

THE COVENTRY SACRED SPACE INITIATIVE



REPORT OF OPENING SUMMIT

22nd January 2020, The Welcome Centre



An initiative to honour and celebrate Coventry's 'arrivals hall' for communities in need of sanctuary and a new home. A space for creativity, hope and healing, where enterprise and industry is incubated and cultivated by all.



A. OVERVIEW

Representatives of Coventry's diverse religious, cultural and interested communities and groups came together at the Welcome Centre on Wednesday 22nd January 2020 to begin the process of developing the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative. They were joined by representatives of West Midlands Police, the Home Office, City Council and other statutory bodies and agencies. The Summit was organised by the Coventry Safety and Security Working Group and supported by Coventry City Council.

The new initiative will see communities working with partners to transform the wide area, at the centre is the Swanswell Park. The area is acknowledged to be at greatest need in West Midlands, with many local people having few opportunities and facing health challenges. It will create a new, welcoming environment for newcomers to the City, students and long-term residents alike.

The great majority of the 80 delegates felt more informed about the Initiative as a result of the Summit, and many felt even more passionate about it. There was a strong desire to make progress and to get some "easy wins" as a precursor to more ambitious actions.

B. PRESENTATIONS

1. Introduction and compère

Steve Stewart, Executive Director, Careers England



Mr Stewart opened the meeting and said how pleased the organisers were to see a full room and to sense the excitement that those present felt about the Initiative. The purpose was to, ensure local communities, leaders and activists of Places of Worship and other stakeholders in the area are engaged meaningfully in the design, purpose and product of The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative, the Programme. (Attachment 1)

2. Welcome

Cllr Abdul Salam Khan, Chair, Deputy Leader, Cllr Khan said the Initiative presented a wonderful opportunity to benefit a deprived area with many vulnerable residents. The policy of the City Council was zero tolerance for racism and xenophobia and it was inspiring to see the different faith communities of the city coming together to address these problems in the Hillfields area.



3. Our Coventry (The Present)

Superintendent Phil Healy, West Midlands Police



Supt Healy's slide presentation can be seen at [\[link\]](#). He said the Initiative was needed to transform lives, provide hope, support trust and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. It deployed faith loyalty & could connect with Neighbourhood Watch, City of Culture & other programmes. Issues to be addressed would include community buy-in, funding & communications.

4. Sacred Coventry (The Past)

Manjit Kaur, Working Group

Ms Kaur's slide presentation can be seen at [\[link\]](#). She said there was a great history of cooperation between faith groups in Coventry. People used to help each other out. Swanswell Park, as a place of both fame and infamy in the past, was an ideal location for a new place of great spirituality – giving positive life experiences to underpin education in the City.



5. The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative

Mohammed Bashir & Deepak Naik



Mr Bashir said constructive unity between faith communities was already a feature of life in Coventry. The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative had emerged from a joint commitment to protect places of worship and improve the Swanswell Park and surrounding area, and fitted in well with other initiatives. He introduced members of the Working Group.

Mr Naik explained that the Swanswell Park area included many iconic buildings and important organisations, and was capable of expansion. It could be a place of dream and memory, stillness and joy, festivals and merriment. It could be an exemplary plastic-free amenity and a place to welcome students and new residents. The next step is to secure funding and develop a business plan.



6. Coventry Tomorrow (The Future)

Jamie Deas, Director of Strategy & Integration, Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust



Mr Deas warmly welcomed the Initiative, and said it fitted well with Coventry Hospital's vision for a healthy and thriving city. The NHS is keen to work collaboratively with community groups to support better health and welfare outcomes.

Eleanor Richman

Counter Extremism Unit, Home Office

Ms Richman gave a presentation on the Home Office's present priorities and actions on Counter-extremism and combatting hate crime in places of worship. (Presentation available on request.)





- 7. International Café – Transforming the Initiative into actions, projects and activities**
Introduced by Balbir Sohal, Working Group.
See Section B for transcripts.

8. Way Forward and Pledge

Deepak Naik

Following the International Café, Mr Naik said the next steps would be to develop a business plan & set up a delivery body. To launch the Initiative during national Inter Faith Week in November 2020. He invited all those present to complete the Pledge in their packs, setting out how they could contribute to the development of the Coventry Sacred Space. A summary of responses is in Section E.



9. Decisions and Approval

Steve Stewart asked those present to say “yes” or “no” to eight key Decisions set out in Mr Naik’s slide pack, as set out below. All of these were approved.

Decisions

- i. We like the idea of the Coventry Sacred Space and support the Initiative.
- ii. We like the way forward as proposed and will support its delivery.
- iii. We request the Safety and Security Working Group to continue anchoring the Initiative.
- iv. We give permission to Together in Action to make applications for funding and secure other resources.
- v. We give permission to develop a WhatsApp group for the Initiative.
- vi. We promise to promote the Initiative in our community/organisation and whenever opportunities occur.
- vii. We will send a supporting email for the Initiative.
- viii. We will consider making a financial donation or grant.

10. The Opportunity and the Journey

Prof Guy Daly

Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students, University of Coventry



Prof Daly expressed he had been excited by the Initiative because its new and fits well with the plans for the City and the University, who offer support of the Initiative and said he looked forward to working with the organisers.

11. Thanks and farewell

Ghulam Vohra, Working Group

Mr Vohra thanked everyone for their enthusiastic participation and praised the team for their efforts.

Everyone confirmed the purpose of the Summit as stated by Steve Stewart at the start had been achieved.



C. SUMMARY OF TABLE DISCUSSIONS (“International Café”)

1. Well-being, Health & Sport



- * Additional support needed on mental health, including dementia.
- * One idea is a Community Walk, maybe with a theme of the Golden Rule, and populated with yellow flowers/shrubs.
- * Need to link ideas around physical & mental health. Mini-walks?
- * Integrate the faith centres – open days?
- * SS area is neglected by the City Council
- * Host the Coventry Peace Walk within the Sacred Space?
- * Community coffee tables/Friendship benches
- * Foster a sense of positivity & pride
- * Safety is an issue – need better lighting
- * Nature/rewilding; gardens/allotments
- * More physical activity for adults
- * We should seek collaboration with sports clubs
- * Develop cycle routes & improve infrastructure to support physical activity
- * Activating the inner space, though Tai Chi, litter picking, park/open space activity,
- * Link with Connecting Orchards project
- * Need a Health and Wellbeing Framework, maybe including the New Economics Foundation’s 5 Ways to Wellbeing, Social Prescribing link workers, Train the Trainer
- * There need to be opportunities for people to contribute & co-produce, leading to a sense of belonging and self-worth
- * Bring art/culture, sport, food, City of Culture, Creative Health Alliance and wellbeing together by holding a Festival in the SS that welcomes everyone & celebrates art/heritage/ culture/food/diversity/sport/physical activity/movement & dance
- * Link with Coventry CC/Sport England Priority Place work – working in Foleshill, Council-led (Jon Hunt), activating faith centres through physical activity

2. Enterprise, Regeneration & Business



- * Physical regeneration and Emotional & Spiritual Regeneration go together
- * Fix fundamentals, promote a wish to belong
- * The student population has great potential as a resource
- * Need to change the area's reputation to promote business start-ups
- * A regular open-air market? Vendors e.g. street food
- * Attract a museum to Swanswell
- * Coventry has rich cultural diversity, reflected in e.g. the City of Culture 21 Streets initiative
- * Area can be intimidating, there has to be a reason to go there
- * Change approach to regeneration: it should be about buildings, open spaces and people
- * What already exists that we can work with? Hills FM? Greenspace?
- * Find out what young people want, and involve them in design & delivery
- * Consider other models e.g. Hackney – financial incentives to encourage creativity
- * Involve local community advocates/ambassadors – “Take back the streets”
- * Need to embrace new manufacturing technologies – the Green revolution
- * Regeneration requires new jobs and skills, and security so that residents/businesses can flourish
- * Transport links need to be rationalised, with different modes of transport

3. Culture, Arts & Movement



- * The facelift of Swanswell can be symbolised through visual art forms
- * A street fair to celebrate our heritages
- * Therapeutic value of art & culture
- * An audit of newcomers' art experiences
- * Connect places of worship through social events, architecture tours

- * A Prayer Walk?
- * Youth groups to be encouraged to think about culture, arts and movement
- * Annual Sacred Space event for all faiths
- * A performance and visual art trail – “Move and explore”
- * Arts as a route to learning
- * Universal community arts access, including for schools. “Art is for Everyone”
- * Vital to link with City of Culture
- * Arts provide a safe space for human encounters
- * “Coventry in the Evening” – lighting displays etc. But what about parking?
- * Need to secure funding, the arts are expensive. Application to Arts Council?
- * Arts provide a stimulus & talking point for the community, especially outdoor pieces
- * Work with the Arts faculty at the University

4. Plastic Free Plus



- * “Plastic free” is unrealistic, let’s aim for less plastic – minimising plastic use
- * We are surrounded by plastic! Including hidden plastics e.g. wet wipes, gum
- * Swanswell Park is full of plastic bags, look dreadful and harm wildlife e.g. swans
- * Could be a business opportunity, e.g. making reusable bags out of old saris
- * Could paper bags replace 10p plastic bags? What about the cost?
- * Reduce plastic coating e.g. in hospital inhalers
- * Use 100% recycled cartons for events
- * Could ban plastic straws. Branded paper straws a good advertising opportunity
- * There is confusion between ‘good plastic’ and ‘bad plastic’
- * An organised litter pick – defending nature in our city
- * Places of worship should re-use plastic and avoid one-use plastics
- * We need to upscale litter picks to a proper community recycling venture (“Clean Up!”) – community hubs for recycling and waste education, map where the plastic litter is, build awareness of recycling (how, where, when, what it looks like, what happens if we don’t do it, signposting to waste-free businesses)
- * Consider other creatures – reconciliation with the Earth
- * Wheelie bins are a big community concern – is there a better way? e.g. bin refuges
- * Changes in rubbish mean we now have 3 massive bins & lots more rubbish. We need weekly collections
- * We must take personal responsibility
- * Get milk delivered in recycled bottles or cartons
- * New communities do better, e.g. cooking from scratch, sharing, minimising waste – let’s learn from them
- * Great potential for youth projects – youth centres, religious youth groups, SS can be a vehicle for outreach to the youth

5. Safety, Crime Prevention & Solidarity



- * Places of worship must be part of Neighbourhood Watch, and nominate single NW Coordinators to report to the police
- * Places of worship could adopt a street as a 'place of sanctuary'
- * Offer particular support to newcomers e.g. inviting them into places of worship
- * Work with refugee centres
- * Places of worship and youth clubs to offer a Street Watch service, timetabled to fit round worship times, reporting to police
- * Faith groups should show solidarity with each other, recognising & celebrating diversity as well as similarities. 'We're in it together'
- * Better lighting in Swanswell Park – be mindful of sight lines and openness
- * Faith groups need training in how to share their faith as a culture, not proselytising. Places of worship should be seen as inviting community centres
- * Need to make sure places of worship are safe; e.g. they could come together to lobby the Council for extra CCTV
- * Places of worship could invite local young people to choose suitable furniture
- * Apply to Pocket Parks (grants up to £25k) to improve Swanswell, it works
- * A 'pop-up parklet' can host activities/festivals/park runs and deter crime/ASB
- * Remember local identities – Hillfields doesn't care about Wood End – need to galvanise different localities to look after the local environment together
- * What about a Swanswell Active Community e.g. to look after local addicts?
- * How to get police interacting with young people? Police Youth Forum? Neighbourhood policing? Will an increased police presence scare young people?
- * Fear of crime is often worse than crime itself, e.g. avoiding underpasses
- * Even smiling at/acknowledging strangers can help a place feel friendlier
- * Could places of worship nominate individuals to join a multi-faith security team?
- * Could also have their own security teams to address everyday threats,
- * Conduct crime reduction surveys of target sites
- * Proper training will be needed for those involved, especially NW coordinators
- * Be mindful of people who don't feel comfortable in places of worship – will heightened security put them off?
- * Places of worship can be a voice for communities, e.g. hosting cultural activities to bring people together
- * Need more inter-faith exchanges, as in Luton
- * Need to start young – what about exchanges between Sunday schools and madrassahs?
- * Local people need to look for simple solutions, e.g. bins for needles & signposting to services, rather than moving away

- * Re-open a youth centre, to reduce youth crime and facilitate police youth outreach
- * DOCU “Design Out Crime” advisor can review plans; Violence Reduction Unit could assist
- * Faith groups to share training and resources relating to safety/security
- * Crime prevention events in places of worship
- * Police should be sure to work in partnership with other agencies, & pool resources
- * Faith leaders should communicate on issues relating to security & safety
- * Could crime prevention training be given to community youth groups, e.g. by Community Support Officers
- * Understand the connections between poverty and crime
- * Physical activity can be a good way to address addiction issues
- * Could young people become Street Wardens? help prevent problems in later life

6. Knowledge, Education & Training



- * What do we need? – analyse training needs
- * Link with National Curriculum if possible
- * Who delivers the necessary training?
- * Draw on faith communities’ cultural knowledge
- * Link to local schools
- * Theme groups to conduct skills analysis
- * Involve students in delivering activities
- * Present Coventry’s extraordinary history
- * Educate residents by giving opportunities for friendly encounters with faith groups
- * Create a Welcome Pack for new residents, with contributions from each faith, or a series of booklets on single faiths
- * Places of worship to host talks and open days
- * Be inclusive of all faith groups in events etc, even if small
- * How do we measure impact?
- * Include non-religious belief systems e.g. meditation, Humanism
- * Involve young people & elderly people in writing resources, make them intergenerational
- * Stress that without a sense of belonging, people resort to escapism e.g. drugs, gangs
- * Use SACRE and Cathedral Schools Network to connect schools to the Sacred Space
- * City College, Sidney Stringer, Eden Girls School could have educational spaces within Sacred Space
- * Make use of Coventry University’s connections with schools and community groups, and of the growing cooperation between Coventry and Warwick Universities
- * Climate change education is essential, including local energy knowledge/capacity, reconciliation with the Earth, tangible/usable green resources

- * There need to be both formal and informal opportunities to help local people understand about diversity
- * Train local people as trainers, to encourage peer support
- * Audit local educational attainment, to provide a baseline and identify gaps/opportunities
- * Think about education for those not in education – the “hidden children”
- * Conduct thorough research on local educational need
- * ‘Prevent’ education should not only be in schools – open days and workshops?
- * School trips to places of worship
- * Fits well with Citizenship GCSE
- * New students in the city should be given information, e.g. of sacred space

7. Threading the Sacred Space Together



- * Definitely need a Sacred Space website to create awareness & give information
- * Define what Sacred means; develop an outward focus to make these concepts intelligible to a secular public
- * Use local people’s knowledge: ambassador programme for residents, welcome walks, a Welcome Centre, showing pride in the area
- * The Sacred Space to host the Peace Walk
- * Cultural activities indoors and outdoors that bring the community together
- * Make the underpass more welcoming
- * Ensure local communities are fully consulted. They need to feel they ‘own’ the SS
- * Create a walking guide to Places of Worship in the “Sacred Mile”, architectural interest
- * Set up a WhatsApp group so we know which places of worship are involved
- * Work with Active Communities Networks in NW and SW Coventry
- * Need to quickly map out the geographic extent of the Sacred Space, though the boundary must be flexible/expandable
- * Consider intergenerational activities
- * Promote the West Midlands region through messaging to residents and worshippers
- * Educate the community – manage everyone’s expectations about the Sacred Space
- * SS needs to be accessible to the disabled community, and be mindful of care & support needs and physical access (including to places of worship)
- * Support community leaders to ensure two-way communication between communities and stakeholders. How do we ensure that all communities get the information they need?
- * Give young people the opportunity to be involved in project they wouldn’t normally be involved with
- * Think about the “Wellness of the City”. What does Coventry need?

- * Kingfield Road wants to do more to welcome newcomers and join in community life
- * Involve young people in future Sacred Space planning meetings
- * Understand the connections between jobs, skills, addiction and homelessness
- * Use the iconic status of the University at the heart of the target area
- * Get the signage right – safe, green, informative, welcoming to those who feel lost
- * Avoid tall buildings – they don't help. Loss of natural daylight
- * Learn from what they've done with town walks in Leamington and Solihull – peaceful green explorations
- * Get marketing, branding and social media presence right
- * Think about the common values that make us similar, and agree what these are before you start
- * Scriptural quotes along the path, or pictures of inspirational individuals?
- * Reach out to addicts by providing sharps bins, clean needles, safe use locations, counselling?

8. Don't Forget



The Coventry Safety and Security Working Group (Members)

- Mohammed Bashir, Dr Jotangia
- Manjit Kaur, Fred Kratt
- Janey Manton, Jean Prescod
- Balbir Sohal, Ghulam Vohra
- Deepak Naik

- * The Sacred Space should commemorate those who are no longer here, but in a way that doesn't exclude young people
- * Events should be visibly inclusive
- * We shouldn't forget people outside the immediate geographical area; how can we include them?
- * And we mustn't forget those who have lived in the area for ages, while we are welcoming new arrivals
- * Don't forget local businesses – they should understand how the CSS benefits them
- * Remember to celebrate the unusual and quirky – celebrate difference!



D. ANALYSIS OF EVALUATION FORMS

41 Evaluation Forms were completed by participants. The following section summarises the feedback given, and presents learning points (in **bold**).

1: Overall – how do you feel about the following?

	Areas	Very Low	OK	Good	High	Very High
1	Was your time well used?	0	3	9	13	16
2	Do you feel respected?	0	1	8	11	21
3	Do you feel informed?	0	0	9	12	20
4	Did the event meet your expectations?	0	2	8	14	17
5	Are you clear of the next steps?	2	3	11	12	13
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent initiative & much needed. • Really great initiative & offers exciting opportunities to get involved. • Ambitious & noble aims. Evolution rather than revolution approach needed. Patience needed as it will take time. • Very interesting event. I am happy to be involved. • Very interesting. • Fantastic day. 					

Analysis

- 38 out of 41 (92.7%) felt that their time had been well used, with 16 (39.0%) recording the most positive feedback possible.
- 40 out of 41 (97.6%) said that they had felt well respected.
- All the participants felt better informed about the Initiative.
- 39 out of 41 (95.1%) felt that the event had met their expectations, with the remaining 2 feeling neutral rather than negative.
- 36 out of 41 (87.8%) felt clear about the next steps, though 5 felt some degree of uncertainty;
- The comments were universally positive.

2: Quality – how would rate the following areas?

	Areas	Very Low	OK	Good	High	Very High
1	Invitation letter	0	4	12	12	11
2	Registration	0	3	13	12	13
4	Venue	0	0	8	15	18
5	Refreshments	0	3	12	14	12
6	Welcome pack	1	0	10	14	16
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent lunch! • A nice space for training. Event was well organised & attended. • Would have liked some veggie sweets. • A bit last-minute but I'm glad I was invited! • Dairy free options? • Everything surpassed even my wildest expectation. • Lovely venue. • Welcome pack is largely pledge forms and feedback forms. 					

Analysis

- Two people indicated that they had not received an invitation letter. Of those that did, 35 (89.7%) rated its quality as good or better. Some felt the invitations were a bit last-minute; this might be addressed in future events.
- All the participants were at least satisfied with the registration process, with 13 (33.3%) rating it as excellent.
- All the participants liked the venue and were impressed by the organisation of the event.
- All the participants rated the refreshments as OK or better, though the absence of dairy-free options and vegan sweets was noted.
- One person found the welcome pack unsatisfactory (though all the others felt it was helpful). Can more written materials about the Initiative be included in packs for future events?

3: Programme – how would rate the following elements?

	Elements	Very Low	OK	Good	High	Very High
1	Welcome	0	1	14	13	13
2	Our Coventry (Present)	0	2	10	12	17
3	Sacred Coventry (Past)	0	1	16	8	16
4	Coventry Sacred Space Initiative	1	2	10	12	16
5	Coventry Tomorrow	1	2	16	8	14
6	Transforming the initiative into actions, projects and activities	0	2	9	13	17
7	Way Forward & Pledge	1	3	11	13	13
8	The Opportunity and the Journey	1	3	12	11	14
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Such a wonderful idea. The Home Office speaker was poor. • Needed an input from Afro-Caribbeans in the Hillfields area, and other communities. • Sacred Coventry section gave good context. Table discussions format was really good model for gathering ideas across the room. (x2) • All good, bit rushed but as needed. • Informative & well organised. • I don't feel able to fully commit to many of the things and would have appreciated more opportunity to talk about reservations. 					

Analysis

- The programme received overwhelmingly positive feedback. The proportion of participants rating each of the programme elements as Good or better was:
 - Welcome – 40 out of 41 (97.6%)
 - Our Coventry (Present) – 39 out of 41 (95.1%)
 - Sacred Coventry (Past) – 40 out of 41 (97.6%)
 - Coventry Sacred Space Initiative – 38 out of 41 (92.7%)
 - Coventry Tomorrow – 38 out of 41 (92.7%)
 - Transforming the initiative into actions, projects & activities – 39 out of 41 (95.1%)
 - Way Forward and Pledge – 37 out of 41 (90.2%)
 - The Opportunity and the Journey – 37 out of 41 (90.2%)

- Although all the elements received some neutral (OK) feedback, four also received some negative feedback: Coventry Sacred Space Initiative, Coventry Tomorrow, Way Forward and Pledge, and The Opportunity and the Journey.
- Among the reasons given for negative feedback were the lack of representation from the Hillfields area, particularly the African-Caribbean community (
- The table format for the group discussions was widely appreciated,

4: *Participation – from your observation, how would rate the level of participation?*

	People	Very Low	OK	Good	High	Very High	
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some speakers did not follow the topic. Limited time for questions. • It was interesting to note how enthusiastic participants were to become involved. • A great morning! • Maybe invite more young people. • So pleased to be here! • Good community engagement. • It was a privilege to hear deeply committed speakers. • I felt that the pledging session was a way to rubber-stamp an initiative and not a real way to contribute. 						
	5	Facilitators	0	2	10	11	18
	4	Participants	1	1	13	14	12
	3	Speakers	0	1	8	14	18
	2	Organisers	0	1	8	13	19
	1	You	1	2	12	11	15

Analysis

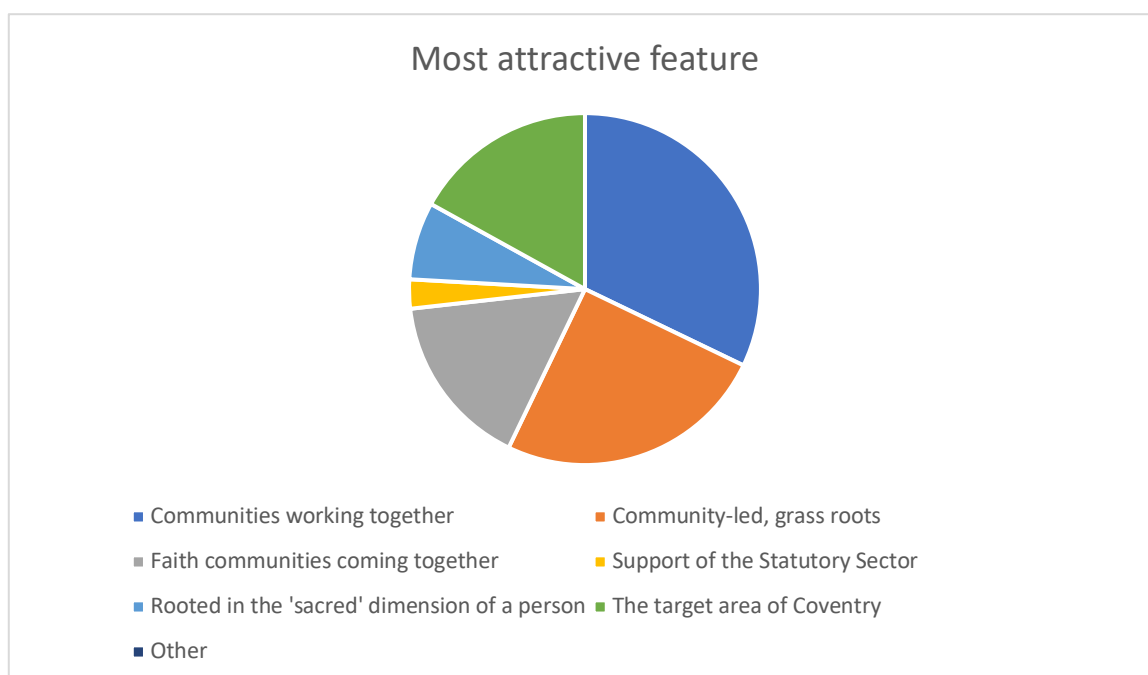
- Some felt that this question was worded ambiguously; the analysis below assumes that it refers to the quality of people's contributions.
- Unsurprisingly, 38 out of 41 (92.7%) felt that their own contribution was Good or better.
- 40 out of 41 (97.6%) rated the contribution of both the organisers and the speakers as Good or better.
- A slightly lower proportion rated the contribution of the other participants and the facilitators as Good or better, but still the feedback was strongly positive.
- Some felt that more time should have been allocated for questions.

5: *What attracts you most about the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative?*

	Feature	Top 3	Comment
1	Communities working together	36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [P Barnett: illegible] • Community is essential • 5 is interesting
2	Community-led, grass roots	28	
3	Faith communities coming together	18	
4	Support of the Statutory Sector	3	
5	Rooted in the 'sacred' dimension of a person	8	
6	The target area of Coventry	19	
7	Other, please add	1	Creativity and expression

Analysis

- Only a minority of respondents ranked the Features 1, 2 and 3 as it was not made clear in the form that this was required. Entries have therefore been regarded as simple votes for the different Features. The pie-chart below shows how the votes were distributed.
- ‘Communities working together’ was the favourite choice. Taken with ‘Faith communities coming together’, these two Features accounted for 54 of the total 113 votes cast (equals 47.8%).
- The least popular Features were ‘Support of the Statutory Sector’ and ‘Rooted in the sacred dimension of a person’ (although the latter was noted as interesting by one participant).
- There was widespread support for the geographical focus on the area surrounding Swanswell Park.
- Only one respondent suggested another Feature: ‘Creativity and expression.’



6: *What comment or request would you make to the following?*

	To	Your request to them
1	Organisers	Continued communication/keep us informed. (x2) Well organised, clear vision. (x2) I want to be involved more in this initiative. Don't give up, keep up the good work! (x4) Involve all communities – sometimes we feel excluded. Have an early marketing campaign. Stay focused, driven and positive – this is achievable! Thank you! Please keep a long view, to give people time. Add more youth groups in the Sacred Space area, different faiths. Further work is needed to make people feel like they own the initiative, in terms of aim and scope.

2	Community Leaders	Produce guidance that they are representing the whole community. Keep conversations going. Be committed and engaged, working together. (x2) Get involved and support the project. (x3) Push a positive message. Stay focused, driven and positive – this is achievable! Be encouraged by reconciliation. Please create more awareness at grassroots level.
3	Local Authority	Are you even represented here today? Support & resource the initiative, including with finance. (x5) Improve lighting. Stay focused, driven and positive – this is achievable! Be brave, take the long view, help us change reputations. Help us with publicity and venues.
4	Key bodies e.g. Police, NHS Trust, Coventry University	Keep involved. (x2) Show backing for project. What involvement do CCC plan to have in the proposed area? Great to have multi-organisation involvement. Make Coventry safer. Support with finance and/or resource. Stay focused, driven and positive – this is achievable! Remember Coventry as a City first, support the Universities and encourage young people from all areas to claim their city centre. Pursue partnership. Keep on doing what you're doing.
5	The Government	We need better understanding of WMCA's involvement. Please support, e.g. with finance and/or resource. (x4) Stay focused, driven and positive – this is achievable! Bigger vision, longer view, less short-termism. Look at our requests sympathetically.
6	City of Culture, Commonwealth Games	Work with local orgs to bring people on board. 2021 – great opportunity to use the arts as a stimulus, place of 'encounter', representation opportunity. Involve more people and communities. Stay focused, driven and positive – this is achievable! Include every estate, show us all how we can be involved in the movement. Support the initiative, including with finance. (x5) Publicise this initiative so that we attract visitors.
7	Funding bodies	Please support this valuable project. (x6) Thing big! Think long-term. We cannot deliver the project without you.
8	To yourself, a friend	Keep close to this. I will do what I can to promote and further this project. I'm really interested to help and get involved. Keep in touch. Stay focused, driven and positive – this is achievable! Promote my city.

Analysis

- The comments have been captured in the above table. These reveal great enthusiasm for the project and a desire that the momentum be kept up.
- Specific suggestions directed at the Initiative's organisers have been highlighted in bold.

7: *Further involvement*

		Yes	No
1	Would you like to become a volunteer for the Initiative?	9	2
2	Would you like to run in the half-marathon for the Initiative in April?	4	17
3	Would you like to become a Sacred Friend?	16	6
4	Contact me; I would like to know more.	17	3

Analysis

- Only 27 of the 41 respondents (65.9%) completed this section, though some individuals may have completed the Pledge Form instead.
- Of those that did fill in this section, the clear majority wanted to become a Sacred Friend (16) and/or to find out more about the Initiative (17).
- Nine wished to volunteer, and four to run the Half-marathon.
- Several respondents said they did not know what a Sacred Friend is, and that this had not been adequately explained.
- The names and email addresses of the individuals who gave an affirmative answer to any of the four questions are listed on the following page.
- Unfortunately, some who gave an affirmative answer did not indicate their name.
- Three further possible volunteers (Tony McNally, Abdifatah Elmi and Shaun Gould) completed Volunteer Registration Forms.

8: *Any final comments, suggestions or complaints?*

Inspired and important. Love the all-encompassing definition of 'sacred' to include nature. Thank you for the invitation; I will relay this back to the Cathedral, including the Dean. Thank you very much for organising this.

I would like more information about the half-marathon. [Anne-Marie]

Great stuff/an exciting and respectful initiative – thank you! (x2)

There was no real opportunity for a 'no' or a 'I'm not sure' to be heard.

Happy to act as a resource. [Andrew Rigby]

As the Positive Images Festival secretary I am delighted to learn about your June event.

Follow up

Willing to volunteer: 11

Willing to run the half-Marathon: 3

Possible Sacred Friends: 14

To be contacted with further information: 16

E. SUMMARY OF PLEDGE FORMS

18 Pledge Forms were completed, though many of them not in full. Their contents are collected here, grouped by section. Please note the **possible actions** under Section 3, 6 and “Come and see me”; and the **support offered** in sections 1, 2 and 4.

Section 1: “I can”

Spread the word in the City of Culture now and in 2021

Support the Initiative

Be involved

Be an advocate of the Initiative

Support communities through funding

Support the Initiative

Continue attending meetings and developing conversation around 2021 and how the Initiative works with that

Provide a perspective from the youth and student communities of Coventry

Let people know more – get St Peter’s Church and Centre on board

I am happy to help in any way that I can – I like what you are doing!

Help alert the Initiative to funding options

As per our discussions

Provide advice, support and resources alongside my colleagues at the Inter Faith Network for the UK

Support the Initiative, work with partners, share ideas

Represent my community

Help sometime, though I am very busy with my own faith organisation

Continue to support the Initiative through Council community engagement support

I can participate

Section 2: “I will”

Connect the different ideas to City of Culture 2021

Promote the Initiative

Be in touch, participate as appropriate

Promote/discuss with colleagues in the Coventry University Students Union and friends

Keep in touch

Actively participate

Be present at the next meeting

Endeavour to participate as much as I am able

Continue to be involved and support this initiative

Keep up to date with the latest events

Inform my colleagues about the Initiative

Support the Crime Prevention and Safety theme

Communicate with my community

Identify ways of engaging the Council more widely

Section 3: “I suggest”

We meet to discuss ideas further

A website to promote it

Education, open days, let the whole of Coventry know what’s happening

Setting up an internal mailing list

Communicating closely and effectively with all active faith and minority communities

That PR, branding and message is really important

Having a social media presence
That the steering committee contact IFN for advice and support
Recruit volunteers from each space

Section 4: "I can give"

My creative ideas
Advice
Time, energy and ideas
Limited time – but happy to support where I can
My support, volunteering, help, funding [West Midlands Police]
Expert advice, access to local businesses
My time
My time, my ideas, my outreach
Time, encouragement of others, support, building a space in Hillfields for meetings etc
Time
Resources from IFN, especially relating to Inter Faith Week
Time

Section 5: "My hope is"

That this initiative becomes a reality
It is still going in 100 years
That this initiative is successful
To be involved
That this will have a long lasting impact on the City and continue to grow
That this isn't just a pipe-dream, and becomes a realised idea
People get behind it and draw others in
This works and can be rolled out across the country
That everything goes to plan and the Initiative launches during Inter Faith Week 2020
Success for the project
This city pulls together to create a much closer community

Section 6: "You should contact"

Shabnam.shabazi@coventry2021.co.uk and I will connect you to my colleagues
Think Active
Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University
Let me think on that...
The Arts Council – it can't hurt to ask – and Louise Lomas, part of the Imagineer team
Southfields Primary, Unto[?] University
The Inter Faith Network for the UK
Shaun.gould@victimsupport.org.uk

Section 7: "We need to"

Come together now
Be proud
Work together
Keep in touch, promote
Work together towards a common goal!
Make sure we stay open and transparent
Take the next step
Assist in any way we can
Work together, plan, share ideas, look for funding, do what we say!

Keep it up

Ticked "Come and see me" box:

Shabnam Shabazi, Coventry 2021
Luke Freer, Coventry City Council
Rebecca Slevin, West Midlands Police
Dhiran Vagdia, Vagdia Holmes
Jennifer Davis, Royal Shakespeare Company
Rev'd Bee Boyde
Shaun Gould, Victim Support
Muhammad Taghar Ali

Ticked "Keep me informed" box:

Shabnam Shabazi, Coventry 2021
Luke Freer, Coventry City Council
Carol Rank, Coventry University
Ian Cole, Coventry University Students Union
Rebecca Slevin, West Midlands Police
Dhiran Vagdia, Vagdia Holmes
Jennifer Davis, Royal Shakespeare Company
Rev'd Bee Boyde
Ruth Foster, Inter Faith Network for the UK
Angela Apparicio, Victim Support
Salam M Mzee
Valerie De Souza, Coventry City Council
Muhammad Taghar Ali

Attachment 1

The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative

An initiative to honour and celebrate Coventry's 'arrivals hall' for communities in need of sanctuary and a new home. A space for creativity, hope and healing, where enterprise and industry is incubated and cultivated by all.

The Summit

Purpose: Ensure local communities, leaders and activists of Places of Worship and other stakeholders in the area are engaged meaningfully in the design, purpose and product of The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative.

Date: Wednesday 22nd January 2020.

Arrival & Registration: 9.00am. Start Time: 9.30am – 12.30pm followed by lunch

Venue: The Welcome Centre, Parkside, Coventry, CV1 2HG

Draft Programme

- 1: 9.30 Welcome**
Deputy Leader Cllr Abdul Khan
Steve Stewart – Executive Director – Careers England
- 2: 9.40 Our Coventry (Present)**
Superintendent Phil Healy – West Midlands Police
- 3: 9.50 Sacred Coventry (The Past)**
Manjit Kaur and Friends
- 4: 9.55 The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative**
Mohammed Bashir, Community Engagement – Coventry City Council
Deepak Naik, Executive Officer – Together in Action
- 5: 10.15 Coventry Tomorrow (Future)**
Liz Gaulton – Director Public Health and Wellbeing, Coventry City Council
Jamie Deas – Director of Strategy and Integration – UHCW NHS Trust
Eleanor Richman – Hate Crime Team – Counter Extremism Unit – Home Office
- 6:** How the international café will operate- *Balbir Sohal*
- 7: 10.30 Refreshment Break**
- 8: 10.45 International Café,**
The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative – how can the Coventry Sacred Space Initiative be translated into tangible features in and around the area. And into projects that result in people and community living] in harmony with one another and bring hope & financial stability to people & families.
- 9: 11.45 Plenary - Balbir Sohal**
- 10: 12.05 Way Forward & Pledge**
Deepak Naik – Executive Officer – Together in Action
- 11: 11.55 The Opportunity and the Journey**
Professor Guy Daly - [Deputy Vice-Chancellor \(Education and Students\)](#)
- 12: 12.20 Evaluation**
Manjit Kaur, Member of the Working Group
- 13: 12.25 Thank you & Lunch**
Ghulam Vohra – Coventry Muslim Forum

Please note: A small working group will remain after lunch to review morning and agree action plan For further information please contact:

Mr Deepak Naik
Co-ordinator, The Coventry Sacred Space Initiative
Deepak.Naik@ntlworld.com

Mohammed Bashir
Chair of Coventry Safety and Security Working Group
Mohammed.Bashir@coventry.gov.uk



Warwick Hawkins & Deepak Naik
(for Together in Action)

29 January 2020