



Faith Action Audit 2013

Faith in the Community across West Cheshire



Link Up

together for transformation



Cheshire West
and Chester

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Background

Link Up is a relational network of Churches and Church leaders in and around Chester, West Cheshire and into North Wales. Drawn from across denominations and traditions, Link Up seeks to support and extend partnership working for personal and community transformation. In 2010 Link Up funded a Faith Sector Audit to establish the nature and extent to which faith groups across West Cheshire were involved in community engagement activities. This work also considered the way faith communities were supporting their local communities, as well as vulnerable and marginalised individuals or groups. This piece of research was extremely enlightening and provided a snap shot of Faith Sector community projects across West Cheshire across all faiths and in all areas.

In 2013 Link Up recognising the value of the previous research agreed to undertake a Faith Action Audit across the borough to see how the landscape of community action had changed. This report will highlight key findings from the research and where possible compare results to the 2010 research. This work has been supported by both Cheshire West and Chester and Link Up

In a recent report produced about social action and The Church of England, it was found that:-

- *Levels of social action are considerable higher amongst Church attendees than the general population. 79% of Church congregations engage in some formal voluntary action compared to just 40% of the general, whereas 90% are involved in informal voluntary activity as opposed to 54% of the general population.*
- *There is a clear link between Christian faith and social action. 81% of respondents stated they get involved with social action in their communities because of their faith. 79% had been involved in social action in the past 12 months (the national figure is 45%). According to the Sunday Telegraph, members of the Church of England give 22.3 million hours every month in voluntary service¹. As the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has recognised, “faith communities provide a clear moral compass and a call to action that benefits society as a whole - and the government is grateful for this²*

The report goes on to argue that:-

- *The Church is an utterly unique institution with enormous reservoirs of good will, education and capacity, as well as an asset base that – because it can be put to the use of all of our communities- can transform every community.³*
- *The Church’s foundational vision is that of the holistic good. Potentially at least it is one of the few organisations that before the fact wishes to care for the whole person with a personal and local approach*

Although the Noyes and Blond report focuses upon the work of the Church of England, the underlying principles of Christian faith communities is to support the whole person in such a way that lives can be transformed.

¹ Moreton, C (2012) "What has the Church of England ever done for us?", The Sunday Telegraph

² Pickles, E (2012) "A Christian ethos strengthens our nation", The Daily Telegraph

³ James Noyes & Phillip Blond, (2013) Holistic Mission Social action and the Church of England: Republica,

Methodology

A self-completion questionnaire was developed based on the 2010 survey. Changes included reducing the overall length, focusing more upon the range of activities provided and identifying activities which supported the local authorities Altogether Better Programme. The sample was drawn from the 2010 list of all faith groups and faith projects across West Cheshire and took into account some projects had ceased, while some faith group leaders had responsibility for numerous fellowships. 245 forms were posted out during February and March, accompanied by a stamped address envelope for return. To encourage a greater response rate from rural areas Link Up's Faith Sector Audit Project Manager completed a number of telephone and face to face interviews with faith groups. By the closing date 122 forms had been returned which equates to a 50% response rate. This response rate is slightly lower than the 56% achieved in 2010 it reflects the situation that some faith projects had ceased and some leaders now have responsibility for more than one faith group. It is still an excellent response rate for a self-completion survey and provides results which are statistically reliable.

Introduction

The objectives for this survey where:-

- To identify the range and extent of community projects and initiatives provided throughout the borough across the boundaries of Faith, location and tradition
- To connect community projects and initiatives already undertaken by Faith Groups to the Local Authority and other community agencies and partners
- To identify activities which relate specifically to the Altogether Better Programme
- To provide a single source for Faith Groups and their community projects across the boundaries of Cheshire West and Chester
- For the Faith Sector to be appropriately represented within the wider Third Sector.

This report will be in three sections

- Section one will give the overall frequency analysis
- Section two will contain the local area analysis, based on the four Cheshire West and Chester locality boundaries
- Section three will contain area based case studies

Where possible within this report comparisons will be made to the findings from the previous survey. However, between 2010 and 2013 Cheshire West and Chester altered their locality boundaries so direct comparison will not be possible in all areas.

In December 2011 The Government announced its Whole Place Community Budgets programme. West Cheshire was one of four areas selected nationally to pilot this programme. The programme was called Altogether Better. The final section of faith audit questionnaire asked faith groups to identify any activities they were providing which supported the five key themes within the Altogether Better programme.

Section One

Overall Frequency Analysis

Overall Findings

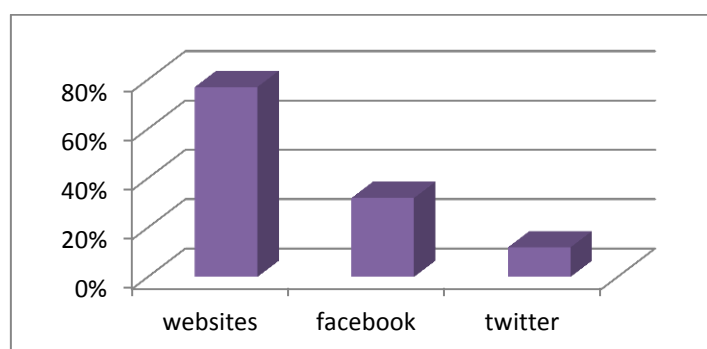
Table 1: Questionnaire distribution and responses by faith tradition for 2013, compared to 2010

Faith Tradition	Sent to	replied	2013 % replied	2010 percentage & Number replied
Anglican	92	39	42%	59% (54)
Baptist	6	4	67%	83% (5)
Baha'i	1	1	100%	100% (1)
Buddhism	2	1	50%	50% (1)
Charismatic	4	4	100%	100% (4)
Hinduism	0	0	0%	100% (1)
Islam	1	0	0%	100% (1)
Judaism	0	0	0%	0
Methodist	35	28	80%	48% (24)
Pentecostal	6	4	67%	100% (2)
Quaker	2	2	100%	100% (1)
Roman Catholic	23	5	22%	32% (7)
Salvation Army	3	2	67%	25% (1)
sikhism	0	0	0%	100% (1)
United Reformed	15	6	40%	60% (9)
Interfaith/ projects/ Interdenominational	25	16	64%	82% (14)
Other	11	4	36%	50% (6)
Other Christian	18	6	(33%)	52% (12)

The majority of faith groups responding stated that their meeting place was a church building (77%) one respondent said they met in a home and the remaining 22% had other types of meeting places. These included on a bus, on the streets and at the locations of individual projects.

The use of websites and social media is growing among faith groups as a means of communication. Figure one shows the percentage of faith groups using one or more forms of social media.

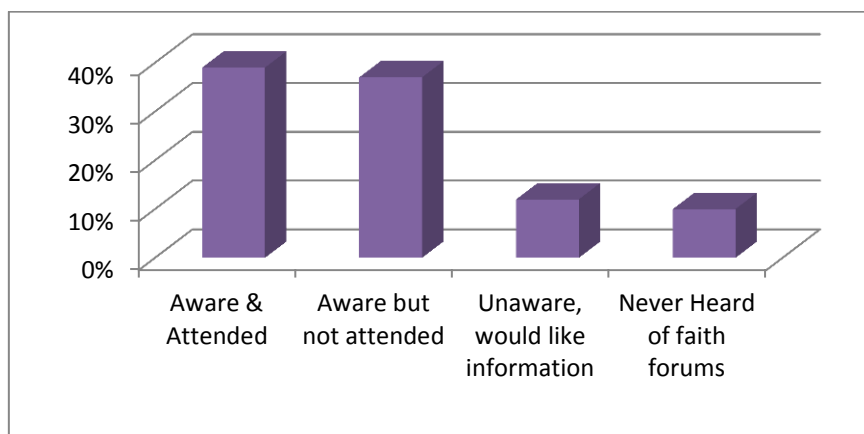
Figure 1: use of social media



75% of faith groups stated that their faith community had its own website.

Since 2010 Link Up has continued to develop relationships, highlight findings from the previous survey and share best practice through area based faith forums. Faith groups were asked if they were aware of the Link Up Faith Forums.

Figure 2: Awareness of Link Up Faith Forum



During the first half of 2013 four area based faith forums have been held, one in each of the CW&C locality areas. Overall these meetings have been attended by around 120 people. They represent faith groups, local agencies, CCG's, police, CW&C, Link Up and local and town councillors. The forums provided the opportunity of presenting the top line findings from the 2013 audit for across the borough and also for each locality area. Each forum also had a presentation from at least one local community based faith project. Local agencies and faith projects had space to display information about their work, this provided great networking and best practice sharing opportunities. At the end of each forum those who attended were asked to give their feedback. At the Ellesmere Port forum this was done by videoing the delegates and collecting a range of "vox box" comments. These were then included on the Link Up Facebook page. More traditional written comments were also collected. The main overall views about the Faith Forums were: -

- Well-structured and delivered events
- Helpful, informative and worthwhile
- Inspirational to hear what faith groups are doing
- Great networking opportunities
- Interactive and thought provoking
- Provides opportunities to work together

Barriers to delivery of community projects

During delivery of the 2012 faith forums faith groups were asked what issues they found difficult when trying to provide community based initiatives. These included the availability of transport in rural communities, planning issues when trying to change the use or interior of listed buildings, and the availability of empty authority buildings being used for faith group community activities. During this survey faith groups were asked to say if any of these issues were relevant to them.

- 20% said transport in rural areas
- 18% agreed they struggled with planning issues with listed buildings and
- 5% said trying to use empty authority buildings for faith group activities was

Other issues included

- Willing members but very elderly so cannot be as active as would like
- Lack of funding or knowledge of where to look for funding
- Space in their existing buildings for additional activities

29 Faith groups said they would like some training in how to write funding bids as a means of accessing funding sources.

Faith Directory

One of the objectives from this piece of work is to develop a directory as a single source of information through Link Up for Faith Groups within the borough of Cheshire West and Chester. 94% of the faith groups responding to this work were willing to have their details made available within a directory.

Paid staff

In the 2010 survey faith groups employed the equivalent of 150 full time staff, this rose to 251 in the current audit. An increase of 67%

People regularly attending place of worship

There has been much talk in the media in recent years about the decline in the number of people attending faith services on a regular basis. In 2010 the number of people attending worship on a regular basis was just over 10,000, if our sample was representative this equated to approximately 20,000 attending a place of worship on a weekly basis.

The same question was asked in 2013. The total number of regular worshippers recorded was just over 9,000. However, the Roman Catholic churches in Ellesmere Port didn't include their information in this year's audit and neither did the Mosque in

Chester. If their congregations have stayed the same since the last audit e.g. 860 and 500 respectively and these figure were added to those provided in 2013, the overall change in the number of regular worshippers would have increased very slightly by 0.5%

Building Assets

By their very nature faith groups are locally based, they work at the grass root level and often engage with people and groups who are hard to reach or on the margins of our society. Many of these faith groups have their own buildings and some would be willing to hire the whole building or rooms within them to other community groups or agencies. From this year's findings

- 77% have their own building
- 62% would be willing to hire rooms
- 57% are compliant with the DDA
- 69% have disabled access
- 60% have a hearing loop and
- 58% have their own car parking.

Activities provided by faith groups, economic impact

During the 2010 audit 420 community projects/ initiatives were identified, serving 11,000+ users, mobilising just over 2,000 volunteers.

In this year's audit the number of community projects/initiatives has risen by 13% to 476. The number of people regularly using these projects has risen to nearly 17,000 (a 54% increase) and the number of volunteers supporting this work has risen by 20% to 2409.

Overall this equates to nearly **396,000 volunteer hours**.

The combined **economic impact** into the Cheshire West and Chester economy for this volunteer time is nearly **£3.000,000**.

The economic value is calculated using minimum wage as the baseline for 80% of volunteer hours and twice minimum wage as the baseline of 20% of volunteer hours. This takes management roles and trustees into account, such roles would normally receive a higher economic return.

Table 2: Economic Impact by locality

	Chester	Ellesmere Port	Winsford & Northwich	Rural Communities	Totals
Volunteer hours	171,7741	37,333	113,148	73,713	395,968
Economic impact	£1,300,673	£282,685	£856,757	£553,732	£2,993,847

Direct comparisons cannot be made with the 2010 survey as area boundaries have changed. However, it is possible to compare figures for Chester and Ellesmere Port as their locality boundaries have remained the same.

- Chester: 157,271 volunteer hours giving economic value of £1,119,136 based on 2010 minimum wage
- Ellesmere Port: 31,189 volunteer hours equating to an economic value of £221,940. Value also calculated using 2010 minimum wage

Table 3: Activities, number of users, number of volunteers

Activities	number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Parents & toddlers/ preschool groups	49	1570	247	11
Youth clubs	43	1183	250	11
Uniform groups	20	783	111	2
Café facilities	29	1858	276	7
Groups for men	30	637	53	12
Groups for women	42	866	109	10
Groups for those 60+	46	1267	220	9
Befriending/visiting schemes	17	441	121	7
Transport schemes for older people	12	144	66	1
Health & Fitness groups	21	564	24	8
Gardening/recycling activities	5	13	28	1
Groups for disadvantaged	16	351	30	7
Space for contact centres	6	13	45	3
total	336	9690	1580	89
Other activities	Number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Includes flame radio with 20,000 listeners	79	25,595	633	25
	34	664	104	17
	18	822	53	4
	9	171	39	7
Sub total	140	27,252	829	53
Grand total	476	36,942	2409	142

The activities with the most users are café facilities, groups for parents and toddlers or preschool groups, groups for those aged 60 or over and youth groups.

The majority of people engaging with the “groups for disadvantaged” are 200 men accessing the Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy’s – Gay Farmers Help Line. This helpline is the only dedicated one of its kind in the UK. The work of the Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy Team will be featured as a case study later in the report.

The majority of volunteers are supporting café facilities, youth clubs, parent & toddler or preschool groups and groups for the over 60’s.

Faith groups had the opportunity of listing other activities or projects which they are engaged in which wouldn’t naturally fit into the categories listed in the “activities” box. Some of these other activities included a Christian Radio Station (Flame), music groups, craft groups, work within schools, money courses and sporting activities. One of the sporting activities was the panna football cage, a project between a church in Blacon, Chester and Cheshire Police. This project will be one of the featured locality case studies detailed later in this report. The overall figure for number of users includes 20,000 listeners from Flame Radio, a Christian station which covers parts of Cheshire West. These have been shown separately from the nearly 17,000 users recorded across all the other activities within the borough.

Community Facilities and agencies

Faith groups are aware of 114 different community facilities across West Cheshire. This is probably a minimum as some responses said there were too many to list. These included community and village halls, other faith group buildings from different traditions than the group responding to the audit.

Training Needs

To fully engage in community projects faith groups need appropriate skills to ensure they comply with statutory arrangements and are on an equal footing with other voluntary and third sector organisations. Faith groups also need the tools to help them strengthen the groups they work with and to build their capacity. Through capacity building faith groups are helped to sustain themselves so they are in a position to continue playing the fullest role they can in community engagement and social action initiatives. To this end the audit asked faith groups to identify any training needs they had.

The training needs are detailed in Table 4

Table 4: Faith group training needs

Training needs	Number
Health and safety	20
Child protection	10
Racial cultural awareness	4
Mentoring	6
Health and hygiene	20
Funding workshops	29
Youth training	9
First aid	6
Manual handling	1

These training needs could be met through the provision of numerous organisations including; Local Authority, Diocese, Cheshire Community Action or Cheshire Voluntary Action. The number of faith group saying they have training needs is relatively small. It may be appropriate to go back to all faith groups to ask once again about training needs if provision in the areas outlined in table four is being provided. Also it may be more efficient to deliver training in a central location rather than in individual locality areas if numbers remain quite small.

Links to Faith Schools

Within the audit faith groups were asked if they had any associations with faith schools, whether people went into schools regularly to help with assemblies or lessons and whether anybody from their faith community was working with schools to tackle issues of homophobia, racist incidents or other forms of hate crime. This latter question was included at the request of Cheshire West and Chester's Equality and Diversity Officer.

- Yes, there is a faith school associated with our place of worship = 33 (13%)
- Yes, we regularly help with assemblies and lessons = 38 (16%)
- No, we have no contact with faith school = 46 (19%)
- Issues of homophobia are not specifically covered but if issues arise they are discussed as needed.

The majority of faith groups did not have to tackle issues of homophobia but as can be seen above most said that if anything arose it would be covered as part of their regular visits to schools.

Links with other agencies

Although some faith groups may be located in rural or isolated areas a large proportion were aware of other agencies, groups or networks which they could

engage with. Some of these were national bodies but others were locally based groups.

- CVA 20 (8%)
- Link Up 63 (26%)
- West Cheshire interfaith forum 15 (6%)
- Churches together groups 77 (31%)
- Cheshire Community Action 10 (4%)

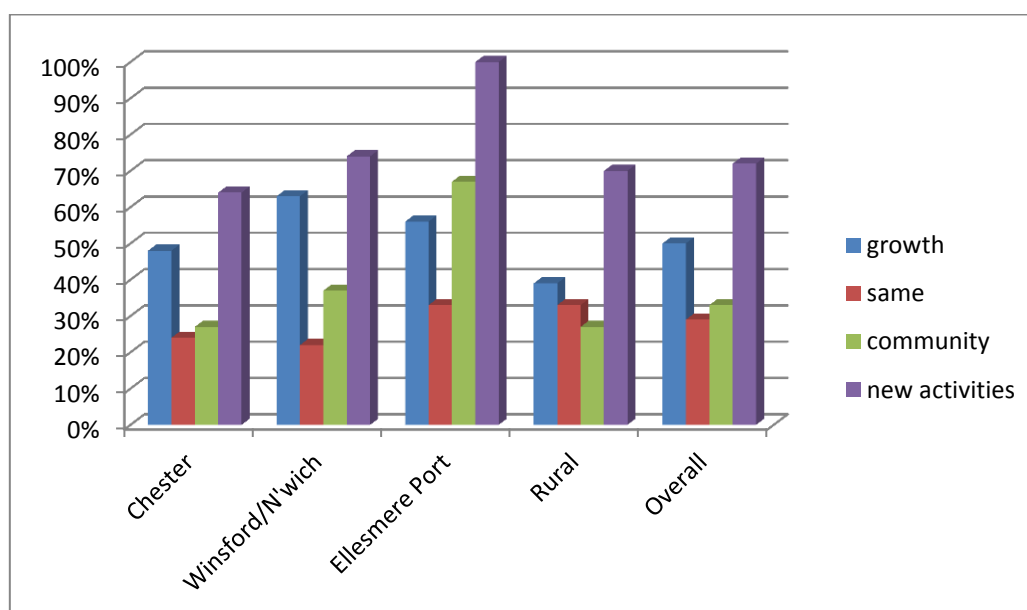
Over 77 other organisations were named by the faith groups as agencies or networks they engaged with.

Faith communities compared to two years ago.

Much has changed in our economic climate over the last few years. Many smaller charities and voluntary groups have lost funding and ceased to operate. This research wanted to identify what had changed among faith communities over the last few years. Whether the faith group had changed in size, what new or different activities were they providing compared to two years ago, or if activities had stopped.

84% of the faith groups responding commented upon how things had changed within their communities over the last two years. Of these, 50% said their congregations had grown, 29% said theirs had remained the same. One third said they were doing more work in their communities and 72% said they were providing new activities both for their congregations and the local community.

Figure 3: Faith community changes by locality



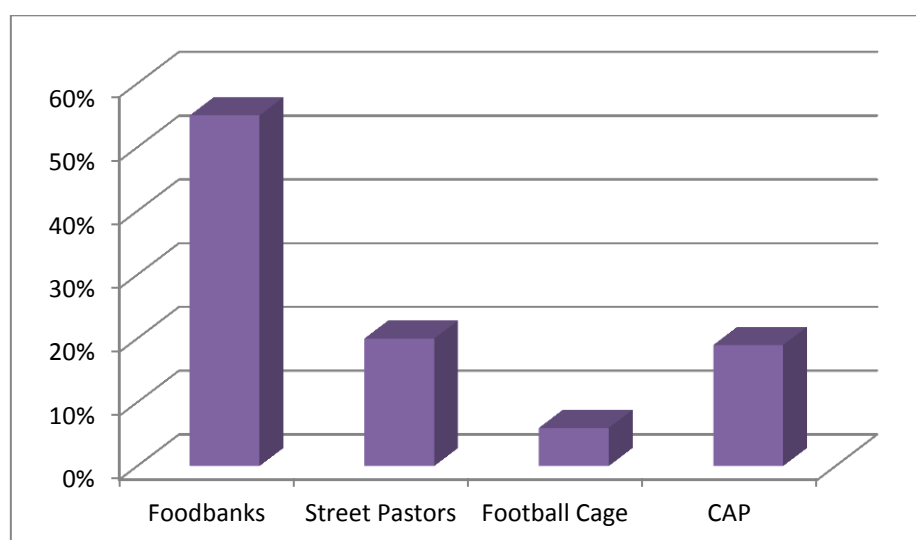
Across the borough 10% of faith groups responding said they had introduced “Messy Church” into their communities and this was having a significant impact on the numbers of people engaging with the faith groups on a regular basis. Messy church is a form of church for all ages, children and adults. It involves creativity, celebration and hospitality. Most Messy Churches meet once a month. It’s primarily for people who don’t already belong to another form of church and can meet in a church or other community buildings. It brings families together through a reasonably long creative time on a biblical theme, includes a short celebration, story, songs, and prayer-time and concludes with a meal. It’s a very relaxed style of Sunday service, and from the responses seems to be having a positive impact within local communities.

Faith communities have always responded to the social needs of their local communities, one of the major developments over the last two to three years has been the growth of Foodbanks. There are three within the borough and more planned. Within the UK 1 in 5 people are living below the poverty line and struggling to put food on their tables, the aim of foodbanks is to provide emergency food and support to local people in crisis. ¹

¹ statistic taken from Chester & Ellesmere Port foodbank leaflet

Faith groups were asked if they or their members were supporting Foodbanks. They were also asked if they were supporting Street Pastors, Christians against Poverty (CAP) or the Blacon Panna football cage project. Their responses are shown in figure 4

Figure 4: Faith groups supporting foodbanks, street pastors, football cage project and CAP



67 (55%) faith groups said they were supporting foodbanks, this could be through collecting food, raising awareness of local centres or volunteering at distribution

centres. The Mid Cheshire Foodbank will be one of the case studies featured in more detail later on in this report.

There are Christians against Poverty centre and money courses around the borough. These provide free debt and budgeting advice, 23 (19%) faith groups are supporting CAP. Street Pastors are well established in Chester and Ellesmere Port and discussions are taking place in Winsford about introducing Street Pastors there. The initiative in Ellesmere Port and Chester has a significant impact locally and overall 25 (20%) faith groups said they were supporting street pastors.

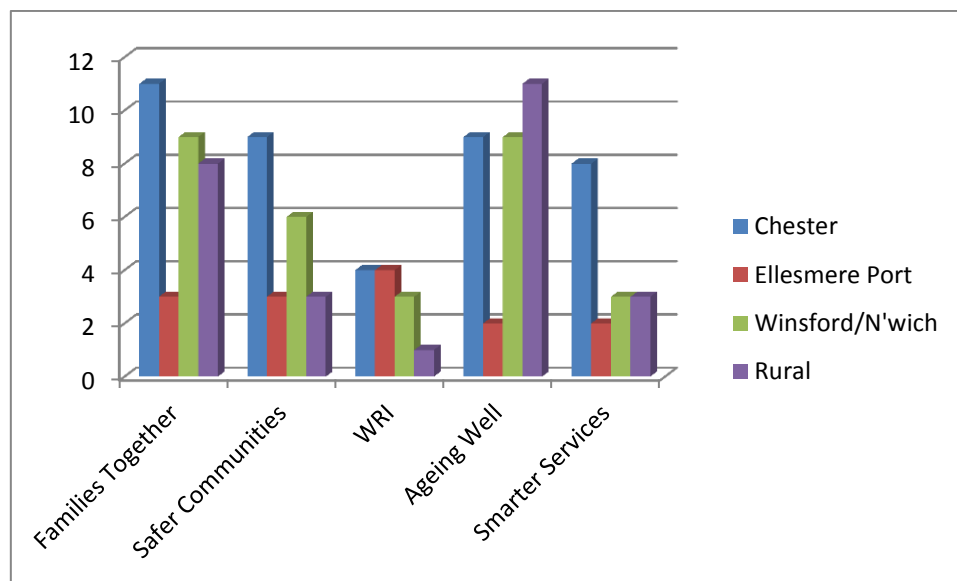
Altogether Better Programme

Cheshire West and Chester were one of four national whole place pilot areas for the Altogether Better programme. This programme involved reviewing local public services alongside partner organisations in the public, private, voluntary and community sector. This research wanted to establish the number of faith groups who were providing community activities which supported the five Altogether Better themes.

Table 5: Faith group activities which support the Altogether Better themes

Themes	Number	percentage
Families Together Project: supporting families with complex needs “troubled families”	31	25%
Safer Communities: Activities to reduce anti-social behaviour or support victims of domestic abuse or volunteering in relation to community safety	21	17%
Work Ready Individuals: 16-24 year olds and over 50's projects helping with interview skills, CV writing, work experience, internships	12	10%
Ageing Well: support for older people, e.g. befriending groups, snow angels, village schemes	31	25%
Smarter Services: working together in the same locations e.g. CAB, Credit Unions, contact centres, shared IT or premises	16	13%

Figure 5: Results by locality



The greatest number of projects supporting “families together” were recorded by Chester based faith groups. Rural communities had the greatest number of faith groups supporting the “ageing well” theme. Overall the smallest of projects were supporting the “work ready individuals” theme.

Section 2

Results by Cheshire West And Chester Locality Areas

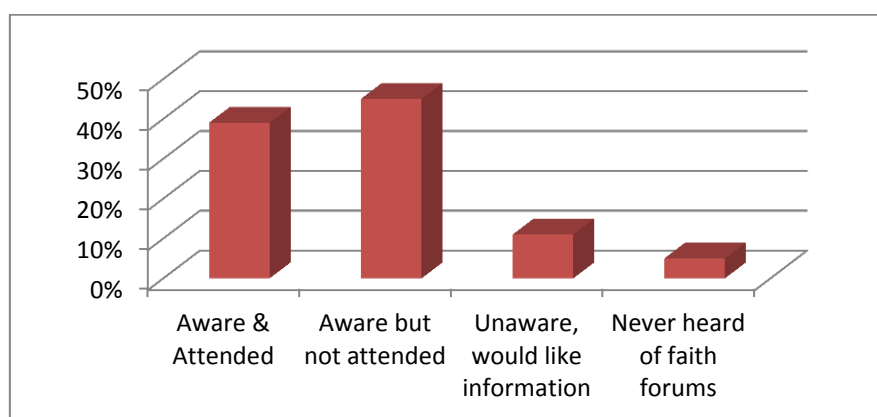
Chester Locality Area Results

Seventy two questionnaires were distributed to all faiths in the Chester locality area, thirty nine were returned giving a response rate of 54%. The majority 90% were from the Christian faith tradition, but responses were also received from Quaker, Baha'i, and Humanist traditions.

Most faith groups are using social media to communicate, 85% stated they had their own websites.

Since 2010 Link Up have been developing relationships with faith groups and have used area based faith forums as a means of bringing different faith groups together to highlight the range of community projects being provided, share good practice and identify barriers which faith groups may be facing. Awareness of these Link Up Faith Forums is shown below.

Figure 2.1: Awareness of Link Up Faith Forums



Barriers to delivery of community projects

- 18% said that planning issues relating to listed buildings was a difficulty for them as they tried to deliver community projects
- 10% had issues with CW&C over the use of empty authority buildings when trying to deliver projects
- 3% said access to transport in rural communities was an issue.

Other issues included

- Limited resources (funding)
- Access issues relating to their buildings
- Age profile of own faith community – some members working and not available, some elderly and not physically able to get involved
- Cost of warehousing for foodbank in the long term
- Lack of public awareness about what was available
- Having the word “Christian” in funding bids

Building Assets

67% of the faith groups in Chester have their own building and all of these said they had rooms which could be hired by community groups or agencies. The majority (67%) said their buildings were compliant with DDA regulations. From the faith groups responding 85% of the buildings has disabled access and 65% have parking facilities.

Activities provided by Chester faith groups and their economic impact

During the 2010 faith sector audit 213 different projects were identified, supported by 1015 volunteers, between them they provided 157,000 volunteer hours.

In this year's audit the number of projects has reduced slightly to 171 community projects. Approximately 9,350 users are engaging with these projects on a regular basis. Overall number of volunteers has risen by 4% to 1054.

These volunteers provide nearly 172,000 volunteer hours into the Chester economy.

The economic value from all this activity is **£1,300,673**. This is a 16% increase compared to 2010.

The economic value is calculated using minimum wage as the baseline for 80% of volunteer hours and twice minimum wage as the baseline of 20% of volunteer hours. This takes management roles and trustees into account, such roles would normally receive a higher economic return.

In addition to the volunteers engaged in these community projects, the full time equivalent of 154 people are employed by faith groups within Chester.

Table 2.1 Activities, number of users and number of volunteers

Activities	number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Parents & toddlers/ preschool groups	16	696	126	4
Youth clubs	16	634	129	4
Uniform groups	6	282	54	0
Café facilities	15	1160	188	3
Groups for men	7	157	13	2
Groups for women	11	194	28	3
Groups for those 60+	19	512	93	3
Befriending/visiting schemes	4	112	23	0
Transport schemes for older people	5	78	34	0
Health & Fitness groups	10	220	4	5
Gardening/recycling	3	12	25	1

activities				
Groups for disadvantaged	9	42	14	2
Space for contact centres	2	12	25	1
total	123	4,111	756	28
Other activities	Number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Activities 1	32	4797	241	9
Activities 2	10	177	32	4
Activities 3	5	263	13	1
Activities 4	1	5	12	1
Sub total	48	5,242	298	15
Grand total	171	9,353	1,054	43

The greatest number of activities and users are for café facilities, activities for young people and activities for older people.

Activities which come under the “other” category included; sporting activities, creative arts groups, education groups, and walking groups.

A whole range of community facilities were identified by the Chester faith groups, overall 42 were listed which included, community centres, children’s centres and buildings belonging to other faith groups.

Training needs

The number of faith groups saying they would like training was 31, the areas of training required was:-

- Funding Workshops 8
- Health & Safety 6
- Health and hygiene 6
- First aid 2
- Racial / cultural awareness 2
- Child protection 5
- Youth training 2

Discussions will take place with CW&C, Chester Diocese, Learning Together Cheshire and Warrington and other agencies to see which are the most appropriate to meet these training needs. This training will help develop the skills and capacity of faith groups in the Chester locality.

Links to local schools

Many faith groups are very active in their involvement with local schools through weekly visits, helping with school assemblies or building links during festival times. From this audit

- 8 faith groups said there was a faith school associated with their place of worship
- 11 regularly go into schools to help with assemblies and lessons
- 17 said they had no contact with faith schools and
- Several faith groups said if issues of homophobia, racism or hate crime arose they would tackle it as part of their visits. Responses from non-Christian faith groups said these issues would be tackled through the Harmony Project.

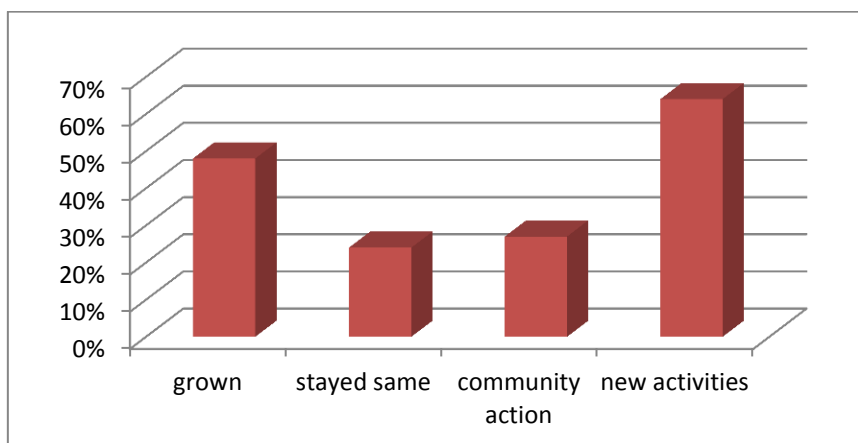
The Harmony Project is an initiative led by the West Cheshire Inter Faith Forum which aims to raise awareness of and to celebrate the diversity of faith and belief groups within Cheshire West whilst strengthening links between all faiths. They visit schools and take part in lessons and assemblies where they have the opportunity to raise awareness of such issues and can promote tolerance and understanding.

Links to other agencies, networks or groups

The network which the majority of Chester based faith groups said they had links with was Link Up (64%), followed closely by Churches Together Groups (62%). 12 said CVA and 9 had links with West Cheshire Interfaith Forum. Overall a further 32 organisations were listed by the Chester faith groups as networks they engaged with.

Faith communities compared to two years ago.

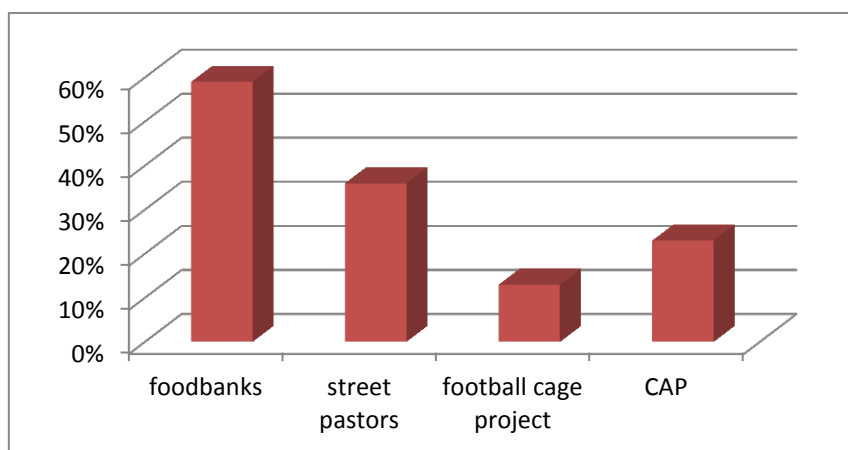
Figure 2.2



48% of Chester faith groups said they had grown over the last two years. Just under one quarter (24%) said their groups had remained the same. Community action has grown by 27% during this period. These community activities included school

pastors, debt counselling, foodbanks, bread making, self-esteem work and messy church. Overall there has been a 64% growth in new activities being provided in the area.

Figure 2.3 Faith groups supporting foodbanks, street pastors, football cage project or CAP



One of the major growth activities has been through the support of foodbanks, 59% said their faith group or members of their group were supporting the Chester foodbank.

Altogether Better Programme

Overall 44 activities are provided by Chester based faith groups in support of the Altogether Better themes. See below

Table 2.2 Faith group activities supporting the Altogether Better Themes

Themes	Number	percentage
Families Together Project: supporting families with complex needs "troubled families"	12	27%
Safe Communities: Activities to reduce anti-social behaviour or support victims of domestic abuse or volunteering in relation to community safety	10	22%
Work Ready Individuals: 16-24 year olds and over 50's projects helping with interview skills, CV writing, work experience, internships	4	9%
Ageing Well: support for older people, e.g. befriending groups, snow angels, village schemes	10	22%
Smarter Services: working together in the same locations e.g. CAB, Credit Unions, contact centres, shared IT or premises	8	18%

Percentages are a proportion of all 44 responses received from Chester faith groups

Examples of projects/ initiatives include

Families Together: parenting courses for dads, counselling services, connecting with families through messy church

Safer communities: Street pastors, night church, Good Childhood conversation project, football cage project

Work Ready individuals: internships, mentoring and volunteer work experience

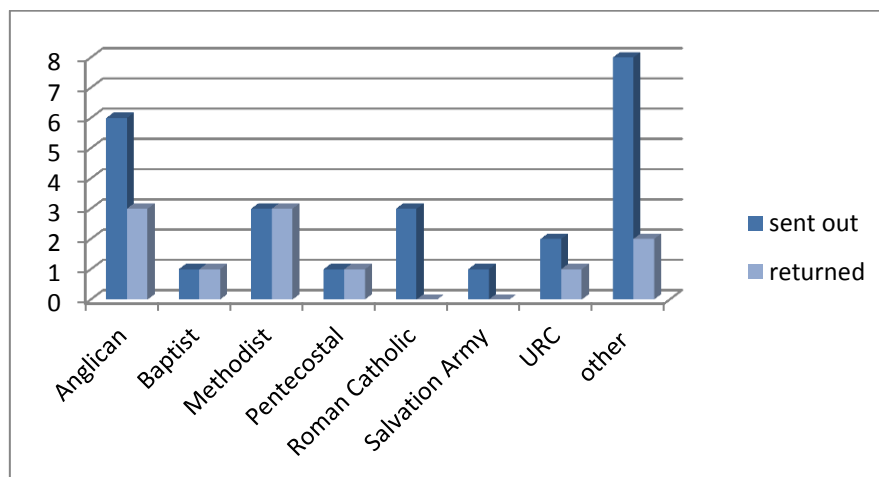
Ageing Well: befriending groups, shopping, home visiting schemes, transport

Smarter Services: links with Credit Unions, shared office space

Ellesmere Port Locality Area Results

Twenty five questionnaires were distributed to all faith groups in the Ellesmere Port locality area, eleven were returned giving a response rate of 44%. All 11 were from Christian tradition faith groups.

Figure 2.4 Number of questionnaire returned by denomination

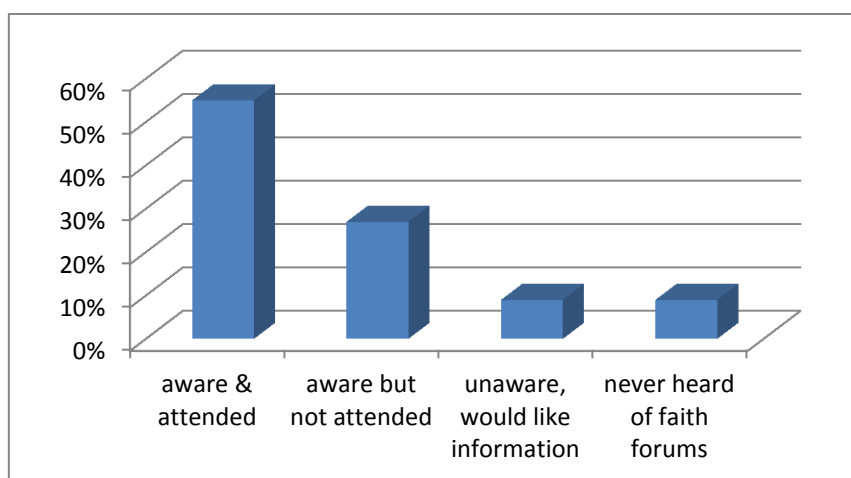


“other” relates to both Christian faith denominations other than the ones identified above and other faith.

64% of the Ellesmere Port groups said they had their own website; this is lower than the borough wide figure of 75%.

Link Up has continued to develop relationships with local faith groups through area based faith forums. These meetings provide an opportunity of raising awareness about local projects, building relationships across denominations, faiths and with statutory agencies. They also share good practice and identify barriers. Awareness of faith forums is shown below.

Figure 2.5 Awareness of Link Up Faith Forums



Barriers to delivering community projects included:-

- Access issues
- “fear factor” in clients (embarrassed about seeking help)
- Sorting governance issues
- Limited resources
- Limited by older age range of faith group

Building Assets

64% of the faith groups said they owned their own building, 72% said they had rooms which could be hired by other groups and agencies. The majority 64% said their building was DDA compliant. 55% said their building had disabled access and 45% said they had car parking space.

Activities provided by Ellesmere Port faith groups and their Economic Impact

Between 2010 and 2013 the Cheshire West and Chester locality boundaries for Ellesmere Port remained the same. It is therefore possible to make comparisons with the findings from the 2010 audit.

30 different community projects were provided by Ellesmere Port faith groups from the findings of the 2010 Faith Sector Audit. 218 volunteers were supporting these projects and between them they were providing over 31,000 volunteer hours.

From the current research 46 projects have been identified an increase of 53%. Approximately 1,644 people are engaging with these projects, which are supported by 262 volunteers. 20% more volunteers than in 2010.

These volunteers provide on an annual basis 37,333 voluntary hours into the Ellesmere Port economy

The economic value of this activity is **£282,685**. A 28% increase compared to 2010.

The economic value is calculated using minimum wage as the baseline for 80% of volunteer hours and twice minimum wage as the baseline of 20% of volunteer hours. This takes management roles and trustees into account, such roles would normally receive a higher economic return.

In addition to the volunteers engaged in these community projects, the full time equivalent of 13 people are employed by faith groups within Ellesmere Port.

Table 2.3 Activities, number of users and number of volunteers

Activities	number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Parents & toddlers/ preschool groups	4	99	17	0
Youth clubs	4	95	20	2
Uniform groups	5	213	18	1
Café facilities	2	248	8	1
Groups for men	4	73	4	2
Groups for women	5	115	11	1
Groups for those 60+	2	152	20	1
Befriending/visiting schemes	2	22	0	1
Transport schemes for older people	0	0	0	0
Health & Fitness groups	1	30	0	1
Gardening/recycling activities	1	1	3	0
Groups for disadvantaged	1	38	0	1
Space for contact centres	1	0	20	1
total	32	1086	121	12
Other activities	Number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Activities 1	7	93	113	4
Activities 2	3	75	15	3
Activities 3	2	360	1	1
Activities 4	2	30	12	1
Sub total	14	558	141	9
Grand total	46	1644	262	21

One of the main contributors to the increased activity is Trinity Methodist. Since their major refurbishment was completed for Easter Sunday 2013, the church is now open every day. They provide locally grown and freshly cooked food in their café, as well as craft, art and fitness activities. They are also the distribution centre for the Ellesmere Port Foodbank. Overall their volunteer team has grown to 62 over the last nine – twelve months.

One of the major “other activities” relates to The Hope Journey. This is an exciting, interactive and engaging way of partnering local churches and local schools in the delivery of certain areas of the Religious Education syllabus. Children are invited to meet the characters of bible stories; volunteers dress up as bible characters and can answer questions raised by the children.

Training Needs

Faith groups identified 12 training needs, there were:-

- Mentoring training 3
- Funding workshop 2
- Health & Hygiene 2
- Health & Safety 1
- Child Protection 1
- Racial / cultural awareness 1
- Youth training 1
- First aid 1

Discussions will take place with CW&C, Chester Diocese, Learning Together Cheshire and Warrington and other agencies to see which are the most appropriate to meet these training needs. This training will help develop the skills and capacity of faith groups in Ellesmere Port.

Links to faith schools

Three faith groups said there was a faith school associated with their place of worship. Four said they went into schools to help with lessons or assemblies, while four said they had no contact. When asked about tackling homophobia, racist incidents or other forms of hate crime it was the Ellesmere Port Bus Project who said they covered these sorts of issues as they travelled around the area

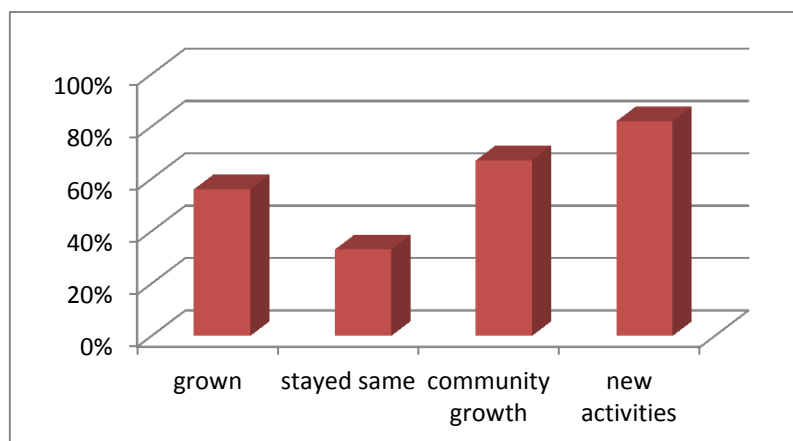
The Bus Project provides young people from chaotic home backgrounds with a safe place to enjoy refreshments, explore faith, relax and chat to people about any difficulties that are worrying them. Many of the young people they work with are facing difficulties at home, so the bus provides them with a place where they can chat to adults who care for them and have time for them.

Links to other agencies, networks or groups

For the majority (91%) the group or network which they were most aware of was Churches Together Groups, 64% had connections to Link Up, and 18% had connections with CVA or Cheshire Community Action. A further eight different groups were identified. One faith group said they had no connections with other groups or agencies.

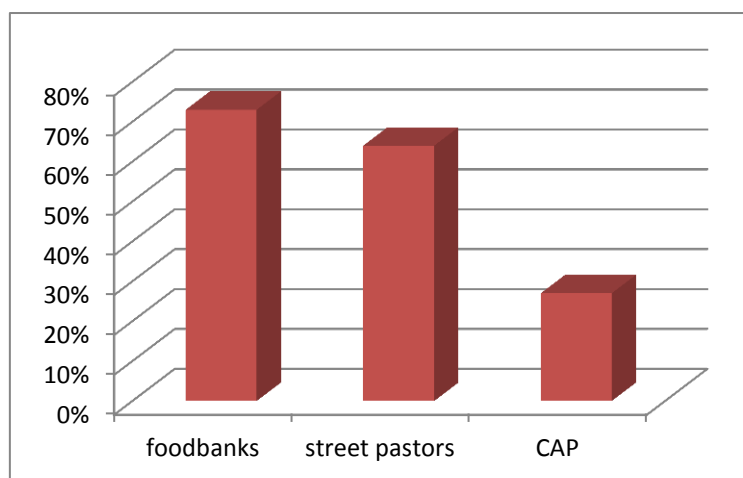
Faith communities compared to two years ago.

Figure 2.6



56% of Ellesmere Port faith groups say they had grown over the last two years. About one third have remained the same. Community Action has grown by 67% over this period and 82% said they were providing new activities since 2010.

Figure 2.7 Faith groups supporting foodbanks, street pastors or CAP



The greatest involvement from Ellesmere Port faith groups is through support of the local foodbank (73%).

64% are supporting Street Pastors with 24% supporting Christians Against Poverty (CAP).

CAP is a national charity, working across the UK to lift people out of poverty and debt. They offer free debt counselling through a network of centres. One of which is based in Ellesmere Port

Altogether Better Programme

Cheshire West and Chester's Local Authority have developed five key themes within the Altogether Better Programme. From this research 14 different projects provided by faith groups in Ellesmere Port have been identified as supporting these themes.

Table 2.4 Faith group activities supporting the Altogether Better Themes

Themes	Number	percentage
Families Together Project: supporting families with complex needs "troubled families"	3	21%
Safe Communities: Activities to reduce anti-social behaviour or support victims of domestic abuse or volunteering in relation to community safety	3	21%
Work Ready Individuals: 16-24 year olds and over 50's projects helping with interview skills, CV writing, work experience, internships	4	29%
Ageing Well: support for older people, e.g. befriending groups, snow angels, village schemes	2	14%
Smarter Services: working together in the same locations e.g. CAB, Credit Unions, contact centres, shared IT or premises	2	14%

Percentages shown are as a proportion of all 14 activities provided by Ellesmere Port faith groups

Examples of projects/ initiatives include:-

Families Together: work with young mums, placements and support

Safe Communities: Bus project helping to reduce ASB, establishing Restorative Justice programme, working with YOT's

Work Ready Individuals: boat project developing work skills, working with NEET students and offering placements, mentoring, personal development courses

Ageing Well: agility programme, live@home work, links to care home, chaplaincy work

Smarter Services: share premises, working with children's centre.

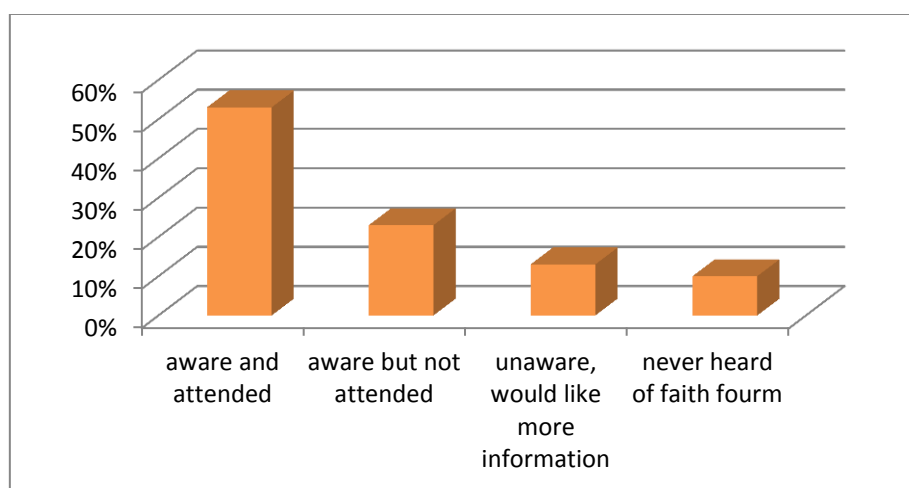
Winsford and Northwich Locality Area Results

Forty seven questionnaires were distributed across the Winsford and Northwich locality area. Thirty were returned, giving a response rate of 64%. The majority 93% were from faith groups following the Christian tradition. But the Buddhist centre in Northwich also responded as did one project which stated it was multi-faith.

The majority of faith groups are using social media to communicate, 73% said they had their own websites.

Part of the on-going work of Link Up is to bring faith groups together at area based faith forums. This research wanted to establish awareness of faith forums in the Winsford and Northwich areas.

Figure 2.8 Awareness of Link Up Faith Forums



The aim of the faith forums is to; bring faith groups together to learn about the range of activities provided locally, to share good practice, discuss barriers when trying to deliver community projects and to network with other faith groups, community agencies and statutory bodies. 53% are aware of the faith forums and have attended. 13% are unaware but would like more information.

Discussions during 2012 faith forums identified a number of issues which caused faith groups difficulties when they were delivering projects. Three of these key issues were included in the 2013 survey. Faith groups had the opportunity of saying whether these issues were relevant to them.

- 47% said transport in rural communities was a barrier
- 23% stated that planning issues with listed buildings was relevant
- 7% said approaching the local authority to use empty building was an issue for them

Other barriers included

- Lack of resources both people and finance

- Funding for new kitchen
- No permanent base during the week
- Lack of transport

Building Assets

Many locally based faith groups have their own building and some of these have rooms which could be used by community groups or agencies. From this locality;

- 87% have their own building
- 70% have rooms which could be hired by community groups
- 60% are compliant with DDA
- 77% have disabled access and
- 67% have car parking

Activities provided by faith groups and their Economic Impact

The locality boundaries for Winsford and Northwich have changed between 2010 and 2013, it is therefore not possible to give area comparisons between the two surveys.

From this year's analysis 118 different community projects/ activities have been identified. These are being used on a regular basis by 2,529 people. The projects are supported by 597 volunteers.

On an annual basis this would equate to **113,148** volunteer hours.

The economic value into the Winsford and Northwich area from all of this volunteer time is **£856, 757**

The economic value is calculated using minimum wage as the baseline for 80% of volunteer hours and twice minimum wage as the baseline of 20% of volunteer hours. This takes management roles and trustees into account, such roles would normally receive a higher economic return.

In addition to the volunteers engaged in these community projects, the full time equivalent of 42 people are employed by faith groups within Winsford and Northwich.

Table 2.5 Activities, number of users and number of volunteers

Activities	number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Parents & toddlers/ preschool groups	14	295	53	4
Youth clubs	12	216	55	4
Uniform groups	6	249	34	0
Café facilities	4	142	30	2
Groups for men	10	213	22	6
Groups for women	11	230	39	4
Groups for those 60+	9	173	31	0
Befriending/visiting schemes	9	267	90	6
Transport schemes for older people	4	24	21	1
Health & Fitness groups	4	203	9	2
Gardening/recycling activities	0	0	0	0
Groups for disadvantaged	4	71	12	3
Space for contact centres	1	0	0	0
total	88	2083	396	32
Other activities	Number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Activities 1	18	281	166	5
Activities 2	8	130	31	2
Activities 3	3	35	4	1
Activities 4	1	0	0	1
Sub total	30	446	201	9
Grand total	118	2529	597	41

The greatest numbers of groups available are for parents & toddlers / preschool, youth groups and groups for women. Overall the greatest numbers of users are for parents and toddlers, befriending schemes and unformed groups. Ninety people are recorded as supporting the befriending/visiting schemes. Across all of these activities the numbers of volunteers could be higher as quite a few faith groups said they were unable to give exact numbers for volunteers and users as there were so many. Since 2010 41 new activities have begun.

Looking more closely at the “other activities” categories these included, Mid Cheshire foodbank, community choirs, messy church, craft groups, sporting groups and activities for the disabled.

Faith groups were aware of over 20 other organisations that provided community facilities in the areas they worked in. These included Children’s Centre, Memorial

Hall, and local village halls. However, quite a few faith groups didn't know of other local facilities and some said there were either none or what was provided was a number of miles away from their area and difficult for people from their parish to get to.

Training Needs

Faith groups identified a number of different training needs from this year's audit:-

- Funding Workshops 12
- Health & Hygiene 9
- Health & Safety 8
- Youth Training 4
- Child Protection 2
- Mentoring Training 1
- Racial/cultural awareness 1
- Manual handling 1

The range of training needs reflect the variety of activities faith groups provide and their desire to gain additional funding so they can continue to provide even more community activities. Training faith groups in the areas identified would help with capacity building in this sector. Discussions will be held with CW&C, Chester Diocese, Learning Together Warrington & Cheshire, as well as other agencies to see which would be the most appropriate to support faith groups with these training needs.

Links to faith schools

Thirteen faith groups said there was a faith school associated with their place of worship. Ten said they went into schools to help with lessons and assemblies, while six said they had no contact with faith schools.

If issues of homophobia, racist incidents or hate crime arose some faith groups said they would help with these through attending anti-bullying weeks at school or getting their youth worker to cover issues as part of their links with schools. Others said these sorts of issues would be covered by school policy and procedures.

Links to other agencies

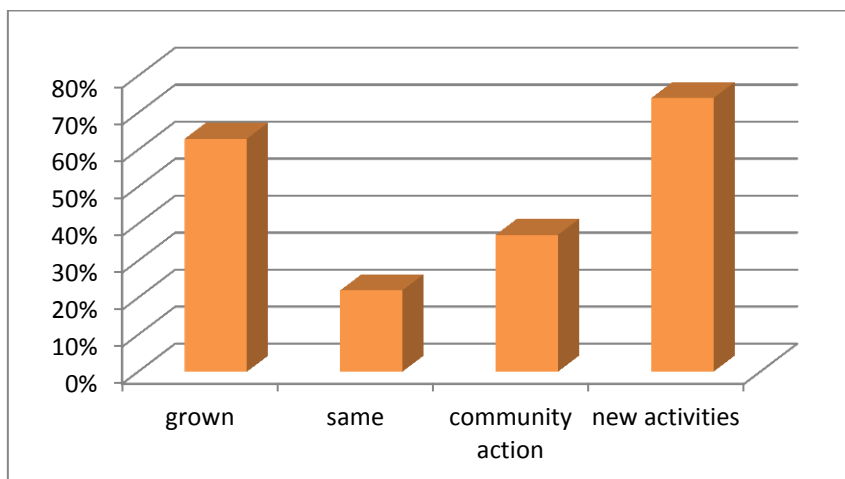
Some faith groups will try to link with other agencies as a way of connecting to local networks or working together.

- Link Up 67%
- Churches Together Groups 67%
- West Cheshire Interfaith Forum 10%
- CVA 7%
- Cheshire Community Action 7%

Faith community compared to two years ago.

Both globally and national the past few years has seen very challenging economic times. Many charities and smaller organisations which have been providing support to local communities have either lost their funding or seen a dramatic reduction. This has, effected what they have been able to do. This research wanted to establish how faith groups had faired over the last two years. Whether or not they had changed in size, what activities they were providing, how community interaction had changed, and if any new activities had started.

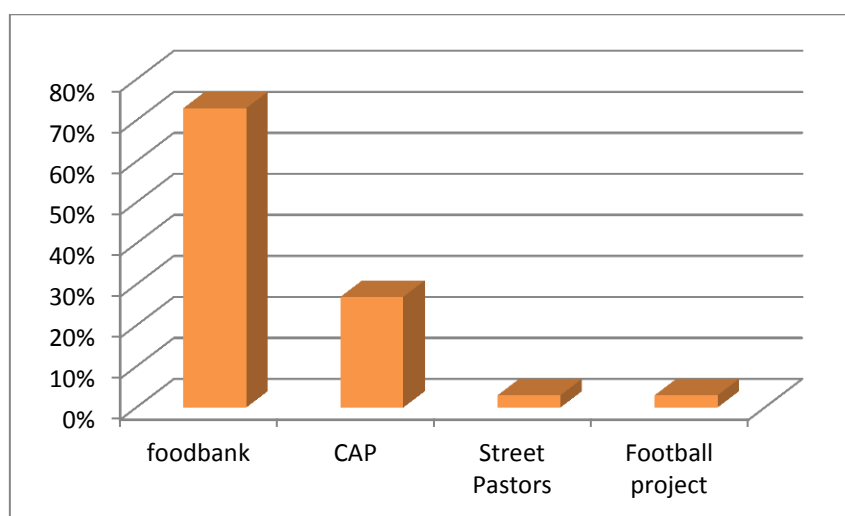
Figure 2.9 Faith community changes



63% said their congregations had grown over the last two years, 22% said it had remained the same. 37% said their community action had increased and 74% said they were doing new activities for their local communities compared to two years ago. These new activities included

- School group visits and daytime classes (Buddhist Centre)
- Foodbanks
- Parenting courses and
- Messy church

Figure 2.10 Faith groups supporting foodbanks, CAP, Street pastors or Football cage



Mid Cheshire Foodbank opened in 2012 and many of the faith groups in Northwich and Winsford are supporting it. From this audit 73% said they were involved with the local foodbank. This could be through food collections, faith group members volunteering at distribution centres or chatting to people while they wait for their three day food collections to be organised. People involved with Christians against Poverty (CAP) centres or money advice courses are linking with the Mid Cheshire Foodbank to try and support people beyond their initial contact.

Altogether Better Programme

Themes	Number	percentage
Families Together Project: supporting families with complex needs "troubled families"	10	33%
Safe Communities: Activities to reduce anti-social behaviour or support victims of domestic abuse or volunteering in relation to community safety	6	20%
Work Ready Individuals: 16-24 year olds and over 50's projects helping with interview skills, CV writing, work experience, internships	3	10%
Ageing Well: support for older people, e.g. befriending groups, snow angels, village schemes	11	37%
Smarter Services: working together in the same locations e.g. CAB, Credit Unions, contact centres, shared IT or premises	3	10%

Percentages shown are based on all 30 questionnaires from Winsford & Northwich faith groups

Overall Winsford and Northwich faith groups say they are providing 33 project or initiatives which support the Altogether Better themes.

Examples of projects included:-

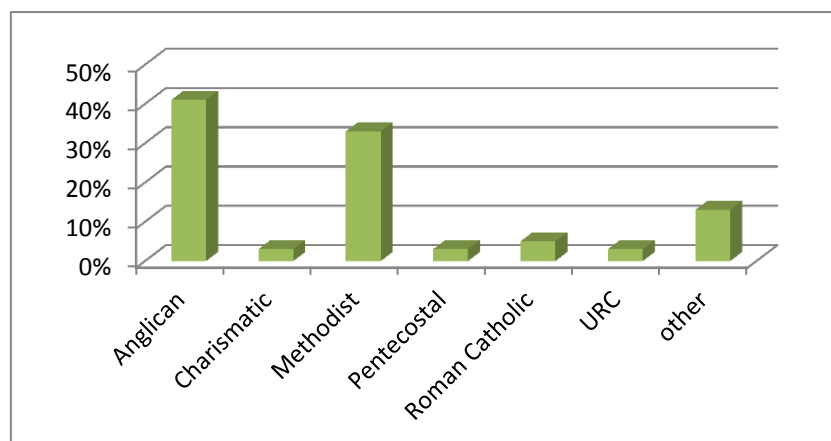
- **Families Together:** parenting course, visits by church members, support for local girls shelter
- **Safer communities:** detached youth work, youth café, working with local PCSO's
- **Work Ready Individuals:** free courses for those setting up businesses, job club, work experience
- **Ageing Well:** befriending and visiting schemes, drop in café,
- **Smarter Services:** operate out of CW&C business enterprise facility, working with schools and colleges

Rural Communities

101 questionnaires were distributed among rural faith communities across the borough. 41 were returned, giving a response rate of 41%. The majority 95% were from Christian faith groups, the two remaining forms came for groups who referred to themselves as all-faith.

Responses by Christian denomination are detailed in figure 2.11

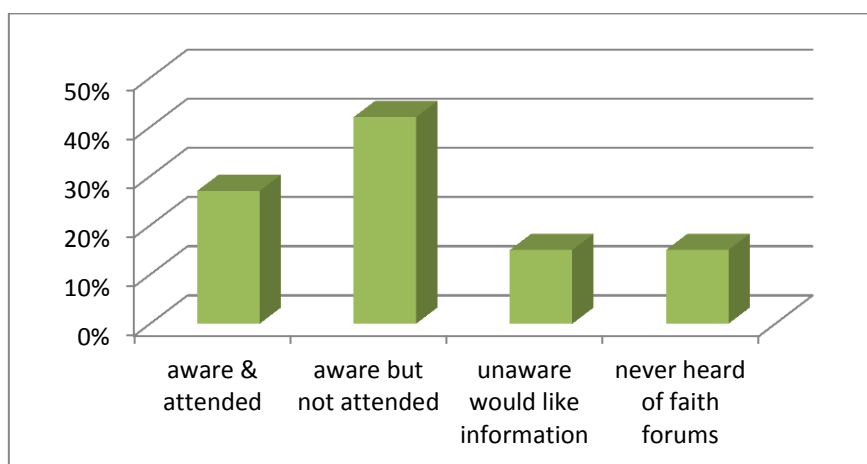
Figure 2.11 Responses by Christian Denomination



71% of the faith groups said they had a website, 15% were using Facebook to raise the profile of what they were doing but only 5% were using Twitter.

Link Up continues to bring faith groups together through locally based faith forums. These forums provide an opportunity for faith groups to network and share information about what community projects they are delivering. They also provide an opportunity to share good practice, discuss barriers which prevent faith groups from delivering projects and meet people from other faith traditions, statutory agencies or voluntary groups.

Figure 2.12 Awareness of Link Up Faith Forums



The geographical area covered by the rural communities' locality is substantially large. This could be one reason why although faith groups have heard about faith forums they have not attended. Even though the forums are provided in rural locations this is still quite a distance for some groups to travel.

During the faith forum meetings there is an opportunity to discuss issues which prevent faith groups from delivering community projects. Three particular issues were identified during the 2012 round of forum meetings and these were included in the 2013 audit.

- 24% said that transport in rural communities impacted on the community projects they delivered
- 20% said planning issues with listed buildings
- None of the response from this audit identified empty authority buildings being used by faith groups as an issue.

Other things which did impact included: -

- Lack of facilities e.g. toilet, kitchen
- Lack of finances
- Not enough volunteers
- Size of building
- Building in conservation area, therefore restricted in what they could do
- The need for cheaper transport for younger people to get to activities faith groups wanted to provide
- Access in rural areas to foodbanks as people in need could not afford transport to get to distribution centres

Building Assets

In many rural areas the faith group building is the only premises available for meetings and activities. From this year's audit

- 83% have their own building
- 49% have rooms which can be hired by community groups, 5% are considering letting their rooms be used
- 54% are compliant with DDA
- 63% have disabled access and
- 56% have car parking

Activities provided by faith groups and their Economic Impact

The locality boundaries for Rural Communities have changed since the 2010 audit; it is therefore not possible to give area comparisons between the two surveys.

From this year's analysis 142 different community projects/ activities have been identified. These are regularly being used by 3,415 users, in addition Flame Christian Radio say they have 20,000 listeners for this area. The projects are supported by 496 volunteers.

On an annual basis this equates to **73,713** volunteer hours.

The economic value into the Rural Communities area from all of this voluntary time is **£553,732**

The economic value is calculated using minimum wage as the baseline for 80% of volunteer hours and twice minimum wage as the baseline of 20% of volunteer hours. This takes management roles and trustees into account, such roles would normally receive a higher economic return.

In addition to the volunteers engaged in these community projects, the full time equivalent of 40 people are employed by faith groups across the Rural area.

Table 2.6 Activities, number of users and number of volunteers

Activities	number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Parents & toddlers/ preschool groups	15	480	51	3
Youth clubs	11	238	46	1
Uniform groups	3	39	5	1
Café facilities	8	308	50	1
Groups for men	9	194	14	2
Groups for women	15	309	31	2
Groups for those 60+	16	448	76	4
Befriending/visiting schemes	2	40	8	0
Transport schemes for older people	3	42	11	0
Health & Fitness groups	6	111	11	0
Gardening/recycling activities	1	0	0	0
Groups for disadvantaged	2	200	4	0
Space for contact centres	1	0	0	0
total	92	2409	307	14
Other activities	Number	Users	Volunteers	New since 2010
Activities 1	22	(20,000) 424	113	4
Activities 2	15	282	26	6

Activities 3	8	164	35	1
Activities 4	5	136	15	4
Sub total	5	(20,000) 1006	189	15
Grand total	142	(20,000) 3,415	496	29

The 20,000 relates to listeners to Flame Christian Radio, who broadcast in parts of rural Cheshire West

The greatest number of groups which are available are for groups for the over 60's, groups for women, parent & toddler / pre-school groups and youth clubs. The greatest number of users are attending groups for over 60's, parents & toddler groups/ pre-school groups, café facilities, and groups for women. One of the groups provided and recorded under the disadvantaged users section is the Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy Help Line for gay farmers. The majority of the 200 people recorded under this heading are men over 50 phoning the help line. This help line continues to be the only one of its kind in the country. The work of the Chaplaincy will be featured as one of the case studies in Section Three.

Faith groups are the central meeting place for many rural communities and many of the "other" activities recorded from this research reflect that. These activities include the faith building being used as a post office, or place for film nights, concerts and dances. There are also cyber cafes when IT is taught, as well as space for creative activities such as art, craft, knitting or flower arranging. There are also fellowship groups, listening and bereavement groups, breakfasts for farmers and messy church activities. All of these provide ways for people living in rural areas to come together to build friendships and reduce isolation.

Rural faith groups are aware of over 40 other different community facilities which include other faith buildings, community centres, village halls or specific groups such as CAMEO (come and meet each other) which is for people suffering from memory loss and their carers.

Training Needs

Within the audit form faith groups were asked to identify any training needs they had from a list of 7 options. They also had the opportunity of including any further training needs which weren't included in the list. Training needs identified:-

- Funding workshops 7
- Health & Safety 5
- Health & Hygiene 3
- Youth training 2
- Safeguarding 2
- First aid, child protection or mentoring training (1 request for each from responses)

The range of training needs reflect the variety of activities faith groups provide and their desire to gain additional funding so they can continue to provide even more community activities. Training faith groups in the areas identified would help with capacity building in this sector. Discussions will be held with CW&C, Chester Diocese, Learning Together Warrington & Cheshire, as well as other agencies to see which would be the most appropriate to support faith groups with these training needs.

Links to faith schools

Eight faith groups said there was a faith school associated with their place of worship. Overall, 12 said they went into schools to help with assemblies and lessons. None of the 41 groups responding to the faith audit had specifically been asked to tackle issues of homophobia, racist incidents or hate crime. A number of groups did say that if such issues arose they would cover them as part of their school visits.

Links to other agencies

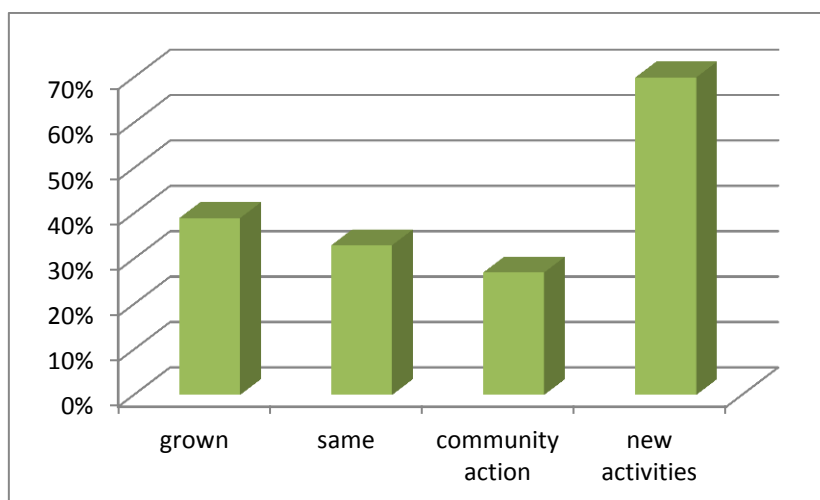
Overall 62 different agencies or networks were identified by faith groups from rural communities. 39% were only mentioned by one or two groups. Although these show there are a variety of agencies or networks covering rural communities, awareness of who they are or what they do doesn't seem to be widespread. As can be seen below the majority of faith groups were aware of Churches Together Groups

- 56% Churches Together Groups
- 27% Link Up
- 12% Cheshire Community Action
- 10% CVA
- 7% West Cheshire Interfaith Forum

Faith community compared to two years ago.

Since the previous research, completed in 2010 the economic climate both globally and nationally has dramatically changed. This current research wanted to see how these changes had impacted upon rural faith groups. Many smaller charities which provide support to local communities have ceased to deliver their services as they have lost their funding, this audit asked faith groups if they were providing any new community activities. Much has been said in the media about falling numbers of people attending a place of worship on a regular basis, this research wanted to see if that was true in rural communities.

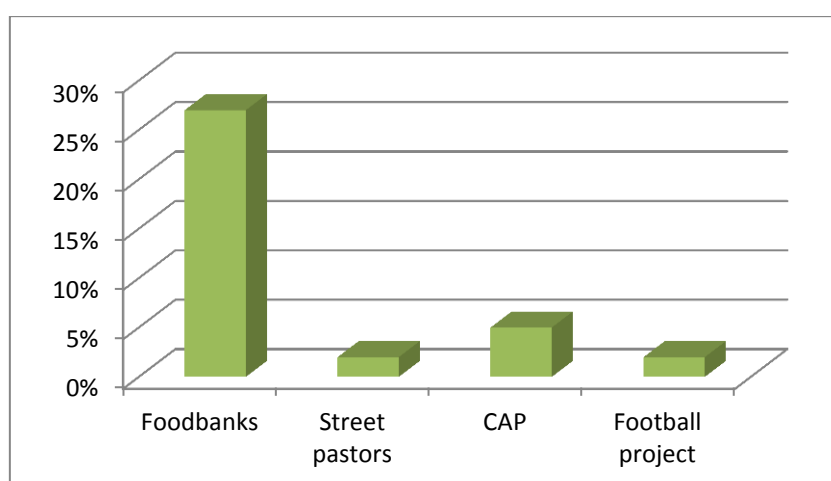
Figure 2.13 Faith community changes



39% of rural faith groups said their congregations had grown, with a further 33% saying they had remained the same. 27% said they were doing more work in their local communities. The greatest change relates to the provision of new community activities. 70% said they were providing new activities. These new activities included:-

- Help line for gay farmers
- Informal foodbank
- Messy church
- Café provision
- Work with young people

Figure 2.14 Faith groups supporting foodbanks, CAP, Street Pastors or Football cage



27% of the rural faith groups who responded to this audit said they or members of their congregations were supporting foodbanks, and 5% were supporting CAP.

Cheshire West and Chester have been developing their Altogether Better programme. A question was included in the 2013 audit see if faith groups were providing any activities under the five key themes.

Altogether Better Programme

Themes	Number	percentage
Families Together Project: supporting families with complex needs “troubled families”	8	20%
Safe Communities: Activities to reduce anti-social behaviour or support victims of domestic abuse or volunteering in relation to community safety	3	7%
Work Ready Individuals: 16-24 year olds and over 50’s projects helping with interview skills, CV writing, work experience, internships	1	2%
Ageing Well: support for older people, e.g. befriending groups, snow angels, village schemes	11	27%
Smarter Services: working together in the same locations e.g. CAB, Credit Unions, contact centres, shared IT or premises	3	7%

Percentages shown are based on the 41 questionnaires from rural faith groups

Overall faith groups are providing 26 different activities which support the Altogether Better Programme. The majority of these 27% support the Ageing Well theme.

Examples of projects provided include:-

Families Together: visiting families, listening ear, provide food, refer to other agencies

Safer Communities: gay farmers help line, youth club tackling anti-social behaviour

Work Ready Individuals: work experience at local radio station

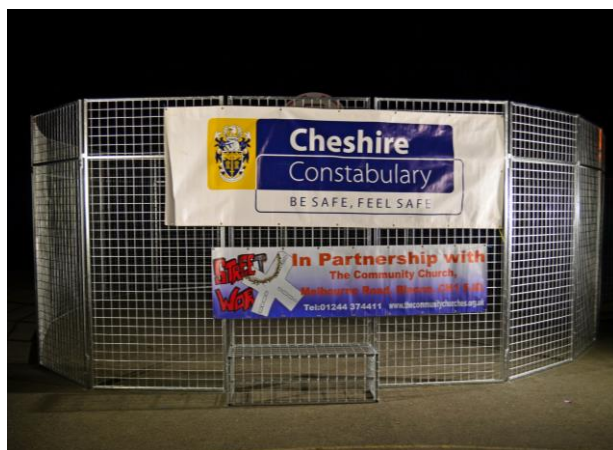
Ageing well: transport schemes, home visits, befriending groups, local time bank scheme

Smarter Services: CAB, Credit Unions, Age UK, Neston Cyber Centre – all using faith group buildings.

Section Three

Area based Case Studies

Chester: Panna football cage project



The panna football cage initiative is a partnership between The Community Church, Blacon and Cheshire Police, which began in the summer of 2011. The aims of the project are:-

- Engage and build relationships with young people to empower and promote positive life choices
- See young people fulfil their potential
- See sustainable reductions in Crime and Anti-social behaviour (ASB) during school holiday periods and beyond
- Increase PSCO community engagement
- Build relationships between local church, detached youth workers and young people.

During school holiday periods there is often a rise in youth related anti-social behaviour. The Community Church and Cheshire Police agreed to work together to see if by building relationships with young people in areas where youth related crime was particularly high they could have a positive impact. Both on the number of incidents of anti-social behaviour recorded and on the life choices of the young people from specific areas. The target age group to work with is 11-20 years. However, children as young as five have been engaging with the project.

They decided to use a panna football cage as the means of engaging with the young people. The idea originated in Holland as a form of street football. Four people play against one another in two on two formats; the aim is to score as many goals against the other pair as possible within a specified short time slot. When the project first started the cage was loaned from Wirral Youth for Christ and stored at the Blacon police station.

The project began in the summer of 2011 during that period there were 373 recorded incidents of ASB. During the same period in 2012 there were 326, a reduction of **12%**

This figure was broken down still further to identify the number of youth related ASB incidents to see if the project was focusing upon the right areas and among the right people. During the 2011 summer holidays there were 116 incidents, compared to 80 during the same period in 2012. This equates to a **31% reduction**.

A total of 14 sessions were held during 2012 and overall 400 young people engaged in the project. During May half term 2013 over 360 young people engaged with the football cage. Approximately 12 people are volunteering to support this project from the local church, plus Police and PCSO's.

The project was featured by Link Up as one of the multimedia case studies in "Faith in Action: **So What?**" The DVD was presented during a borough wide Strategic Partnership event hosted by Cheshire West and Chester and at the Link Up Chester area Faith Forum during 2012. The project generated a great deal of interest. As a result local councillors agreed to fund the purchase of a cage from their member's budget. This would enable the number of sessions when the cage was available to be increased.

The new cage has been designed to include a basketball hoop on the framework. This offers greater flexibility in the use of the cage and is the only cage of its height in the UK to have this facility. The new cage and trailer were delivered for Easter 2013; there was also enough money to buy some floodlights so that the cage could be used during the dark nights as well as summer months.

Cheshire Police entered the project into the Home Office "Tilly Award". It was recognised by assessors as "effective practice" and has been added to the Home Office website "toolkit".

The project continues to have a positive impact on youth related anti-social behaviour.

School holiday periods	Number of youth related ASB incidents in the Outer policing Area of Chester			
	2010	2011	2012	2013
Feb half term	33	20	6	13
Easter full term	77	24	35	24
Whit half term	35	23	17	6
Summer full term	125	116	80	
Oct half term	37	43	55	

School holiday period	Data for Outer policing area of Chester		
	2011	2012	Percentage change
Overall ASB (including youth)	373	326	12% reduction
Youth related ASB	116	80	31% reduction
Criminal Damage	112	78	30% reduction
Youth Nuisance Forms	264	74	72% reduction

The project has not only seen a reduction in the number of youth related incidents of ASB but there has also been a positive financial impact on Cheshire Police overtime budget for summer periods for Chester Outer Policing.

- During 2011 school summer holiday period police overtime costs were £4,500
- During 2012 for same period police overtime costs were reduced by **73% to £1,184**
- During 2013 Cheshire Police have currently **spent no money** on police overtime costs during holiday periods

From the perspective of the Streetworx team from the Community Church Blacon their aim was;

to be proactive in our response to the needs of young people, meeting them before they get to the point of being in trouble with the authorities, arrested and/or sent to YOI's. The best way we know how to do this is by talking, listening and supporting them. Our desire is to engage and build relationships with young people to empower and promote positive life choices, that they may see and fulfil their potential. All this starts with conversations and getting alongside them, meeting them where they're at.

Positive outcomes which have resulted from this approach using the cage are:-

- An improvement in health and fitness through increased sporting participation
- Increase in young person's ability to build positive relationships with peers and wider community
- Better relationships with PCSO's and Police therefore a better understanding and less likely to cause a nuisance or ASB creating a forum to explore life choices using informal education through conversations

One of the project aims has been to build relationships with the young people among the police and the local church. Below are just a few comments about the impact this project in having on local relationships

- Positive impact of project is that youths see PCSO's as human and not a threat.
- Communities perception of PCSO's has changed, they know me better and there is better interaction, they find we are approachable
- Changes in relationships with young people – I know the kids names, they are more willing to talk to me as they get to know me as a person, not just a PCSO
- The students loved having the opportunity to compete and use the facility in lessons and it was really beneficial; however the most positive aspect I felt was the pupils have an opportunity to engage in a well-managed and active activity in their free time. The staff were really professional and friendly and the children enjoyed the Panna football experience. I know we would be keen to have them in school in the future as it gives pupils a focus in free time and particularly is a way of the liveliest boys letting off steam between lessons. Thank you to all the volunteers for your time; hope to see you again soon. Head of KS 4/5 PE
Christleton High School

- From my perspective as an Inspector of Chester Outer Neighbourhood Policing Team the panna cage football / basketball project has to date been a huge success in terms of youth engagement and measureable reductions of crime and anti-social behaviour in the community. The results the project has achieved to date are both positive and ground breaking in the way we police the suburbs of Chester particularly in the current financial climate. The project has allowed me to reduce staffing costs (overtime to provide robust policing of ASB) and use these funds to deliver further engagement activities to build on the successes of the Panna cage project. Not only does the project allow community offers the opportunity to build positive relationships with young people in their area but it also allows fully qualified detached youth workers to encourage young people to develop their skills and confidence, self-belief and respect in terms of sport and life in general. All of these factors encourage a positive view of Cheshire Police from the communities we serve. Inspector Kevin Chambers
- Great resource of engaging with young people that often won't come in to a youth club. Youth worker 1
- Very happy for this resource to be in Chester. Highly recommend youth workers from every area to get involved. Youth worker 2
- Good fun, my son really enjoyed playing, winning and experiencing a different way to play football. Parent 1
- Great fun, and very well organised, my son really enjoyed the experience of Panna football. Parent 2
- Improves skills, challenging, good workout, good to make friends. Young Person 1
- It was good fun, enjoyable and hard work. It improves the technical side of your game. Young person 2 & 3

Way Forward

The Community Church and Cheshire Police are trying to identify ways to help make the project more sustainable. Their thoughts include:-

- Different sponsors for each panel of the cage
- Try to get funding to employ youth workers
- Share good practice with other areas across the borough
- Try to start new cage projects in other areas of Cheshire
- Speak to West Cheshire Collage to see if their manufacturing department could make other cages
- Look at feasibility of adapting the cage so it has a base to enable it to be used indoors as well as outside.

Thanks go to Sgt Ian Wilson from Cheshire Police, Paul Stevens from The Community Church and the Streetworx team who have helped supply figures, feedback and information for this case study.

Ellesmere Port: Cheshire West School Pastors



What is a School Pastor: School Pastors is an initiative operated nationally by The Ascension Trust, it is probably best known for the Street Pastors movement. The School Pastor initiative helps Christians to be relevant to and engage with their local communities. A School Pastor cares for and supports a “school community”. They promote safety and aim to reduce anti-social behaviour. School Pastors are there to listen, care and help young people to become good citizens.

There are a number of responsibilities associated with School Pastors:-

- To be present at times and locations agreed with the school
- To listen, be observant and look out for young people that are vulnerable and respond accordingly
- To build links with the school community – teachers, young people, parents etc
- To be prayerfully aware of God’s direction and share that with the team

The role of the School Pastor is also to work with pupils who are experiencing difficulties in some area of their school life. The School Pastor will work with, build relationships and develop communion with pupils who are:

- Disruptive in class
- Finding it difficult to participate/engage in classroom learning
- Regularly being excluded from class
- On final warnings for exclusion from school
- Presenting with a host of social issues.

The aim of the School Pastor is to engage with the pupils, identify their concerns and in liaison with the school, agree how best the School Pastors can be used to support the student so that their personal development is encouraged and their school experience enriched.

The Ellesmere Port School Pastors initiative was officially launched in September 2012 and operates in the new University Church of England Academy. The initiative was initially promoted by the Academy and their school chaplain. The local Street Pastors co-ordinator was approached about developing a School Pastors team in the Academy.

In preparation a team of 16 volunteer School Pastors were recruited, trained and brought together to build links not only with the Academy but also with four feeder primary schools, whose year six pupils would be attending the Academy.



The teams go into the primary schools for specific events and festivals to help build relationships with primarily the year six children before they moved to the secondary school.

Initially the School Pastors teams went into the Academy every Friday from 8am until 10am to chat to, and mingle with the young people during the breakfast club and classroom registration. It was soon realised that this wasn't long enough to properly build relationship and with agreement from the Academy the teams extended their time to include the first two lessons and the mid morning break. The Academy have a very open policy towards the School Pastors teams and welcome them into the classrooms. The team are now in the academy from 8am to 11.15 am every Friday.

Social and Economic impact of School Pastors

During the first academic year of the scheme the team of volunteers provided over 600 voluntary hours. Using minimum wage as the calculation nearly £4,000 has been contributed into the local economy and specifically into the Academy through the work of the School Pastors. During the 2012/13 academic year the team worked with the 250+ year seven pupils. A similar number of pupils are currently being supported during the 2013/14 academic year.

Positive impacts have been seen among staff, pupils and volunteers:-

- Teaching staff value the School Pastors being in the Academy. Particularly the time and effort they give as volunteers and the support they offer as an additional resource during the morning lessons
- There are opportunities to build relationships with teaching and support staff
- Young people are coming to the School Pastors with their concerns as relationships have developed. Many are from areas of high deprivation and appreciate the support and interest provided by the School Pastors
- Now in it's second year of operation at the Academy relationships exist with both year 8 and year 7 pupils and staff
- Volunteers were keen to extend their hours in the Academy because of the value of the work and to provide better opportunities to build relationships and support the children
- Volunteers are prepared to go over and above their commitment by helping at open evenings and other Academy events

Further developments

Discussions are taking place with the Academy about the possibility of extending the number of times School Pastors are present. It is suggested that both Fridays and Mondays are crucial days when young people may need support as they prepare for the weekend, or react to something which may have happened over it. Additional funding for further co-ordination work and recruiting of more volunteers and training would be needed to extend the scheme.

Dialogue is also taking place between Winsford Academy, and the School Pastors co-ordinator about introducing the scheme into Winsford. Both the local authority and Cheshire Police are keen for this to happen.

Thanks to the Street and School Pastors co-ordinator for the information supplied to complete this case study.

Mid Cheshire Foodbank



Mid Cheshire Foodbank was launched in May 2012 and serves the areas of Northwich and Winsford. The foodbank was set up as part of The Trussell Trust network of foodbanks. From the start it has been open to all denominations and those who have no faith connections. The foodbank is an independent charity and Company Limited by Guarantee.

Nationally The Trussell Trust estimate approximately 13 million people live below the poverty line in the UK. The Trussell Trust has seen a 76% increase in the number of foodbanks launched since April 2012. They have seen the biggest rise in the number of people being given emergency food since the charity began in 2000. Almost 350,000 received at least three days emergency food from The Trussell Trust foodbanks during the last 12 months. This compares to 128,697 in 2011/12 and represents an increase of over 170%. 37% of those helped during 2012/13 were children.

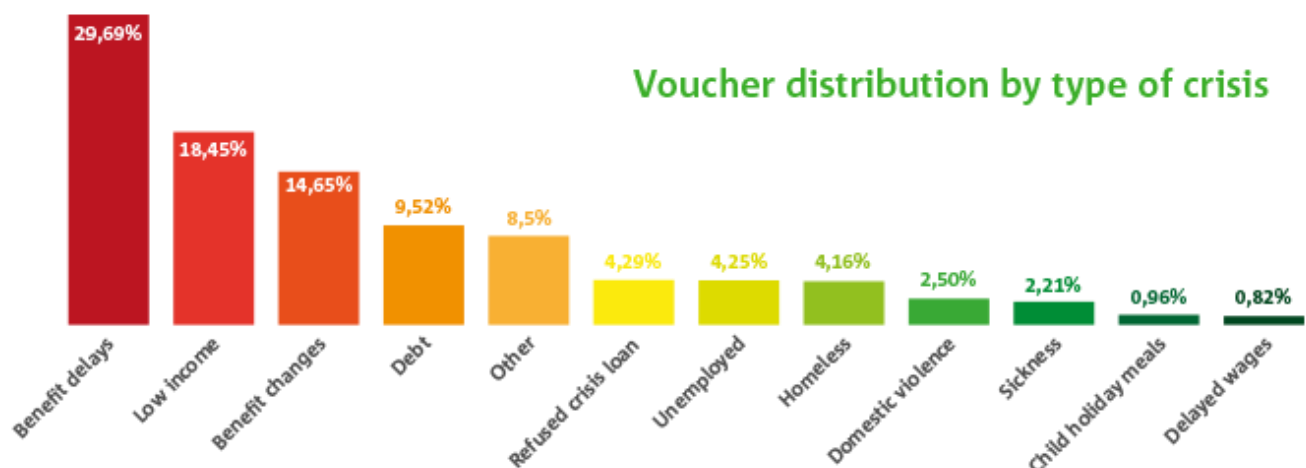
Locally the first Mid Cheshire Foodbank distribution centre opened in December 2012; there are currently seven centres across Northwich and Winsford. They are open a total of 11 times during the week and details of these times can be found on their website <http://midcheshire.foodbank.org.uk>

As well as the distribution centres the foodbank has a small warehouse/ office facility in Winsford. The foodbank is run entirely by volunteers. As of August 2013 140 people were registered as volunteers with the foodbank. Some of these give their time regularly every week, while some give time "as and when required", for such things as supermarket collections. Training and capacity building is taking place among the volunteers with seven people completing a Level 2 course in manual handling.

Since the first collection in September 2012 over 18 tonnes of food has been collected. Frontline care professional such as doctors, social workers, CAB, and Jobcentre Plus issue their clients with a voucher. This is then taken to the foodbank distribution centre where the client receives three days emergency food supplies.

Just under 400 vouchers have been issued and almost 850 people have been fed. 57% of vouchers are issued to single people. For 55% of the people being fed the main reason for referral is given as either benefit changes or benefit delay.

Across the country The Trussell Trust is finding a similar picture; only 4% of people needing foodbank support came due to homelessness. 30% were referred due to benefit delay, 18% low income and 15% because of benefit changes. Other reasons included domestic violence, sickness, refused crisis loans, debt and unemployment. The majority of people turning to foodbanks were working age families.



statistics taken from www.trusselltrust.org/sstats

Shoppers in Northwich donated more than 4,000 meals to Tesco's National Food collection to help people in need. Customers donated non-perishable items during a two day collection. This was organised after research revealed an estimated one in five people in the North West suffered from some form of food poverty in the past year. Tesco is working with volunteers from The Trussell Trust foodbank network to distribute food to local people in need. Rebecca Shelly, group corporate affairs director at Tesco, said *We've been overwhelmed by the response from customers in Northwich and thanks to their generosity we've been able to collect much needed food for people in need. To raise 4,074 meals in Northwich is an incredible achievement and I want to thank all our customers and colleagues for their support.*

This article appeared in its original form on the Northwich Guardian website on 22 July 2013 under the headline Shoppers donate meals for people in food poverty.

The main challenges facing Mid Cheshire foodbank as they move forward are;

- Finding ways of ensuring that the large rural areas of their catchment are provided with appropriate support/ cover
- And planning for the long term sustainability

Support for their on-going work comes from various local sources. Mr David Biggs, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire has become the foodbanks first patron.

Thanks to the Co-ordinator of the Mid Cheshire Foodbank for information for this case study.

Rural Communities: Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy Team



The Agricultural Chaplaincy Team is headed up by Canon Keith Ineson and began as a very small venture in response to the foot and mouth crisis in 2000. Since that time the team has grown to eleven members. Four are paid employees and the rest offer support to farming communities on a volunteer basis. The team have a wide-ranging base of skills and experience and is able to help in most situations. Between them they offer a holistic service to the farming community and their families.

Farming has become more and more specialised over the last few years. The pressure on farmers has grown enormously as a result of the documentation required and poor trading conditions. All this, in addition to the isolation, mental health issues, debt, physical stamina, and in some cases suicide, has meant the Team has been in constant demand. Members are available twenty four hours a day seven days a week.

Currently they are working with over 200 farming families a year and work in excess of 5,700 hours. In addition they have regular contact with a further 1,200 farmers, as well as main stream churches and other organisations able to help.

The Agricultural Chaplaincy team can help in a variety of ways. They offer a listening ear, guidance and confidential support in numerous areas including

- Illness
- Bereavement
- Tenancy issues
- Personal problems
- Compliance difficulties
- Help with SFP enquires
- Access to other help agencies including; the Farming Community Network, Addington Fund, RABI, and the CAB

Members of the team support the farming community by attending county shows, farmers markets and other agricultural events. They offer regular farmers breakfasts which provide an opportunity for farmers to come together to help reduce isolation and to hear about how the team can offer support.

Professional support is also available through other sources including the Chaplaincies Honorary Legal Officer. His expertise covers agricultural land, development, tenancies, succession issues and partnerships.

A major move forward has been the establishment of a specialist help line for gay farmers (www.gayfarmers.co.uk; 07837 931894). Since its establishment three years ago over 200 farmers have sought help, and the profile continues to expand. Social media has been used to engage with gay farmers and they have their own private page on Facebook. This is a unique development as it is the only gay farmer's helpline in the UK.

Volunteering within the team is another group who are dedicated to organising fundraising activities throughout the year. Their work brings in valuable extra resources and helps to expand the knowledge of the wider community who may be unaware of the difficulties facing farming community in Cheshire.

Demand for the services of the Agricultural Chaplaincy Team continue to grow, they expect this will remain the case over the coming years. Particularly as the effects of bad weather, TB and other market forces cause additional problems for the farming community.

Thanks to the Agricultural Chaplaincy Team for the information supplied for this case study.

Conclusions

The faith sector audit had a number of key objectives these included:-

To identify the range and extent of community projects and initiatives provided throughout the borough across the boundaries of Faith, location and tradition.

The work of faith communities in the range and nature of their community projects has continued to grow between 2010 when the first faith sector audit was completed and the refresh in 2013. This survey had a response rate of 50% and identified:-

- 467 community projects a 13% increase on the previous findings
- 54% increase in the number of people engaging with these community activities to nearly 17,000
- 20% increase in the number of volunteers to 2,409
- The equivalent of 396,000 voluntary hours are provided across the borough to support these projects
- Using minimum wage as the calculation the economic impact is nearly £3m into the West Cheshire economy
- The greatest number of users of these community projects are for;
 - Café facilities
 - Parent and toddler groups
 - Groups for the over 60's and
 - Youth groups

To connect community projects and initiatives already undertaken by Faith Groups to the Local Authority and other community agencies and partners.

Area based faith forums have been one mechanism used to bring faith, local authority, health, police, councillors and other local agencies together to highlight the range of projects taking places, share best practice and identify barriers which may be effecting faith groups when they try to deliver community projects.

In the current survey 40% of respondents were aware of the Link up Faith Forums and had attended, 36% were aware but had not attended and 12% were unaware but wanted more information. To mirror the area localities of Cheshire West and Chester, four faith forums were delivered by Link Up in the first half of 2013. Over 120 people came to the faith forums. During each session the top line results from the current audit were shared, plus the results for the local area where the faith forum was being held. Opportunities were also given for local projects to be presented, so that local groups could connect with the different initiatives. Staff from the CW&C locality teams also gave presentations about the work and priorities in their areas.

To identify activities which relate specifically to the Altogether Better Programme

Overall faith groups said they were providing 111 different projects or activities which were aligned with the five key themes of the Altogether Better agenda.

- Families together project: 31 activities
- Safer Communities: 21 activities
- Work Ready Individuals: 12 projects
- Ageing Well: 31 projects
- Smarter Services: 16 activities

The greatest number of projects supporting “families together” were recorded by Chester based faith groups. Rural communities had the greatest number of faith groups supporting the “ageing well” theme. Overall the smallest numbers of projects were supporting “work ready individuals”

To provide a single source for Faith Groups and their community projects across the boundaries of Cheshire West and Chester.

Faith groups are contacting the Link Up office to learn more about community projects which are available across the boundaries of Cheshire West and Chester to see how they operate and to share best practice. The audit findings have been shared at the faith forums and will be circulated further to continue to raise awareness. Both statutory agencies and other community agencies are coming to Link Up to understand the range of projects provided by faith groups across the borough.

Meetings have been held with among others Chester Diocese; Director of Social Responsibility, CW&C Employment Skills and Learning Team and with the Ecumenical Officers for Churches Together in Cheshire.

On a national basis information from the audit has been shared at the Social Accounting Network Forum, and the Cinnamon Network “Church and Civic Engagement Forum” in London. Expert advice has also been given to other local authority areas (Southampton) around conducting a faith audit as they are wishing to do a similar audit with faith groups supported by their local authority.

Appendix A

Faith groups who responded to 2013 audit

Chester

- Hoole Baptist Church
- Chester New Church (Swedenborgian)
- Quaker Meeting House Chester *
- The Salvation Army
- Chester Quaker meeting
- Upton Baptist Church *
- Kingsway Chapel
- Chester Humanist Group
- Vintage Blacon
- Holy Trinity Church Blacon
- Queen Street Christian Centre
- Street Pastors
- The Community Church Chester
- Christ Church Newtown
- CAP Centre: HBC
- The Light Project
- Uniting Church Garden Lane
- Matthew Henry Evangelical Church
- St Michaels Plas Newton
- St Marks Church Lache cum Saltney
- St Andrew's URC Handbridge
- Blacon URC
- Aglow International Chester
- All Saints Hoole
- St Peter's Christian Centre
- Chester Baha'i Community
- Chester & Ellesmere Port Foodbank
- The Wesley Church Centre
- St Luke's Church
- Hoole URC
- Hamilton Street Methodist
- Reach Counselling
- Northgate Church
- St Paul's Boughton

- Chester Cathedral
- Glory Fires
- St Theresa's RC Church
- Christian Family Church
- Chester Schools Christian Work (CSCW)

Ellesmere Port

- Church Army Bus & Boat project
- St George's URC
- CAP Money Centre
- Ellesmere Port Parish St Thomas and St Lawrence
- St John the Evangelist Great Sutton
- Centre 4 Renewal Church Ellesmere Port
- Trinity Methodist E. Port
- Whitby Methodist
- Little Sutton Methodist
- Ellesmere Port Community Ministry Urban expression
- Port Reach

Winsford and Northwich

- St Wilfrid's Davenham
- Christ Church Wharton
- St Wilfrid's Presbytery
- URC Over Winsford
- Odiyina Buddhist Centre
- Milton Baptist Church Acton Bridge *
- Lostock Green Methodist
- Shurlack Methodist
- Pickmere Methodist
- Bartington Methodist
- Comberbach Methodist
- Acton Bridge Methodist
- Christ Church Crowton (x3)
- Storehouse Church
- St Mary Whitegate, Northwich
- Christian Community Ministries
- Snow Angels
- Mid Cheshire Foodbank
- Chester Road Methodist Winsford

- St Andrew's Methodist Church
- St John's Over
- Salvation Army *
- The Connection Church
- St Joseph's RC Church
- St John's Hartford
- CAP
- St Mary & All Saints Church
- St John the Evangelist Lostock
Gralam & All Saints Lach Dennis
- ST Helen's Witton
- St Chads
- Christ Church Greenbank

Rural Communities

- Holy Trinity Capenhurst
- Parkgate & Neston URC
- Neston Christian Fellowship
- St Thomas Becket Catholic Church
- St Cuthbert by the Forest
Mouldsworth
- St Albans, Tattenhall
- St Wenefrede Bickley
- Helsby Methodist
- Hurst Methodist Kingsley
- Blakelees Methodist
- St Peter's Plemstall
- Cheshire Agricultural
Chaplaincy
- Waverton Evangelical
Fellowship
- St Edith, Shocklach
- St Mary's Tilston
- Spiritaul Care Centre *

- St John the Evangelist,
Manley
- St John the Evangelist,
Alvanley
- Elim Community Church
Malpas
- St Oswald Backford
- Huxley Methodist church
- Main Street Community
Church
- Little Neston Methodist
- Neston Methodist
- St Bartholomes Barrow
- St Mary & St Helen Neston
- St Paul' Parish Church Hooton
- Brown Knowl Methodist *
- St Peter's Little Budworth
- Tarporely Baptist & Methodist
- St Luke Dunham on the hill
- Oakmere Methodist with
Ashton Methodist
- St John the Evangelist Ashton
Hayes
- Tarvin Methodist Church
- Norley Methodist Church
- Bunbury Methodist Church
- Kelsall Methodist Church
- Frodsham Methodist Church
- St Nicholas' Church Burton
- LIFT project
- Wirral Christian Media Ltd

* Faith groups not wishing to appear in an online directory