

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Marks, Kate](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: X-Gov Faith and Belief notes
Date: 10 October 2022 07:26:31
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Kate

Many thanks for covering this – very much appreciated. We should share details at the next F&B board, where I'm also keen we discuss the plans for IFW and how we can best support.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

From: Marks, Kate <Kate.Marks@environment-agency.gov.uk>
Sent: 06 October 2022 15:06
To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@defra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@defra.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@defra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@defra.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@defra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@defra.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@defra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@defra.gov.uk)>
Subject: X-Gov Faith and Belief notes

Hello all

And a particular hello to you [REDACTED], I look forward to working with you. Here are the notes from the X-Gov FaB meeting which has just finished.

[REDACTED] started with a reminder that InterFaith week is coming up – keen to understand how we are progressing this over InterFaith Week and what we are doing to widen participation through allowing other departments to join.

[REDACTED] – DLUHC – lead secretariat for Faith Engagement Review (Bloom Review) and BAU on wider connections between faith groups and gov departments

- Bloom Review launched in 2019, but stalled by pandemic – faith only (but gathered evidence from belief groups too)
- 21,000 responses to call for evidence, pandemic provided further evidence
- Final draft leaning towards: Faith being a positive thing for society, importance of faith literacy for policy-makers and front-line public services, including intra-faith issues, and there are wider ranging themes with specific recommendations for multiple departments. Other reviews or strategies cover antisemitism, Islamophobia, FGM. Anecdotal evidence so written to stay the right side of the legal line.
- Hopefully being published early Dec but change of Ministers may delay further.

Philosophical (or protected) beliefs [REDACTED]

- Grainger test has been established and used by employment tribunals as to whether they are beliefs.
 - The belief must be genuinely held

The belief must not simply be an opinion or viewpoint based on the present state of information available

- The belief must concern a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour
 - The belief must attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance
 - The belief must be worthy of respect in a democratic society, not be incompatible with human dignity and not be in conflict with the fundamental rights of others.
- There is now a CS Ethical Veganism network and (didn't catch the full official name, something like sex and equality network) but essentially a gender CS critical beliefs network. They are still working through the best fit for these networks, the ethical veganism network may want to make some links with us / Environmental Networks given synergies and gender critical network may find more they want to discuss with gender sponsors than belief sponsors. Further work ongoing and [REDACTED] happy to help with any wider discussions needed on these emerging beliefs. A distinction was drawn between the belief being protected and the manifestation of that belief not being protected so still a legally grey area.

CS Muslim Network

- Have really grown the network in terms expectations and delivery over the last 3 years.
- Are seeing an increase in confidence in faith literacy across the CS from members and their line managers and great feedback on the materials they have produced
- Concentrating on the lived experience of members and tie in to the Bloom Review, faith literacy, BHD, islamophobia.
- Prayer rooms – better adoption across the estate = people are still being asked to use First Aid rooms
- More data needed on faith and belief, measures on progress and inclusion and impact
- Examples shared of white Muslims feeling they can't express their faith at work (seeming 'white and Christian' protects them), senior Muslim women leaving because they don't feel that they can wear the hijab at work and because there are no powerful CS role models who do, and Muslim versus other global majority religions (a Hindu colleague held back because people thought he was Muslim).
- Overall 8 recommendations, 4 immediate challenges, looking for commitment from the Champions to support them succeeding.

Slide packs will follow, will circulate and can run through at the next Board.

Regards

Kate

Dr Kate Marks FCIWEM C.WEM C.Env C.Sci

Deputy Director

(Pronouns: s [REDACTED]) ([Why is this here?](#))


How to pronounce my name (phonetic spelling)	Kate Marks kAYt mAHks
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National flood duty manager (24/7) | 

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LGBT+_network_logo_friends



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