic Centre Swansea (Swansea)	Bilal Jamia Mosque & Muslim Community Centre (Wolverhampton)
Swansea City Mosque & Islamic Centre (Swansea)	University of Wales (Swansea) Mosque, (Wolverhampton)
University of Wales (Swansea) Mosque (Swansea)	Mosque Taiyyibah (Wolverhampton)
Hazrat Shahjalal Mosque (Swindon)	UKIM - Madina Masjid & Islamic Centre, (Wolverhampton)
Thamesdown Islamic Association (Swindon)	Wrexham Mosque (Wrexham)
Taunton & Somerset Islamic Centre (Taunton)	S. S. M. C. A. & Yeovil Mosque (Yeovil)
Masjid Shah Jalal (Tipton)	UKIM - York Mosque (York)
Tipton & Tividale Islamic Centre (Tipton)	York Muslim Association (York)
Torbay Islamic Centre (Torbay)	
Central Jamia Mosque & Madressa Arabia Islamia (Wakefield)	



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