



Essex Faith Covenant

The Faith Covenant is a joint commitment to a shared set of principles that guide engagement between faith communities and public services. .

It aims to promote open, practical working and strengthen community cohesion.

The principles are:

- *Faith communities are free to practice their beliefs and religious observances, and to raise their voice in public debate and to be respected, within the framework of UK law.*
- *Public services and faith-based social action should respect service users from all backgrounds, without discrimination.*
- *The voice, participation and solutions that faith communities bring are important and good engagement with the public services should enable them to be brought to bear for the benefit of the wider community.*

Both faith groups and public services will commit to working together to:

- *Pro-actively **build relationships and trust** between faith groups and public services*
- *Create opportunities to **raise awareness and share learning and knowledge** between different faith communities, and within the public services*
- *Seek opportunities to **bring people together to serve the community**, particularly the most disadvantaged*

Both faith groups and public services will use the Faith Partnership as a tool to develop activity around uniting communities to better serve Essex residents. Therefore to aid pro-active engagement with the principles the first priority the Partnership will work on together will be:

Tackling Loneliness, Isolation & disadvantage

Signatories of the covenant are invited to gather annually to share their achievements with the broader faith community and Public Services.