

# Understanding Equality and Diversity Faith Digest



Produced by the Corporate Research Team, Borough of Poole.

## Purpose of this Paper

This paper has been designed to help inform and service and policy planning, and aid focus and prioritisation of services. A series of 7 guides provide available research and statistical evidence relating to the varying needs, experiences and outcomes of different equalities strands in Poole. It provides a top-level view of this specific subject area and identifies contacts and resources for people who would like more detailed information. National information is highlighted in grey throughout.

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## The Local Population of Interest

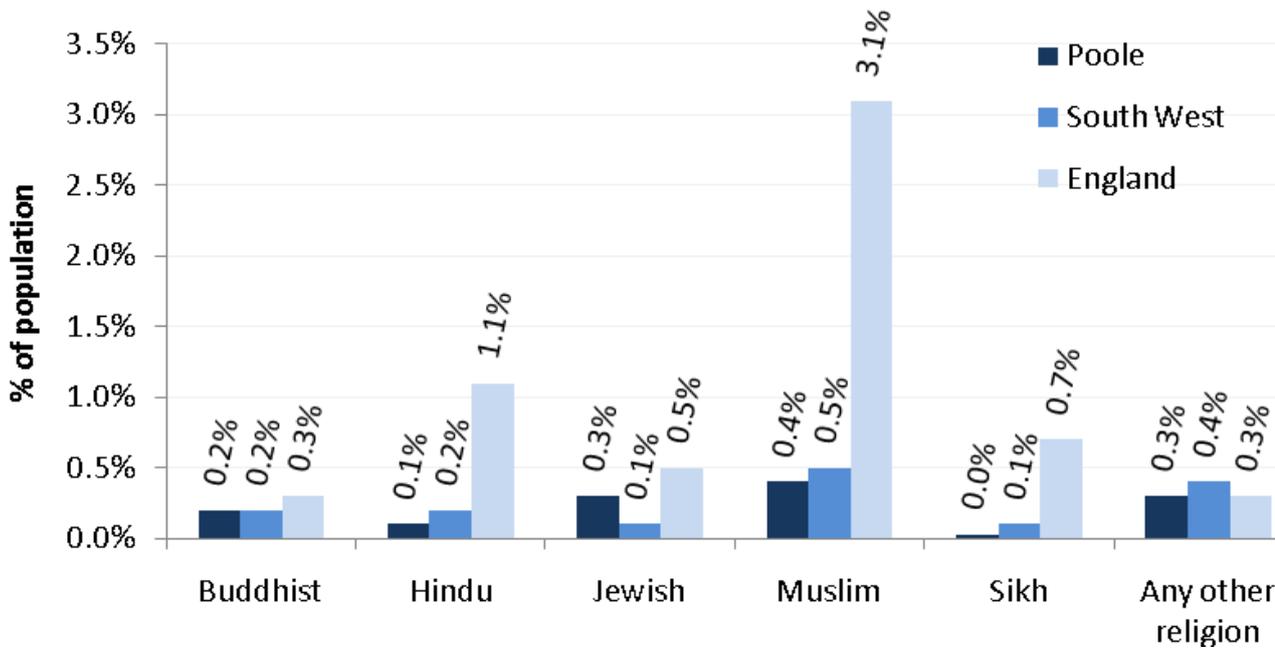
In 2001, Christianity was the main religion in Great Britain, with a population of 41 million (72% of population). The second largest group (15%) was people with no religion. After Christianity, the largest religious group was Muslims, comprising over half of the non-Christian religious population and 3% of the total population. The religion question was the only voluntary question in the 2001 census, and 8% of people chose not to state their religion (*Neighbourhood Statistics*).

The 2001 Census provides top-level data on the population of Poole by religion. 74% of the population categorized themselves as Christian, 16% stated they had no religion, 8% did not state their religion, and the remaining 1% belonged to other religions (*ONS Neighbourhood Statistics*).

Active local faith groups in Poole include Buddhist, Hindu, Chinese, Muslim, Asian, Sikh, Jewish, Baptist, Humanist and Baha'i (*Poole Borough Chaplaincy*).

The graph below shows the distribution of other religions in Poole (other than Christian and no religion) from the 2001 Census.

## Distribution of religions other than Christian and no religion



(2001 Census, ONS)

### Key Issues for this Strand

#### Health and Longevity e.g. mortality, access to healthcare

Nationally in 2001, Muslim males and females had the highest rates of reported ill health (age standardised figures of 13% males, 16% females). Rates were also high for Sikhs (10% males and 14% females). Jewish people and Christians were the least likely to rate their health as 'not good'. The highest overall rates of disability, when age was not taken into account, were found among Christians and Jews, due to the older age profiles within these groups. When age was taken into account, Muslims had the highest rates of disability, with 24% of females and 21% of males having a disability or limiting long-term illness (*Neighbourhood Statistics*).

No information available in Poole.

#### Physical and Legal Security e.g. freedom from violence and discrimination

Based on the 2006/07 British Crime Survey, there were few differences in the risks of victimisation between religious groups, although Muslims appeared to be at higher risk of some household crimes than Christians. Based on the interviews from this survey, less than 0.1% reported having been a victim of a religiously motivated crime. Religion was independently associated with high levels of worry about crime in general. Muslims and Hindus had the highest levels of worry about burglary, car crime and violent crime. Muslims were more likely to have police-initiated contact (30%) than Christians (21%) during the year 2006/07. (*Attitudes, Perceptions and Risks of Crime, 2006/07, Home Office*).

Muslims report feeling unsafe as they are easily identifiable, for example women and girls wear a hijab and men often wear a beard. Muslims can feel unsafe whilst out and about, but can also feel unsafe in their homes due to neighbours' attitudes. There can be a fear of unfair selection when redundancies arise in employment (*Bournemouth and Poole Equality and Diversity Forum, February 2009*).

## **Education** e.g. attainment, access to life-long training and learning

Nationally in 2004, a third of Muslims of working age had no qualifications, the highest proportion for all the religious groups, followed by Sikhs (20%). 17% of Buddhists and a similar proportion of Christians (15%), Hindus (15%) and people with no religion (14%) had no qualifications. Jews were the least likely to have no qualifications (7%) (*Annual Population Survey, Neighbourhood Statistics*).

In January 2004 there were almost 7,000 state-maintained faith schools in England, making up 36% of primary and 17% of secondary schools. The majority (99%) of these were Christian (*Annual Schools Census, Neighbourhood Statistics*).

There are 7 faith schools in Poole, 4 Church of England, 2 Roman Catholic and 1 combined Church of England and Roman Catholic (*Schools in Poole – Boroughofpoole.com*).

## **Standard of Living** e.g. housing, transport, independence

Nationally, Sikh, Jewish and Hindu households are the most likely to own their homes with Muslim and Buddhist households least likely to be homeowners. Muslim households are also the most likely to be living in social rented accommodation (28% in 2001) and the most likely to experience overcrowding, lack central heating and lack sole access to a bathroom (*Neighbourhood Statistics*).

Many faith communities have the need to live near a place of worship, however there is a low level of provision for some faiths in Poole, for example Hindus and Sikhs (*Borough of Poole Chaplaincy*).

## **Productive and Valued Activities** e.g. employment, workplace experience

In 2004, Jewish people were most likely to be self-employed (one third), followed by Muslims (one fifth) and Buddhists (one fifth). Certain religious groups are concentrated in particular industries; in 2004, 37% of Muslim men were working in the distribution, hotel and restaurant industry, around one in seven of Muslim and Sikh men worked in the transport and communication industry, and around a third of Jewish men worked in the banking, finance and insurance industry. 30% of Christian men worked in managerial or professional occupations, and were also more likely than Muslim or Sikhs to be working in skilled trade jobs.

Among women, Sikh, Muslim and Hindu women were most likely to work in the distribution, hotel and restaurant industry and Sikh women were also more likely to work in manufacturing (*Neighbourhood Statistics*).

No information available in Poole.

## **Individual, Family and Social Life** e.g. independence, equality in relationships

Nationally, among 16-24 year olds in 2001, those with no religion and Muslims were the most likely to be living with a partner, either as a married or cohabiting couple (19% for each group), with people with no religion most likely to be cohabiting (16%). Hindus and Sikhs are the least likely to be divorced, separated or re-married (10% Sikhs and 11% Hindus compared to 34% Christians and 43% no religion) (*Neighbourhood Statistics*).

No information available in Poole.

## **Participation, Influence and Voice** e.g. participation in decision making

A Volunteering Survey conducted by the Cabinet Office found differences in volunteering between those respondents who actively practised their religion, and those who did not. 67% of actively practising respondents gave some level of formal help (compared with 55% in other groups) and over half were regular formal volunteers (at least once a month), compared with a third or less in other groups.

Hindu respondents reported the highest levels of formal volunteering (61%), and Muslims were the least likely to give formal help (45%) (*Helping Out, 2007, Cabinet Office*).

No information available in Poole.

## **Identity, Expression and Self-Respect** e.g. Religion, Belief

In every religious group the majority of people in Great Britain described their national identity as British, English, Scottish or Welsh. 78% of Sikhs, 70% of Muslims and 69% of Hindus gave one of these British identities. People from all religious groups who were born in the UK were more likely to give a British identity than their foreign-born counterparts (*Annual population survey, 2004, Neighbourhood Statistics*).

More than half of Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Hindu adults living in England and Wales in 2001 said that their religion was important to their self-identity. Only a fifth of Christians mentioned religion as important (*Home Office Citizenship Survey 2001 - Neighbourhood Statistics*).

Key issues in Poole for Muslims include lack of dedicated burial sites facing towards Mecca, lack of prayer space in workplaces and public buildings and lack of fitness facilities for women, especially swimming facilities (*Anecdotal*).

## **Sources of Information Regarding Faith:**

The following section provides links to local reports and datasets that offer further insight into the diverse nature of the varying age groups in Poole. However, it should be noted that due to population sizes and inconsistent data monitoring, the information available at local level is often limited. For more robust, national sources of equalities information, please refer to the Improvement and Development Agency 'Equality Evidence Base', and the Equalities and Human Rights Commission 'Review of Equality Statistics'.

Most reports in this section are available from our website, [www.boroughofpoole.com](http://www.boroughofpoole.com). For access to older reports not available on our website, please contact the Corporate Research Team by email: [research@poole.gov.uk](mailto:research@poole.gov.uk), or on (01202) 633086.

## **Reports Providing Specific Information on Faith**

**Fairness for all Equalities Scheme, 2009 - 2012** – outlines the Borough's vision for positively promoting equality and respecting diversity in the community, in service delivery and employment practice. Available [here](#).

## **Reports Which Contain Analysis of Information by Faith**

**Poole's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2008** - provides a picture of the current and future needs of the local population. Available [here](#).

## Faith Information Sources

**How Fair is Britain? Equalities and Human Rights commission** – The first review that examines how far what happens in people's real lives matches up to the ideals of equality in Britain. The report brings together a range of sources including Census data, surveys and research. Report and supporting evidence available [here](#).

**Joseph Rowntree Foundation** - Independent development and social research charity, supporting a wide programme of research and development projects in housing, social care and social issues. <http://www.jrf.org.uk/>

**Knowledge Base, Equality South West Data Tool** - collates and disaggregates (where possible), by local area and by equality strand and socio-economic status, existing data from a wide range of reliable and widely used national data sets, and is capable of detailed interrogation and analysis for a range of local equality purposes. Available [here](#).

**Neighbourhood Statistics** – Allows you to find detailed statistics within specific geographic areas e.g. Local Authority, Ward, Super Output Area.

<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/>

**Nomisweb.co.uk** - service provided by the Office for National Statistics providing detailed and up-to-date UK labour market statistics. <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

**Office for National Statistics** - The Office for National Statistics produces independent information to improve our understanding of the UK's economy and society. <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/default.asp>

This paper is one in a series of seven profiling the Equalities Strands produced by the Corporate Research Team, Strategy Team, in line with I&DEA guidance on measuring equality at a local level. You can view the papers on age, disability, ethnicity, gender, social inequalities and sexual orientation [here](#).

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