



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

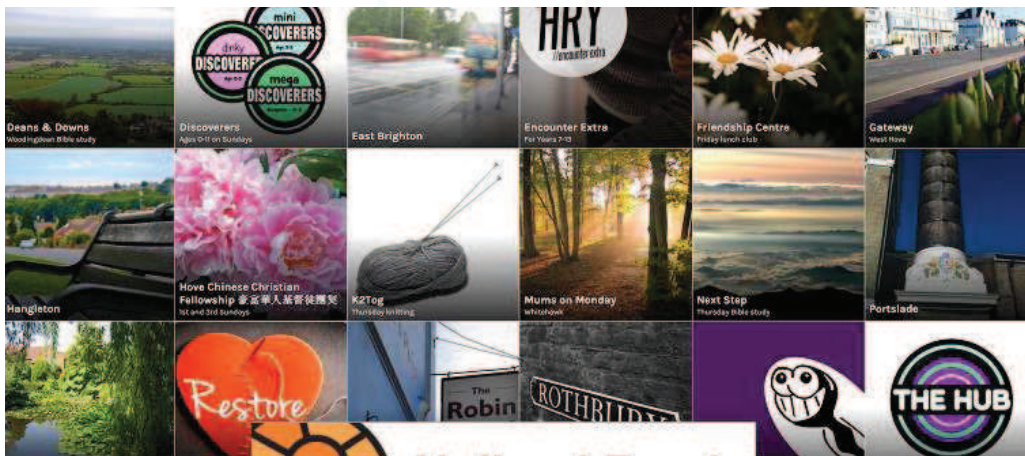
**NEIGHBOURHOODS, COMMUNITIES
AND EQUALITIES COMMITTEE
ADDENDUM**

To the Minutes

ADDENDUM

ITEM		Page
39	COMMUNITY VENUES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS	1 - 14

Audit report



“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.

For I was hungry, and you fed me.
I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink.
I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home.
I was naked, and you gave me clothing.
I was sick, and you cared for me.
I was in prison, and you visited me.

“Then these righteous ones will reply,
‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you?
Or thirsty and give you something to drink?
Or a stranger and show you hospitality?
Or naked and give you clothing?
When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

“And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’”

The parable of sheep and goats

Jesus Christ

Jerusalem, 33 AD

As recorded in the Gospel according to St Matthew ch. 25 vs. 34-40

Funded by:



Contents

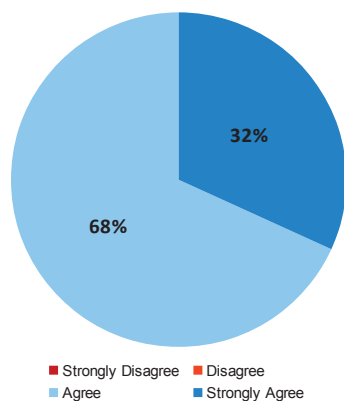
Introduction and Methodology.....	4
Personal reflections	5
Historic presence of faith groups in Brighton and Hove.....	6
Services offered by faith groups	6
Notes on types of services offered	7
Offering the hand of friendship	7
Socialising parents and toddlers	7
Looking after older people.....	7
Bringing Communities together.....	7
Feeding the hungry	8
Tackling Homelessness.....	8
Improving mental health.....	8
Looking after our youth	8
Helping people out of debt and into work.....	9
Welcoming strangers	9
Miscellaneous services.....	9
Number of different people using services.....	10
Beneficiaries of services offered	10
Staffing	11
Areas in which Faith Groups would benefit from help.....	11
Areas where faith groups are lacking the capacity or resources it needs to meet its own objectives	12
Acknowledgements.....	13

Introduction and Methodology

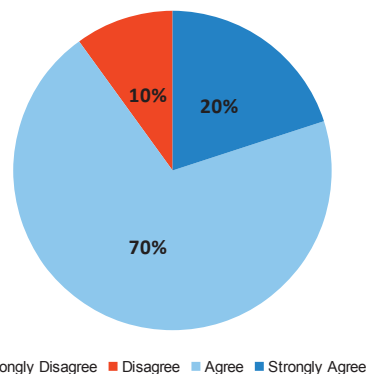
Brighton and Hove Faith in Action (BHFA) is an interfaith charity that was established in February 2014. The purpose of the BHFA is to support and coordinate social welfare (food banks, homeless shelters and debt advice) and community facing services (parent and toddler groups, support for the elderly and youth groups) delivered by faith groups in the city. In this report we merge and abbreviate the two terms “social welfare services” and “community facing services” to “social action”.

In October 2014 the BHFA conducted an online survey for all faith and secular third sector groups across the city, asking them whether they would value an interfaith group providing information and organising social action partnerships between local faith and secular groups. The results were overwhelmingly positive:

Would value an interfaith group providing information on local faith based social action projects



Would value an interfaith group promoting social action partnerships between faith groups and secular third sector organisations.



From October 2014 to May 2015 the BHFA conducted a city wide audit of 106 faith groups. About half of these were conducted with staff or ministers via interview in person or over the phone. The remainder were conducted using the faith group website where available. Audits which were done via interview have gleaned more data than those conducted via website. This report presents the findings of this audit.

The audit document heavily borrowed from Community Work’s own audit document, adapted and tailored in places for the purpose of faith groups. Our criteria was to only collect data on those services open to people on the basis of need or want, rather than faith allegiance.

Every faith group was emailed several times inviting them to engage with the audit. However, very few responded to the emails so most of our effort was spent on phoning faith groups asking them directly. Some faith groups did not respond to the phone calls, but just over half did. Some audit interviews were conducted in person at the location of the faith group office or place of worship - others were conducted over the phone.

Around 85% of all faith groups in the city are Christian. Some faith groups, mostly non-Christian groups, declined to engage with the audit on the basis that they do not provide social action services outside their own faith community. This is understandable for several reasons. Firstly, minority faith groups are often exclusively focused upon their own communities. Secondly, minority faith groups often do not have the resources to provide open ended services to the public. Finally, minority faith groups have not had an organisation that can unite different faith groups together in order to collaborate on providing interfaith social action services. Despite the lack of social action services delivered by minority faiths, the appetite to join the BHFA is notable. We have recruited 67% of all faith groups in the city, with representatives from the following 10 different faiths:

1. Christian
2. Jewish
3. Muslim
4. Buddhist
5. Bahá’í
6. Scientology
7. Spiritualist
8. Pagan
9. Brahma Kumaris
10. Hindu

The BHFA defines a faith group as an organisation that is recognised by the Office of National Statistics. We do not use any bias or favour in determining who we approach or attempt to recruit from and we treat all faith groups with equal respect. We divide faith groups into two categories; 'worshipping faith groups', such as Churches, Mosques and Synagogues, and 'non-worshipping faith groups' such as food banks, homeless charities and debt advice services that have been set up and run by worshipping faith groups to focus exclusively on a particular social need.

Personal reflections

The author of this report is the project coordinator for the BHFA and throughout the past year I have been continuously surprised by the depth and breadth of services run by faith groups.

It is hugely encouraging to know how many people are served by faith groups, often people in desperate need of assistance. It was also a huge privilege to spend many hours discussing these services by the staff, ministers and volunteers who set up and run them.

They are humble people who don't like to brag about their work, and quietly get on with selflessly serving some of the most marginalised and dispossessed members of our community.

We all owe them our gratitude for ensuring that Brighton and Hove not only welcomes the stranger, feeds the hungry, shelters the homeless, visits the lonely, leads people out of debt and helps addicts out of darkness – but also builds up and brings closer the wider community through social activities and communal endeavour.

It is my hope that this audit will go some way to prevent the value that faith groups bring to the city from being ignored or underestimated.

Lev Eakins
BHFA Project Coordinator
Brighton, July 2015

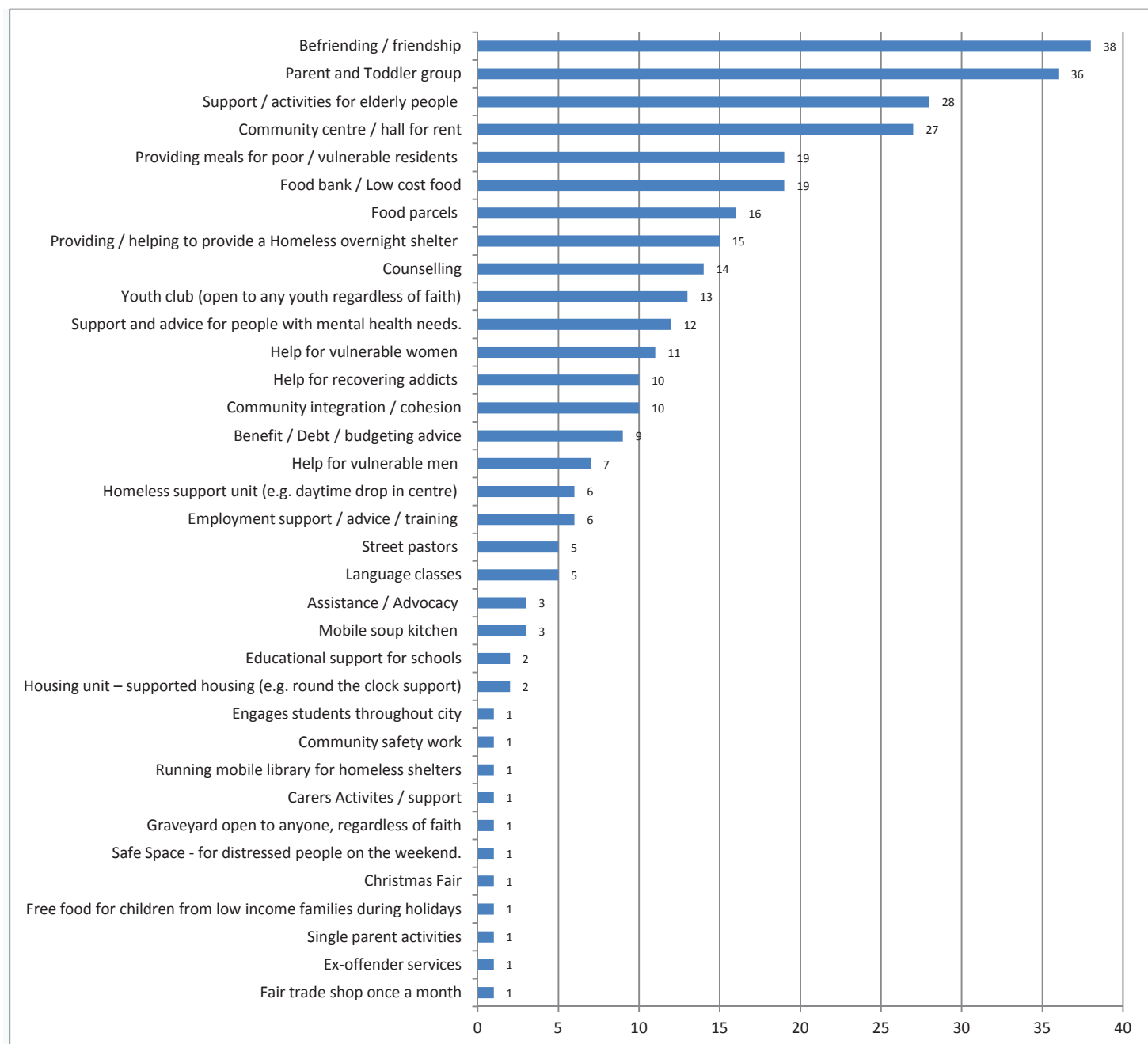
Historic presence of faith groups in Brighton and Hove

We captured what year each faith group was formed (where available) and have calculated how many years they have served the city until 2015. Faith groups have served the city of Brighton and Hove a combined total of **13,000 years**.

The oldest church building, St Peters in West Blatchington, dates back to 1037. Six other churches are between 700-900 years old, but many are considerably younger, dating back to the 18th and 19th centuries.

Services offered by faith groups

The main purpose of the audit was to capture what types of social action services are being delivered by faith groups, as seen in the following graph:



Notes on types of services offered

Offering the hand of friendship

Most faith groups (38) interviewed said they offer either formal or informal befriending services. In an informal setting this mostly takes the form of members of the faith group naturally offering the hand of friendship to those who they come into contact with, either through worship services or the social action projects they deliver. In a city where social isolation is an increasing problem, these services are a welcome boon to those suffering from loneliness.

Socialising parents and toddlers

The majority of faith groups (36) run parent and toddler groups and many report that these are very popular with their local community. Mostly these are mothers (but increasingly fathers) who bring their pre-school children to a church hall to socialise their children with others in a safe setting. They often make friends with other parents and it forms an important part of their week where they can see their friends whilst their children play games with other children or engage with craft activities supervised by staff or volunteers. Often a staff member or minister will engage the children in some form of collective entertainment such as signing a nursery rhyme together or telling a story.

It would be foolish to underestimate the social value such services represent for the children and parents who attend. This is attested to in their popularity, with one group organised by Holland Road Baptist Church having a ticketing system due to high demand. Parents would queue up in the morning to get a ticket, then go to the nearest cafe and wait for the group to begin. Demand is considerable across the city.

Looking after older people

28 faith groups run activities for elderly people, either at their building or in the community. Some ministers attend local old people's homes and run social activities there, however most run some form of social activity at their own church building. This will quite often take the form of a coffee morning, lunch or fellowship club.

Patcham Methodist church runs a very popular lunch club twice a month where older people have a chance to make and meet friends over an "outstanding two course dinner."

Bringing Communities together

Most churches across the city have a hall, or enough open space in their main building to be used for social action projects. Some, however, have dedicated community centres that are used by thousands of people across the year.

Church halls are of high utility value, especially for small local groups who need a space to meet. Political parties, tenant and resident groups, AA meetings, yoga classes and Councillor Surgeries are a small fraction of the types of groups who rent such halls, often at very affordable rates.

There are some outstanding examples of faith groups who have used their building space for community service. These are:

Faith group	Estimated number of different people using community centre
Brighthelm	12,000
St John the Baptist	5,000
St Marys via St Ann's day centre	5,000
Quakers	5,000
St Mary Magdalen	5,000
Brighton Unitarians	2,000
Dorset Gardens Methodist Church	1,000
	Total: 35,000 or 1 in 8 people across the city

Feeding the hungry

59 services involving feeding people are run across the city. These take the form of:

- regular lunch or dinner events for poor or vulnerable residents - 19
- mobile soup runs for homeless - 3
- low cost cafes such as Brighthelm
- food parcels for struggling families - 16
- collections for food banks or running a food bank itself - 19
- free food for children from low income families in the summer – One Church

Due to the difficult economic circumstances the city has endured for the last seven years, as well as a significant homeless population, faith groups across the city have recognised and are attempting to meet the need for low cost or free food. Some projects, such as the Soup Run has been running for decades, serving homeless people high quality nutritious soup every night all year round. Other projects, such as the Hangleton and West Blatchington Food Bank, a project that was established in collaboration between by St Peters and St Georges, have been set up in the last year.

Tackling Homelessness

Faith groups across the city spend a great deal of effort supporting and helping homeless people:

- Every year 15 churches take it in turns to provide a homeless shelter throughout the winter, providing warmth, companionship and shelter for individuals who aren't able to secure a bed.
- Two churches (Church of Christ the King and Sacred Heart RC Church) operate a dedicated housing unit which provides round the clock support.
- Six faith groups (St Peters CofE, St Mary CofE, All Saints CofE, One Church, Church of Christ the King and Off the Fence) operate day time drop in centres for homeless people. Off the Fence is of particular note, as their day centre 'project Anti-Freeze' is described as follows in their latest impact report: "Our day centre was accessed 8067 times by 928 individuals last year. Clients always comment on the calm atmosphere we provide in the centre, one mentioned: "I love to come here, this place is my sanctuary.""
- Several faith groups take it in turns to run the 'Carpenters Arms', a weekly Sunday lunch for homeless or vulnerably housed residents.
- The Quakers run a mobile library for homeless people throughout the city, providing a valuable alternative to boredom.

Improving mental health

Many faith groups run services helping those who are in need of mental health care. These services can range from minor complaints where somebody needs a listening ear and wise counsel, to more serious care such as those seeking to escape addiction from drugs or alcohol. 11 faith groups provide services to vulnerable women and seven provide services for vulnerable men – those people who are struggling with life and need some individual or group support to get back on their feet. The total amount of services is as follows:

- 14 counselling services
- 12 service for improving mental health
- 11 faith groups help vulnerable women and seven help vulnerable men
- 10 faith groups specialise in helping addicts into recovery

One particular service deserves its own mention. St Pauls CofE runs 'Safe Space', a place where distressed people on Friday and Saturday nights who are drunk, high or agitated can cool off and decompress in a safe environment. They are normally referred or escorted there by police, PCSOs or door staff, rather than taken to a police cell, freeing up valuable police time and resources that can spent on more pressing matters.

Looking after our youth

Faith groups run 13 youth clubs that are open to any youth, regardless of their faith. Several faith charities run educational or youth services such as Kidz Klub, City Mission and Off the Fence.

The two university chaplaincies run a variety of services aimed at helping students, as well as supporting worshipping faith groups in helping student populations in their communities. 10 faith groups report that they directly help students in one way or another. Although there are faith schools in the city, the BHFA decided not to capture this information as it was decided this realm is outside our interest.

Helping people out of debt and into work

Economic hardship, especially since the financial crash in 2008, has left many individuals and families struggling to cope. Too many people become trapped in debt after losing their job and struggle to maintain their debts even after taking low paid work.

Nine faith groups run debt advice services, with St Lukes Advice Service operating as a dedicated debt advice agency. Six faith groups help people with employment support, advice and training. Three faith groups run general assistance and advocacy services, helping those who need a louder voice.

Welcoming strangers

Brighton is a multicultural city and a tourist destination, especially for Asian and Hispanic tourists. Some decide to immigrate and 10 faith groups run community integration services, helping those who choose to live here integrate into Brighton life. Five faith groups run language classes, for those who wish to improve their English.

Miscellaneous services

Faith groups deliver a variety of other services which don't fall into the categories above such as:

- Street pastors – roaming the streets offering assistance or care for those in need
- Community safety work – working with the community to improve safety
- Help for carers and single parents
- Support for ex-offenders
- A graveyard open to anyone, regardless of their faith

Number of different people using services

The audit captured data on the total number of people using faith group social action services for the last year. We asked faith groups to only count the number of different people using the services, rather than the amount of times they have used them. So a parent and toddler attending 40 parent and toddler groups would count as two, rather than eighty.

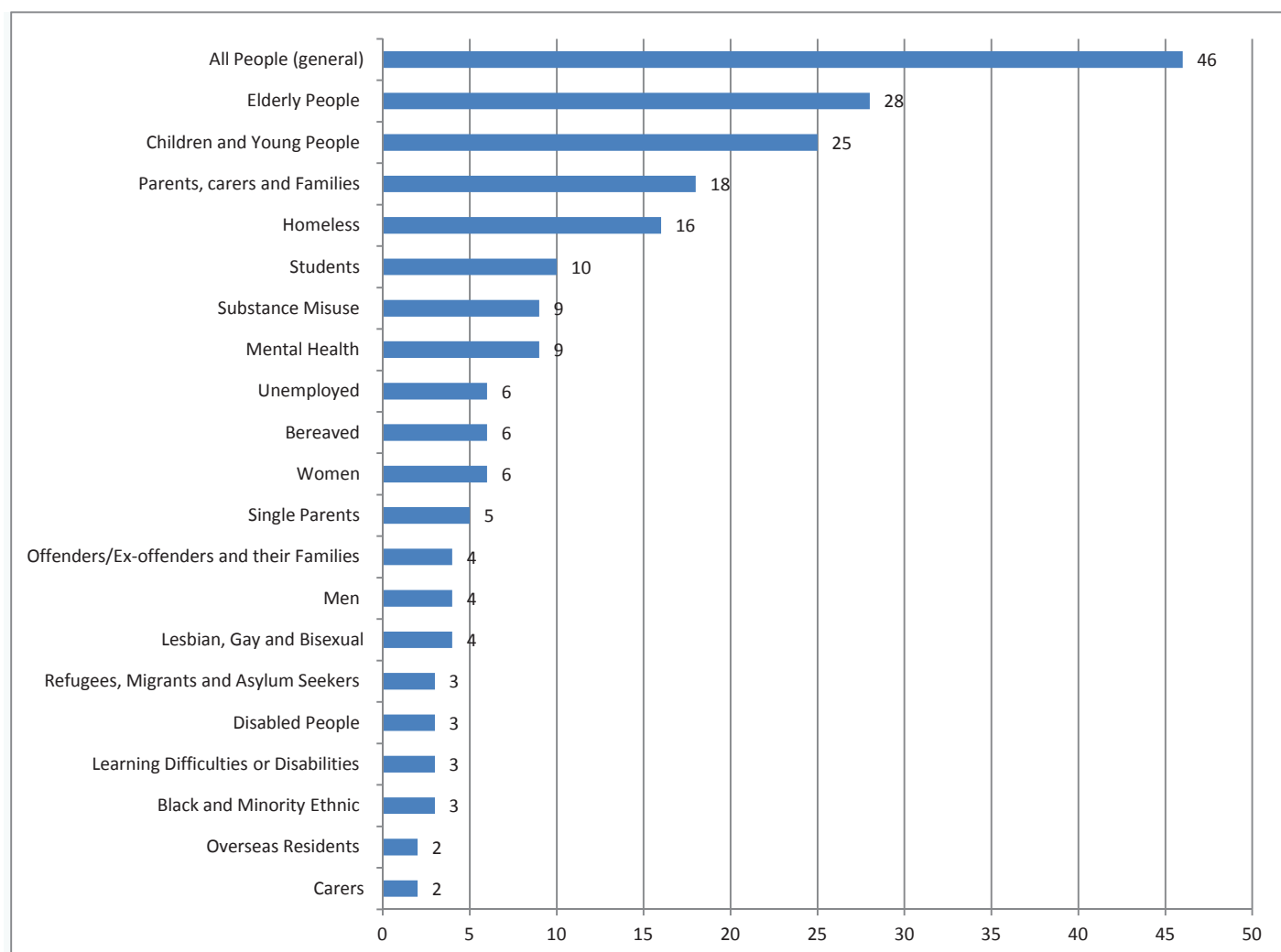
Most groups were only able to supply us with a broad estimate, rather than an accurate figure, but some were able to. Around 50% of faith groups were interviewed, and so we were unable to acquire data from the website audit on the other half.

The estimated number of people using faith group services for the last year in Brighton and Hove is 64,472, which represents 24% of the population of the city, or almost one in four people.

Due to only half of the faith groups engaging in the interview audit, the true figure is likely to be significantly higher, but not double. Although we know many of those who did not engage with the audit did so as they do not deliver many publicly facing social action services, there were a handful of active faith groups who were unreachable or declined to engage. Hove Methodists, the Coptic Church, St Georges Kempdown and the Mosques are examples where we continue to reach out to.

Beneficiaries of services offered

The following graph depicts the main beneficiaries of the services delivered by faith groups:



Staffing

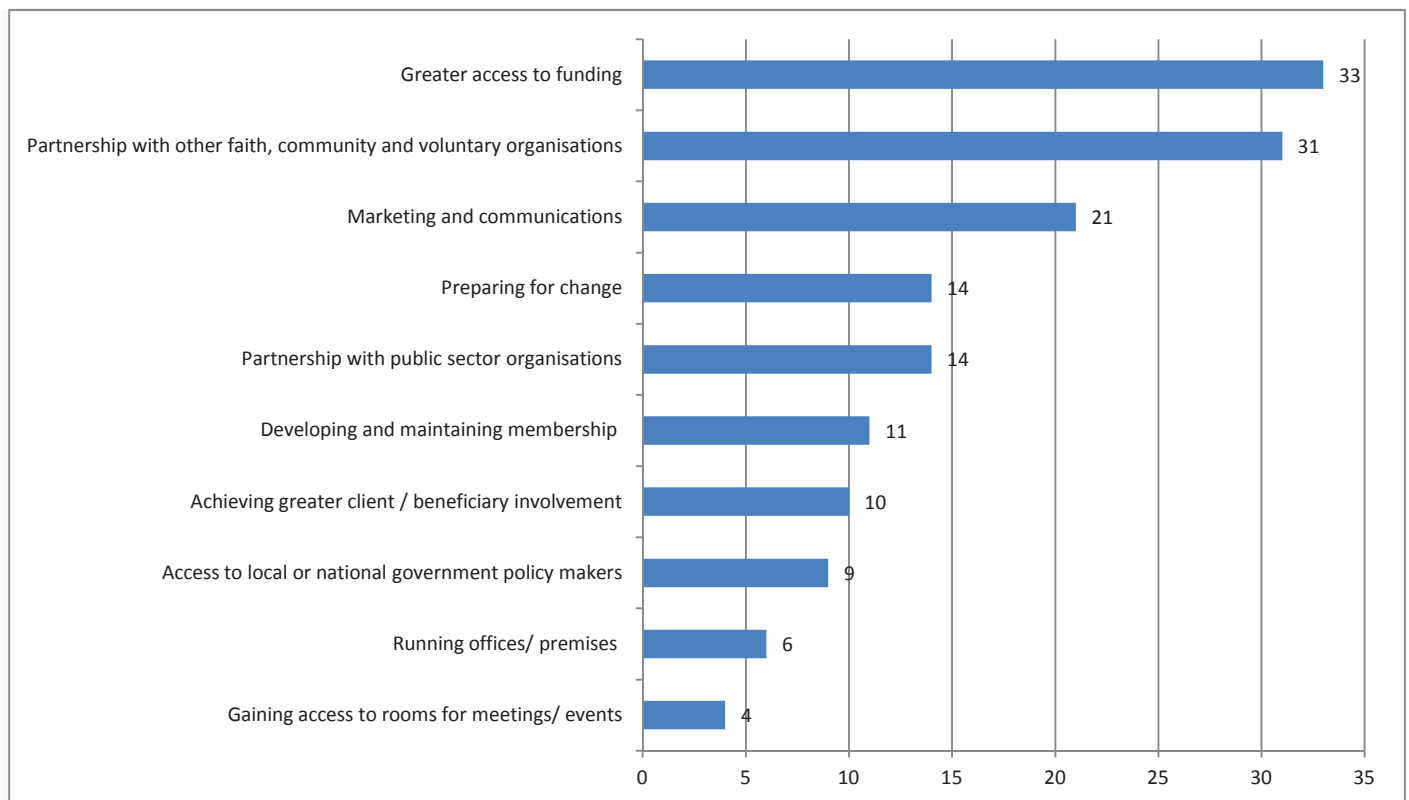
The audit captured the staffing arrangements of faith group. Here we present the total number of people who work for faith groups, the number of hours worked over one year and the potential value of that labour.

	Total number of people	Total number of hours worked over one year	Value of labour:
Management committee	600	61,555	£483,207 (If paid £7.85 per hour)
Volunteers	1391	230,412	£1,808,734 (If paid £7.85 per hour)
Paid Employees	189	68,367	£749,986 (If paid £10.97 per hour - av income rate in SE England)

We estimate that faith groups pay £0.75m a year on staffing. The 1,391 volunteers and 600 members of management committees give £2.2m pro bono worth of labour every year.

Areas in which Faith Groups would benefit from help

Of those faith groups that were interviewed, we asked what help would benefit their services:

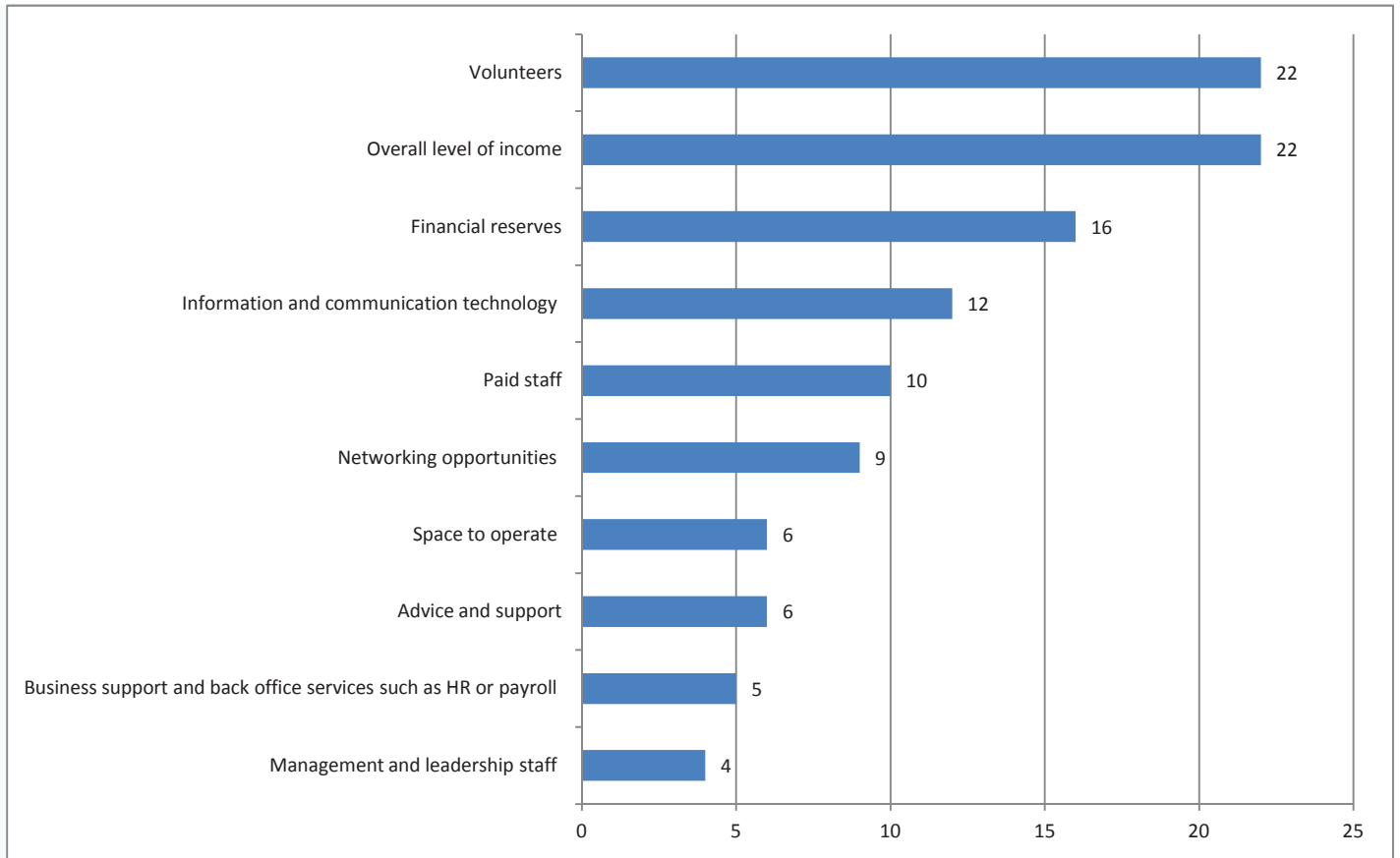


There is a clear desire for additional funding and greater connectivity among faith groups, as well as a recognition that they could do better at advertising their services.

The BHFA aims to respond to all those faith groups indicating they require help, and will work with Community Works in providing training and assistance.

Areas where faith groups are lacking the capacity or resources it needs to meet its own objectives

We asked faith groups to identify areas where they are lacking the capacity or resources to meet their own objectives:



Clearly manpower and funding are the two greatest needs, and it is encouraging that there is a strong appetite to grow their social action services.

As indicated in the previous section, the BHFA will respond to all those faith groups indicating they require help, and will work with Community Works in providing training and assistance.

Acknowledgements

The BHFA would like to thank the Big Lottery and Brighton and Hove City Council for generously funding the work that went into the data collection, analysis and composition of this report.

The Big Lottery (through Awards for All) funded the work involved in gathering almost 10,000 pieces of data and the Council funded the analysis of the data and the composition of this report. Without each of these funders this valuable work would not have been possible – we are extremely grateful for their generosity.



LOTTERY FUNDED



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