

# **Interfaith Iftar 2018 Evaluation Report**

## **St Johns Wood Synagogue**

### **30<sup>th</sup> May 2018**



**Kindly sponsored by**  
**The Randeree Charitable Trust**  
**and Pears Foundation**

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**NAZ** LEGACY  
FOUNDATION

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## Introduction

The Naz Legacy Foundation aims to raise aspirations and provide educational, cultural and inspirational experiences for young people from ethnic minorities or deprived communities in the UK. They encourage integration among diverse communities living in the UK by bringing groups together for discussion, to promote understanding and encourage public service. Additionally, they promote confidence and professional skills (team work, resilience, networking and presentation skills) for the next generation.

For the last three years The Naz Legacy Foundation have hosted an Interfaith Iftar bringing young Londoners from all faiths (or none) together to spur a spirit of community, unity and public service. This year, over 100 young Londoners from 32 London boroughs and eleven different faiths attended the Interfaith Iftar at St. John's Synagogue in North London. The event was kindly sponsored once again jointly by The Randeree Charitable Trust and Pears Foundation. It was attended by The Chief Rabbi, The Mayor of London and Cardinal Nichols along with the first female Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally who was attending her first Iftar. Concurrently, an Interfaith Iftar was conducted in Manchester Cathedral attended by 200 young Mancunians, The Dean of Manchester and the Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester and other dignitaries.

The format of the London Interfaith Iftar was as follows:

- Meeting and greeting of allocated cluster groups
- Cluster group discussion about different faiths and to how to best to bring communities together
- Speeches by The Mayor of London, The Bishop of London, The Chief Rabbi, Cardinal Nichols and a Muslim Youth representative Esmat Jeraj
- Dignitaries tour cluster groups to discuss and share ideas
- Photos taken at each cluster group (including selfies)
- Breaking of the fast
- Meal
- Tour of Synagogue by Rabbi Yonni (attended by 30 young people)

## Outputs

Over 100 young Londoners aged 16-35 attended the event (just over half had never attended an Iftar before and just under half had never visited a Synagogue before. Over 2/3rds had never been to an Interfaith Iftar before).

4 Speakers presented speeches

1 Youth speaker presented a motivational speech

The event received press coverage in Faith media and On-line news (including The Jewish News, Mvslim.com and The Church Times among others)<sup>1</sup>

### **Social Media Outputs**

The hashtag handle reached 5,716,956 with a total of 15,262,643 impressions

You tube views for the Interfaith Iftar video reached in excess of 12,000 (with over 100 shares).

## Evaluation Method

A dual method of pre- and post-questionnaires together with unstructured observation was utilised for the event. The aim was to gather demographic data from the participants, assess initial impacts that the event may have had on the participants, and to evaluate issues that were raised and discussed during the Iftar. Additionally, ratings for the organisation of the Iftar and suggestions for improvement were also garnered. Follow-up evaluation on any networks or social action taken as a result of the Iftar will be undertaken in early July 2018.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/chief-rabbi-mirvis-joins-sadiq-khan-for-interfaith-iftar-at-st-johns-wood-shul/>  
<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2018/8-june/news/uk/bishop-of-london-mullally-relishes-diversity-in-the-city-at-interfaith-iftar>  
<http://mvslim.com/an-interfaith-iftar-hosted-in-a-synagogue-and-sadiq-khan-a-bishop-and-a-chief-rabbi-were-present/>

## Sample Group

Over 100 young Londoners were invited to the London Interfaith Iftar from eleven different faiths (or no faith). 97 responded to the pre-iftar questionnaire and 66 completed the post-iftar questionnaire. The key statistics for those who responded to the questionnaire are presented below:

<i>CATEGORY</i>	<i>NUMBER OF RESPONSES</i>	<i>PERCENTAGE</i>
<b>GENDER</b>		
<i>Male</i>	45	46%
<i>Female</i>	52	54%
<b>AGE</b>		
<i>16-19 years</i>	22	23%
<i>20-23 years</i>	29	30%
<i>24-27 years</i>	26	27%
<i>28-31 years</i>	13	13%
<i>31-35 years</i>	1	1%
<i>36+ years</i>	6	6%
<b>LSOA (from postcode data provided)</b>		
<i>50% most deprived</i>	56	58%
<i>50% least deprived</i>	35	36%
<i>N/A</i>	6	6%
<b>FAITH</b>		
<i>Christian (C of E)</i>	16	17%
<i>Muslim</i>	31	32%
<i>Hindu</i>	7	7%
<i>Jewish</i>	13	13%
<i>Sikh</i>	5	5%
<i>Catholic</i>	2	2%
<i>Baha'i</i>	2	2%
<i>Zoroastrian</i>	1	1%
<i>Jain</i>	3	3%
<i>Atheist/Agnostic/Humanist</i>	8	8%
<i>Mixed religious background</i>	1	1%
<i>N/A</i>	8	8%
<b>BEEN TO AN IFTAR BEFORE?</b>		
<i>Yes</i>	45	46%
<i>No</i>	52	54%
<b>BEEN TO AN INTERFAITH IFTAR BEFORE?</b>		
<i>Yes</i>	26	21%
<i>No</i>	77	79%
<b>HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO A SYNAGOGUE BEFORE?</b>		
<i>Yes</i>	34	52%
<i>No</i>	29	44%
<i>N/A</i>	3	4%
<b>HAVE YOU TAKEN PART IN A SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT BEFORE?</b>		
<i>Yes</i>	56	58%
<i>No</i>	41	42%
<b>DO YOU EVER FEEL THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DISCIMINATED AGAINST BECAUSE OF YOUR FAITH?</b>		
<i>Yes</i>	36	37%
<i>No</i>	41	42%
<i>Maybe/not sure</i>	20	21%

The young attendees were drawn from 11 different faiths (including different branches of the Muslim and Christian faith). The attendees were aged between 16-36, with an average age of 24.

The attendees were drawn from 32 different London boroughs, many were from areas that are designated some of the most deprived in the country and others from the least deprived (according to the English Index of Multiple deprivation). 77% of the attendees had never been to an Interfaith Iftar before, and 44% had never been in a Synagogue before; presenting these attendees with new experiences. Although some of the attendees had some experience of being part of a social action project before, 42% had no prior experience of this.

The respondents were asked how many people of different faiths (including their own) that they knew. The average number of people that the respondents claimed to know was 5 (range: 2-11). 37% of the respondents felt that they had experience of being discriminated against because of their faith (although all of the faiths had some experience of this, the Jewish and Muslim respondents were most likely to suggest that they had faced discrimination because of their faith).

## Motivation to visit

The pre-evaluation collected open-ended responses surrounding the applicant’s motivation and expectation of the Interfaith Iftar. Analysis of the given responses highlighted four central motivational themes. These are listed below:

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Number of comments (some gave more than one answer)</i>
<i>Social Networking/meeting people from other faiths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting people from other faiths</li> <li>• Communities coming and working together</li> <li>• Meeting likeminded people</li> </ul>	53
<i>Knowledge and Understanding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faiths and religions</li> <li>• Beliefs</li> <li>• Commonalities</li> <li>• Discussion about discrimination, stereotyping of faiths and being young with a faith in London</li> </ul>	49
<i>Social Action</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting with groups involved in social action or interfaith activity</li> <li>• Making connections that start social action</li> </ul>	23
<i>Experience &amp; Enjoyment</i>	Experience of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Iftar</li> <li>• Of Muslim prayer</li> <li>• Of how other faiths experience an Iftar</li> <li>• Meeting faith leaders and key influencers</li> </ul>	17

Networking and meeting people from faiths other than their own was a primary motivation for most of the attendees. The comments reveal that this was a significant goal despite many of the attendees knowing people from different faiths socially (see above). The environment of the Interfaith event was also flagged as relevant to this experience with many of the comments

mentioning a need for a, 'warm environment' with a sense of, 'unity', 'community', 'solidarity', 'respect' and 'tolerance' (these words were used 44 times within the 97 responses).

Many of the responses also referred to an aspiration to learn and share knowledge and understanding about different faiths and issues that surround this (i.e. discrimination). The desire to understand and learn about and from other faiths was typified by the following comment:

*I would like to experience meeting people of different faiths, learn from people of different religions and work together*

(Female, Atheist, Aged 23)

Other respondents had more specific agendas such as:

*I would love to speak to other people about faiths that I'm not so familiar with, such as Judaism, and learn more about their day-to-day life and beliefs.*

(Male, Christian, Aged 19)

*I'd like to meet open-minded Muslims because I don't think I know enough Muslim people and I'd like to be friends with more to escape the stereotyping it's quite easy to fall into*

(Male, Jewish, Aged 21)

*I would like to discuss if people have faced discrimination against them due to their faith and if we can find solutions to tackle those and also have discussions of how different communities come together and bring about positive change*

(Female, Muslim, Aged 25)

It was also noted that for some participants there was a desire to meet and find out more about different sects within their own religion (such as the Ismaili Community).

Social action participation was mentioned directly by 23 of the respondents (and indirectly by many more by their involvement in the event). Many of these comments referred to finding out about or getting involved in social action projects following the Iftar.

Interestingly some of the motivations for attendance were connected to finding out about Ramadan and to experience an Iftar, something 52% of attendees had no prior experience of. Some of the Muslim attendees were interested to see how other faiths experience the Iftar and Ramadan. Some of the comments are highlighted below:

*Find out more about what an Iftar is and its significance*

(Male, Hindu & Christian, Aged 24)

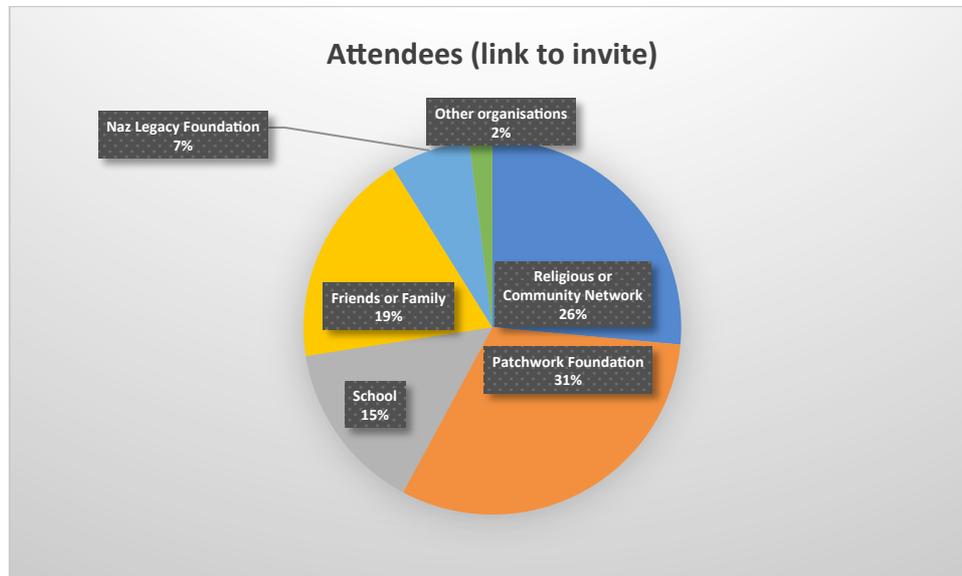
*Just to see how different faiths respond to Iftar and what they think about the whole month as I have only had bad responses to it from other faiths.*

(Female, Muslim, Aged 17)

Primarily the attendees were motivated to attend by the opportunity to meet new people from different faiths in order to discuss issues surrounding social cohesion and to gain new knowledge

and understanding about faiths other than their own. Some of the attendees were personally motivated by issues, such as discrimination, being young and religious in London or a desire to find out about a specific faith or religion.

## Attendee link to Invite



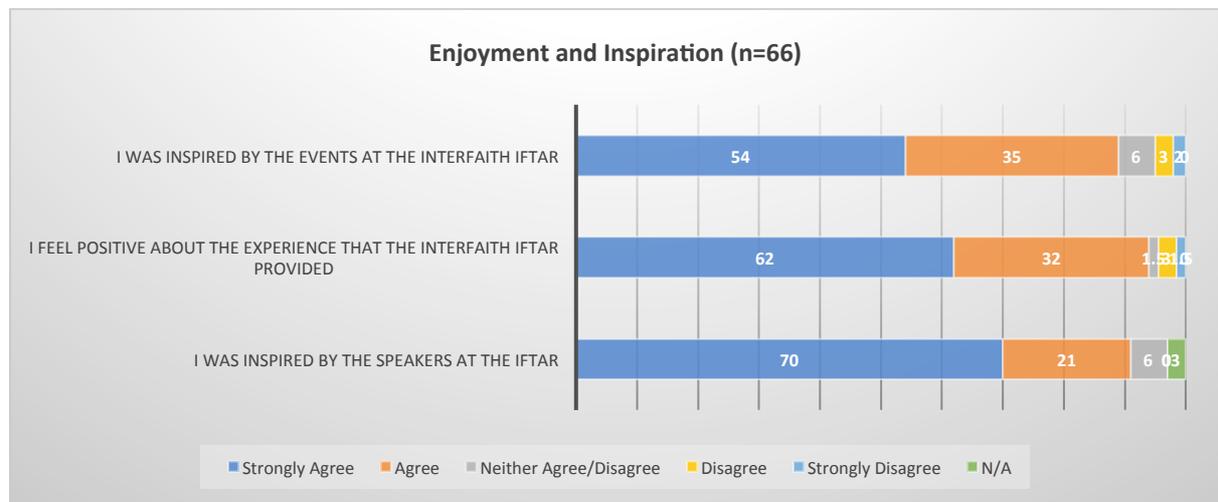
The attendees were invited to the Interfaith Iftar from a wide range of different religious or community groups from different boroughs in London (some of these were invited by friends and family connected to these groups). Patchwork (a multi-faith youth political organisation) and three schools: Westminster Academy (mixed-faith Comprehensive school); Kantor King Solomon (Jewish Faith School in Ilford); and JFS (Jewish Faith School, Harrow) provided 46% of the attendees. There was no Buddhist representation at the Iftar this year.

## Results – Evaluation of the Interfaith Iftar

The results of the evaluation of the young attendees are presented below ( $n=66$ ). Where possible, pre- and post- results have been compared. The evaluation specifically analyses five distinct areas:

- **Enjoyment and Inspiration:** *Was the event enjoyable and did it inspire?*
- **Knowledge and Understanding:** *Did the event aid individuals in gaining new knowledge and understanding (of other faiths)?*
- **Improving access (to other faiths):** *Did the event enable individuals to meet people from faiths that they had not met before?*
- **Attitudes and values:** *Did the event help to change individual attitudes towards others or challenge their pre-existing thoughts?*
- **Behaviour and Progression:** *Did the event change peoples' behaviour and/or inspire them to get involved in social action projects (that they were not aware of previously)*

## Enjoyment and Inspiration



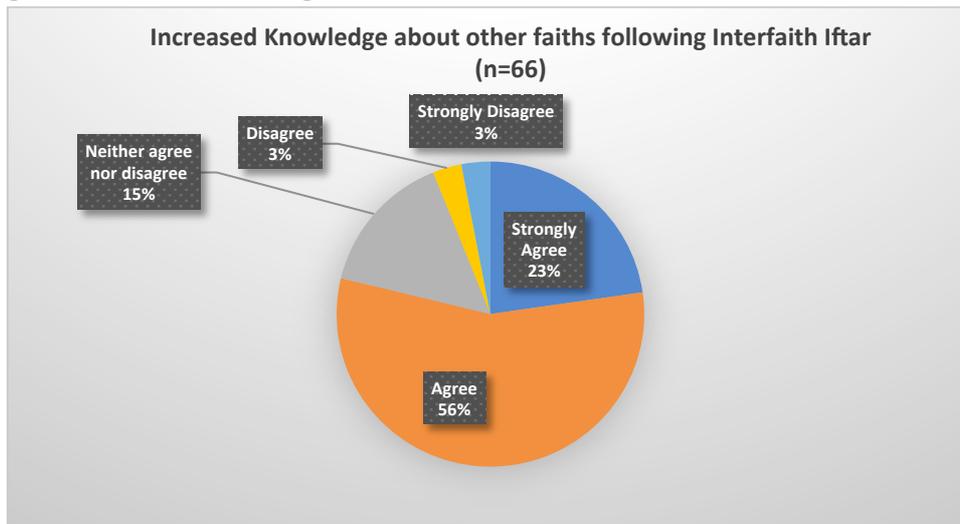
**89%** of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the **Interfaith Iftar was inspiring**

**91%** felt inspired **by the speakers**

**85%** were overall **positive about the experience** of the Interfaith Iftar.

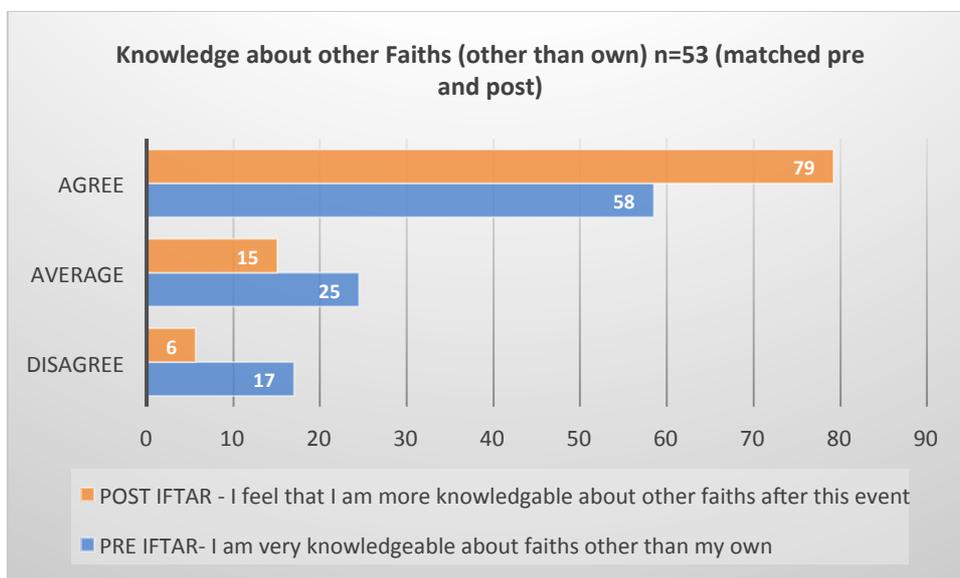
The few respondents who were not as positive about the enjoyment and inspiration of the Iftar presented reasons that linked to a lack of depth of discussion or a lack of mix of diverse cultures or religions in their cluster groups (see below).

## Knowledge and Understanding



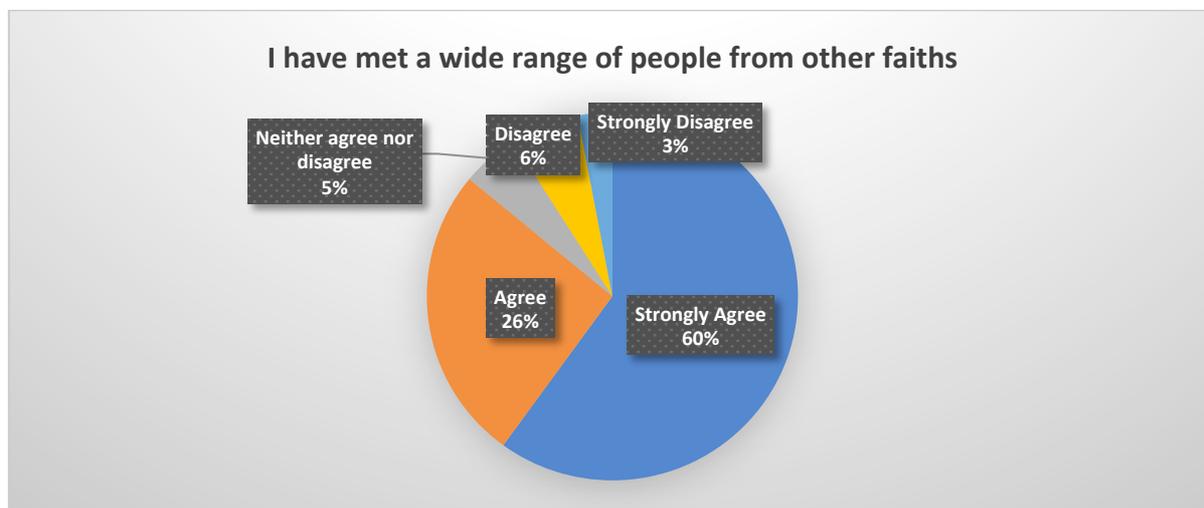
**79%** of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had **increased knowledge** about other faiths as a direct result of the Interfaith Iftar. The tour of the Synagogue hosted by Rabbi Yonni attended by 30 of the young people brought an added dimension to experience. The Rabbi explained about Jewish practice and symbolism and allowed time for questions from the floor which enabled the attendees to find out additional bespoke information (15 questions were asked in total).

A comparison of the pre- and post- matched evaluation forms reveals a **21% increase** in 'agree and strongly agree' responses for increased knowledge about other faiths following the Iftar event. This is shown in the chart below:



## Improving Access to other Faiths

The respondents were asked whether the Iftar enabled them to meet people from a wide range of faiths. The results show that 86% felt positive that the event improved access to people from different faiths. 14% were not as confident that this was achieved at the event and this was due to a perceived lack of diversity in their cluster group or that they already knew a wide range of people from different faiths. The chart below shows the results:



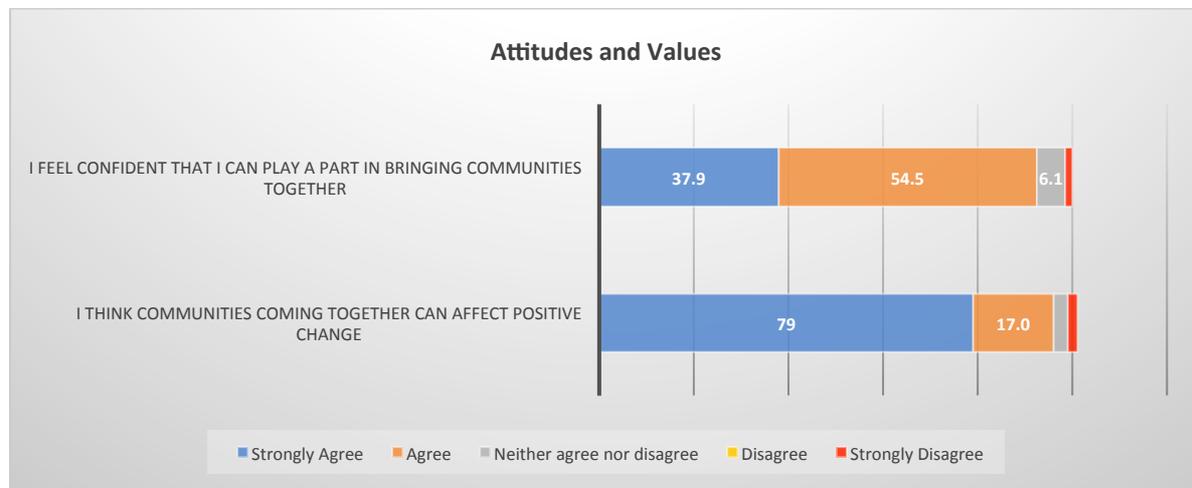
The Interfaith Iftar was able to introduce 36 (55%) of the respondents to people from faiths that they had not had direct experience of before, these are listed in the table below:

<i>Religion/Faith/belief not met before</i>	<i>Number of attendees</i>
<i>Jewish</i>	6
<i>Muslim</i>	5
<i>Ismali Muslim</i>	2
<i>Sikh</i>	4
<i>Anglican (Church of England)</i>	4
<i>Hindu</i>	3
<i>Jain</i>	3
<i>Agnostic</i>	1
<i>Unitarian</i>	1
<i>N/A</i>	7

It is anticipated that some of the relationships made at the Iftar may continue beyond the event leading to greater social cohesion or social action projects in the future.

## Attitudes and Values

The respondents were asked about their attitudes towards bringing communities together. The results are illustrated below:



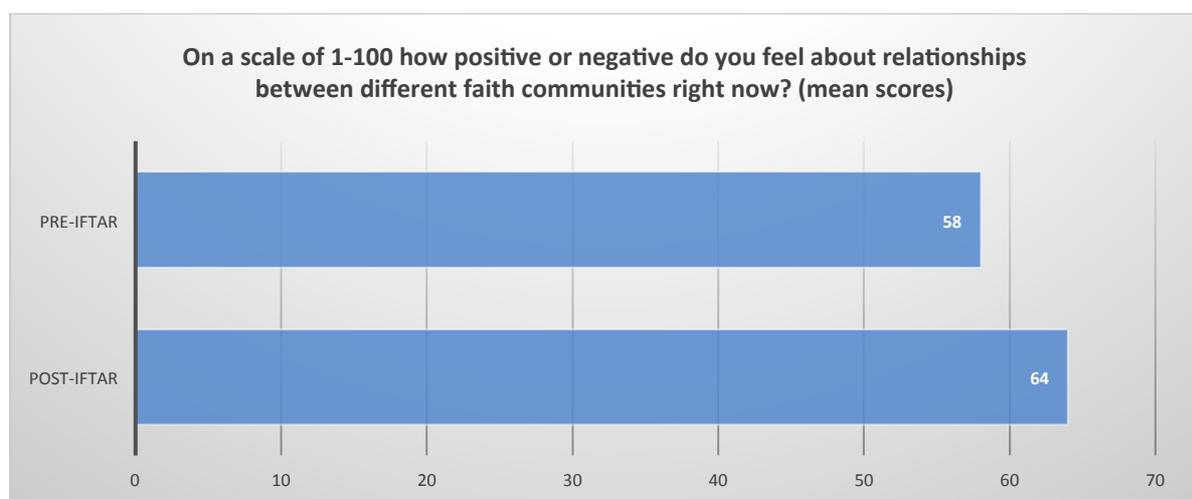
Post-Iftar,

**96%** of the respondents felt positive that communities **coming together can affect positive change**

**92%** of the respondents felt positive that they can **play a part in bringing communities together**

Similar collective figures were evidenced pre- and post- for these attitudinal indicators. A slight decrease in those who felt strongly confident about their own role in social action post-Iftar was evidenced. This could be due to the reality of approaching social action (post-Iftar) versus the idea of it (pre-Iftar). These results could indicate that further support and additional information would be needed for individuals to launch their own projects post-Iftar.

The respondents were also asked to list how positive or negative they felt about the relationship between different faith communities pre- and post- Iftar. The result shown in the chart below illustrate a 6% point increase post-Iftar indicating that the event itself was able to impact on some wider attitudes towards social cohesion.

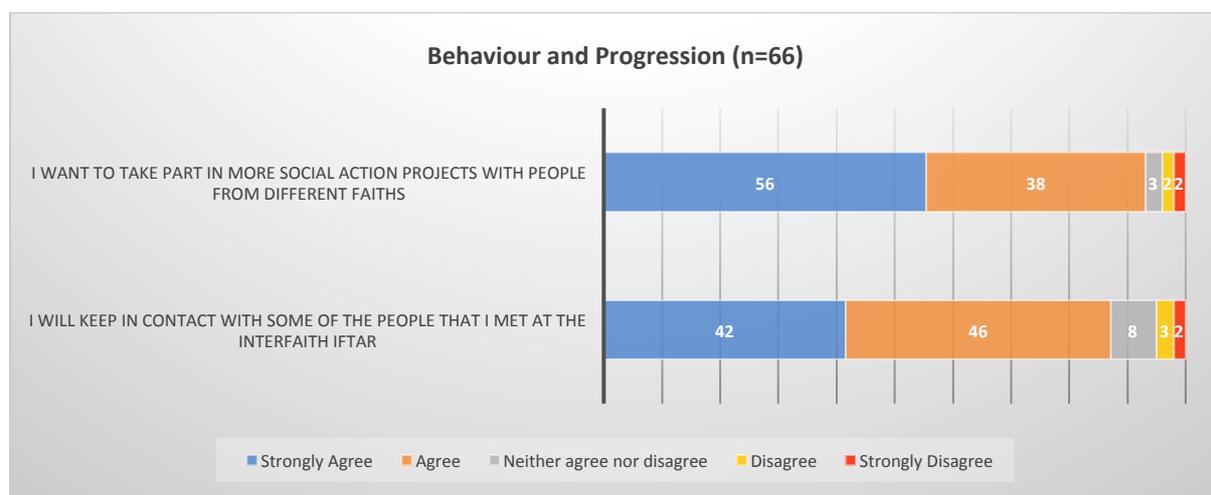


## Behaviour and Progression

One of the central aims of the Naz legacy Foundation is to encourage discussion, promote understanding and inspire public service. The respondents were asked about their intentions to keep in contact with some of the attendees and/or take part in an Interfaith social action project following the Iftar. Many of the attendees (58%) were currently, or had previously been involved in social action projects prior to the Interfaith Iftar. The chart below plots the results for behaviour and progression following the Iftar,

**94%** of the respondents felt positive about taking part in **more social action projects with people from different faiths**.

**88%** felt confident that they would **keep in touch with people that they had met at the Iftar** (there was evidence of attendees setting up WhatsApp groups and exchanging contact details – see below)



To find out more about the intended social action projects, the respondents were asked what social action they intended to follow after the Iftar event. 49 out of the 66 respondents provided explanations or ideas for intended social action (some provided more than one idea). These ideas and actions have been grouped and are presented below:

Theme	Idea or Action	Number of Comments
ACTION	Arrange an interfaith sports event	4
	Organise a local interfaith community event	4
	Organise an Interfaith charity event	1
	Visit a mosque (for first time)	1
	Join in Zumba classes at the Synagogue	1
	Join Mitzvah day	1
	Start a social media campaign	1
	Follow-up ideas into action (general)	11
	Start a social media contact group (within cluster)	4
	Keep in contact with cluster group	6
INFORMATION/IDEAS EXCHANGE	Encourage school to exchange students and experience with other schools/take ideas back to school	2
	Get involved with school projects	2
	Use school approach to Interfaith	1

<i>ENCOURAGED FURTHER RESEARCH/AWARENESS</i>	to teach other schools	
	Pass ideas gathered onto faith leaders and the wider community	8
	Use ideas and networks gathered at Iftar in existing Interfaith or social action project	7
	Encouraged understanding of different perspectives and topics like extremism	3
	Encouraged interest in finding out about other social action and/or Interfaith groups that they could join	8

In addition to the written feedback provide, informal observation was undertaken during the Interfaith Iftar event. The evaluator moved around the room in a clockwise rotation to observe each of the 8 youth groups in discussion and to note down social action ideas and evidence of knowledge exchange. Photographs of the notes from each group and notes were taken to record as much activity as possible during the event<sup>2</sup>. It is noted that not all the ideas and discussion would have been recorded. Each group was approached before the observation began to explain the research. The observations and ideas generated by the groups have been tabulated and themed in the tables below:

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Ideas</i>
<i>Religious Education or School involvement</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Policy change</b> to religious education</li> <li>2. Reduce ignorance through <b>education</b></li> <li>3. More <b>community-based education</b></li> <li>4. <b>Students teaching students</b> about faith and togetherness</li> <li>5. <b>Faith days</b> held in schools and communities</li> <li>6. <b>Interfaith school coalition</b>: five schools across three London boroughs work together to organize two annual events (one charity and one discussion based on a pre-arranged theme – i.e. homelessness)</li> <li>7. <b>Unite</b> with other faith schools for sports tournament</li> <li>8. Faiths coming together to <b>visit schools and youth groups</b> to discuss community cohesion</li> <li>9. Hold <b>multi-faith religious knowledge and understanding classes</b> for adults and young people from abroad who are living in the UK from counties that do not have multi-faith religious education (example given: Saudi Arabia). Delivered by schools, adult education or university.</li> <li>10. Schools that have a good track-record in diversity could <b>provide training</b> to schools that are struggling (i.e. Westminster Academy have day off for Eid and are encouraged to celebrate and share their culture by wearing traditional dress on non-uniform days and events).</li> </ol>
<i>Religious spaces and Faith communities</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Faith leaders</b> – lead on dialogue and inspiration</li> <li>2. Encourage religious spaces to accommodate other <b>clubs and societies</b> especially for the younger ones in our society i.e. Sport and music clubs where all people of all faiths can join-together and meet each other (within a religious space)</li> <li>3. <b>Exposure to religious space</b> will encourage cohesion and openness from a young age, so that when they grow older they feel comfortable meeting socially people from different faiths and in visiting religious spaces that are not their own.</li> </ol>

<sup>2</sup> Note: the noise in the room mean that recording some of the conversations was not viable.

*Interfaith in the Community*

4. All faiths should **publicize other faiths** open-days or introduce them
  5. Muslim – Jewish **charity** raising money for each-others charity
1. **Volunteering** through the community in other places – indirect education and meetings.
  2. Interfaith action projects within communities
  3. **One-day community events** – sports, societal – i.e. packing food for a homeless shelter.
  4. **Sports event**
    - a. Gender neutral (such as bowling), accessible and fun – brings people together
    - b. Interfaith football tournaments
    - c. Charity Interfaith hike
  5. **Music festival**
  6. **Food festival** or/and summer picnic
  7. **Action-based meet-ups** (i.e. planting in a garden)
  8. Multifaith **community centre**
  9. (Encourage) Interfaith responses to **communal issues**
  10. Don't Hate – Educate! **Round-table discussions** (esp. for young people)
  11. **Mitzvah day** – social action
  12. Utilizing existing event days – Islamophobia day and refugee week to highlight communities coming together.
  13. **'Speed-dating' event:** can be effective in imparting knowledge about other faiths and enabling questioning. Individuals move around the room engaging with different religious people asking questions and getting advice. A good and fun way to educate people.

*Social Media or Online campaigning*

1. Online **interfaith blogs/magazine** or shows in mainstream publications
2. Using **social media** in a positive way (key influencers – see above Refugee week etc.)
3. **Collect pledge** from interfaith people (collect 50-60 signatures) to take back to our community (leaders).
4. Form **WhatsApp group** or swap contact details with cluster group to keep in contact and take-action in the future.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Discussion evidenced</b>
<b>Reflexivity</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do we need to come together – why? What is the desired outcome?</li> <li>2. Who exactly are we aiming to bring together, why and how?</li> </ol>
<b>Issues and Barriers</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do you access religious spaces if you are not from the faith?</li> <li>2. Funding is needed for religious places to provide outreach to others to open-access to the faith and to educate. How do these places get funding (council/charity/external)?</li> <li>3. How to empower young people of differing faiths to take-action</li> </ol>
<b>Wider social issues</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the other issues surrounding tensions within communities?</li> <li>2. How does class and access to resources (capital) impact on the community? Could this be as significant as Faith? (many London boroughs have rich and poor living side-by-side)</li> <li>3. What are the communal issues that bring communities together that are pan-faith?</li> </ol>
<b>Faith</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discussion about Jainism</li> <li>2. Discussion about Baha'i religion and beliefs</li> <li>3. Discussion about Unitarian beliefs</li> </ol>

<b>Representation of Religious communities</b>	4. Discussion about practice in other countries (South Africa and Saudi Arabia)
	5. Discussions about Ramadan
	6. Discussion about emerging theological ideas on Islam
	7. Discussions about non-religious morality
	1. Discussion about how Muslims are often portrayed negatively in the media and on social media.
	2. Discussion about religious persecution in countries around the world
<b>Symbolism of event being held in a Synagogue</b>	1. Discussion about first visit to a Synagogue which they had considered closed spaces - however having first-hand experience was very different. Seeing some similarities in the belief system and prayers between Islam and the Jewish faith and some differences.
	2. Discussion about the symbolism of this event being held in a Synagogue in the light of the troubles in the Gaza Strip.

The above two tables illustrate the breadth of conversation generated in just a short period of time. In addition, conversations surrounding education, travel, jobs and hobbies were also evidenced that helped to establish relationships and unity within the cluster groups.

## Ratings

The respondents' ratings of the discussion groups, meal and organisation of the event are displayed in the chart below:



**88%** of the respondents were positive about the **organisation** of the event

**97%** of the respondents rated the **meal** good or excellent<sup>3</sup>

**76%** of the respondents felt positive about the **discussion groups**

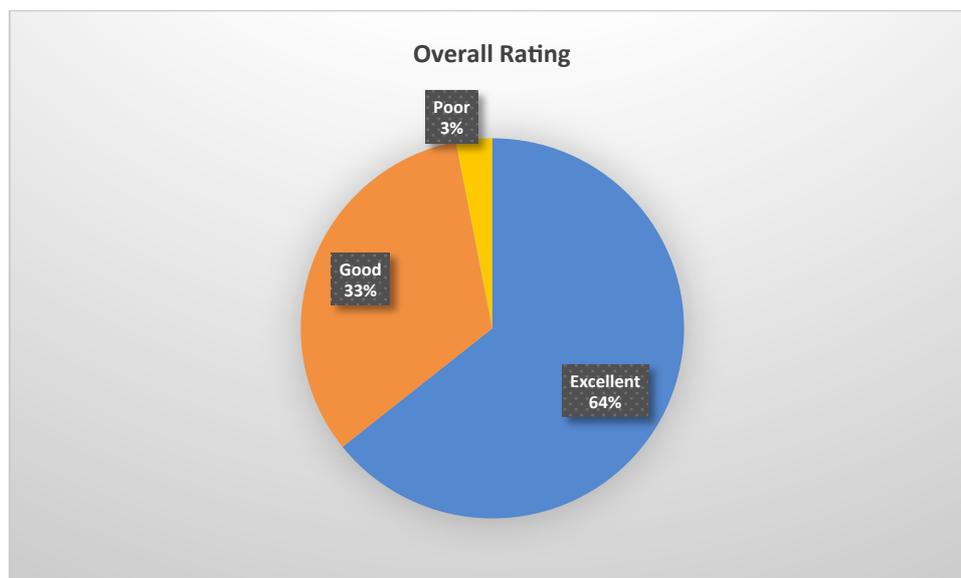
The discussion groups received the least positive rating. The reasons for this were threefold: clarity and depth of task and discussion topic; size of group and lack of seating and; lack of diversity within some cluster groups (see below).

The young attendees were asked to characterise their experience of the Interfaith Iftar in a few words. 55 of the respondents provided comment (11 gave no response). The word-cloud below lists the most common words used,

<sup>3</sup> A number of respondents completed their evaluation form before the meal therefore left this blank. The final rating figure is based on the number who completed the form after the meal together with verbal feedback and observation of empty plates.



## Overall Rating for Interfaith Iftar



Overall **97%** of the respondents rated the 2018 Naz Legacy Interfaith Iftar as **Good or Excellent**

## Improvements

The attendees were asked to list any areas or ideas that could improve the Interfaith Iftar and impact future planning. The suggestions are presented in the table below:

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Improvement/suggestion</i>	<i>Number of comments</i>
<i>Physical needs</i>	Provide chairs (during or after discussion groups)	18
	Too noisy to hear discussion	2
	Directional signage needed	1
<i>Structure and Direction of Discussion groups</i>	More directional structure to discussion topics (inc. more focus on faith and belief systems)	5
	More substantial topic that generated deeper engagement with Interfaith issues	3
	Moderator needed to direct group discussion and encourage quieter members	2
	A verbal introduction to what was expected of the cluster groups was needed	1
	Cluster group too large for debate	1
<i>Representation</i>	A greater spread of religions and faiths across cluster groups	7
	Time to mingle or swap cluster groups to meet other faiths	6
	Opportunities for all members of the cluster group to speak to dignitaries	1
	Have a faith leader (Imam) from the Islamic faith as a speaker	

<i>Support</i>	Support for starting social action (how to achieve)	1
<i>Others</i>	Less photos/PR more engagement	1
	More information for volunteers	1

The main areas for improvement surrounded the individual’s physical needs, such as seating. Moreover, a desire for more direction or a deeper focus for discussion topics was evidenced. There were also comments relating to the lack of diversity or lack of representation of certain religions within the cluster groups (in particular non-Abrahamic religions); and a desire to meet more of the people in attendance by mixing between cluster groups. This may need to be addressed for future events.

## Speakers Feedback

A short post-event survey was administered to the Bishop of London, Cardinal Nichols, The Major of London and The Chief Rabbi to gather their thoughts on the event and to find out whether the young peoples ideas for social cohesion had an impact on them<sup>4</sup>. The Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, commented that she was, “inspired by the young people” at the event. She was particularly impressed with the ideas presented by the young people concerning cross-faith discussion in schools and cross-faith community activities. She would consider taking these ideas forward in the future.

## Conclusions

The Naz Legacy Foundation 2018 Interfaith Iftar successfully engaged over 100 young Londoners from 11 different faiths and across 32 London boroughs to come together for an Interfaith Iftar at St Johns Synagogue in London. 79% of the attendees had never been to an Interfaith Iftar before and 42% had never taken part in a social action project before. The hosting of the Iftar in the Synagogue was not only significant because of the symbolism of unity and peace within a multi-faith community, but also because for 44% of the attendees this was their first experience of a Synagogue.

The event enabled Young Londoners to come together in an open environment to discuss their faiths or beliefs and work together on ideas that can help bring communities together. For the school pupil attendees this was particularly significant as for many this was the first event of this nature that they had attended. The event was able to introduce just over half of the respondents to people from faiths that they had not met before despite living in multi-cultural London. There was evidence of knowledge exchange between people of different faiths and this was enhanced by the tour of the Synagogue. This resulted in a 21%-point increase in the respondents’ knowledge of other faiths post-iftar.

The event positively inspired 89% of the respondents (with 91% inspired by the speakers) and prompted 94% to feel positive about playing their part in future social action projects. The conversations generated by the cluster groups and subsequent ideas presented demonstrated a good level of engagement from the attendees.

Overall 97% of the respondents rated the Interfaith Iftar as Good or Excellent. Suggestions for improvement centred around the format, structure and diversity of the discussion groups (see recommendations below).

<sup>4</sup> Due to the full diaries of the dignitaries, three were unable to respond to the survey.

## Recommendations

### Introduction

1. Explain what an Iftar is for those that do not know.
2. Explain the format of the cluster group session (i.e. you will have one hour. In this hour we would love it if you got to know each other, exchanged information about your faith or beliefs and discussed ideas that can bring young Londoners together. The notes on the table will guide you more on the format of the evening)

### Cluster Groups

1. Ensure all cluster groups (including the adult groups, sponsor tables and school groups) are as diverse as possible
2. Consider dispersing the school sixth formers within the non-school cluster groups (with advice from school teachers). Or mix Westminster Academy pupils with the Jewish Faith School pupils – they had a lot to share.
3. Ensure discussion topics are printed in bold in large type on each table – so they are not missed.
4. Ensure all groups have a moderator who has been primed and is experienced at handling large groups.
5. Consider limiting the cluster groups to Maximum 8 people
6. Provide table with seating for each and limit noise pollution if possible.

### Presenting or Sharing Ideas

1. Let cluster groups decide how to present this to the speakers (some groups may have more than two who would like to present)
2. Consider providing each cluster group with a flip-chart or Giant post-it notes so that they can put their ideas up for everyone else to see and discuss during meal time – this may promote discussion and/or get people excited about social action.
3. You could also have a pledge wall – ‘I pledge to talk to more people about interfaith events’, ‘I pledge to invite someone to my religious space from another religion’, ‘I pledge to talk to my headteacher about starting an interfaith network between schools’ etc...

### Meal

1. Provide seating during meal times so that conversations can continue over dinner

### Progression

1. Give follow-up advice and help to those wanted to start a new project or set up a community event (often young people lack the confidence to do this without support from older more experienced people).
2. Provide an online support network that could give advice and guidance
3. Introduce young people to charities and agencies that already do this (leaflets – emails)

Opportunities were needed to link to the speakers and the attendees after the event:

1. Provide each speaker with a summary of the ideas and discussions that took place at the event (so that they can consider these in their own time)
2. Provide the attendees with a follow-up email summarizing the ideas had and inviting them to add more
3. Provide attendees with any news relating to whether any of the speakers followed-up on any of their ideas and what impact it had on them.

## Year on Year Comparison

The following table provides a summary of the 'agree' or 'strongly agree' results from 2017 and 2018:

Question	2017 (% Agree & Strongly Agree)	2018 (% Agree & Strongly Agree)	Difference (% point)
I feel positive about the experience that the interfaith iftar provided	96%	85%	<b>-11%</b>
I was inspired by the events at the Interfaith Iftar	90%	89%	<b>-1%</b>
I will keep in contact with some of the people that I met at the event	72%	88%	<b>+16%</b>
I feel that I am more knowledgeable about other faiths after this event	90% (+33% pre to post)	79%	<b>-11%</b>
I have met people at the Iftar from faith groups that I had not met before?	55%	55%	<b>Equal</b>
I feel confident that I can play a part in bringing communities together	94%	92%	<b>-2%</b>
I think communities coming together can affect positive change	100%	96%	<b>-4%</b>
I want to take part in more social action projects with people from different faiths	92%	94%	<b>+2%</b>
Please state how positive or negative you feel about the relationship between different faith communities right now	62% (mean, pre-event) 68% (mean, post-event) Difference = 6%	58% (mean, pre-event) 64% (mean, post-event) Difference = 6%	<b>Equal difference</b>
OVERALL RATING	Data not collected in 2017	97%	
RATING – Inspiration of speakers	85%	91%	<b>+6%</b>
RATING – Organisation of Event	83%	88%	<b>+5%</b>
RATING – Discussion Groups	78%	76%	<b>-2%</b>
RATING - MEAL	90%	97%	<b>+7%</b>