Building the Bridge:
Muslim community engagement in Bristol

Building the bridge

Centre for the Study of ETHNICITY and CITIZENSHIP

University of BRISTOL

PRODUCTIVE MARGINS

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

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Executive Summary

Overview

This report explores the emergence of Building the Bridge, an organisation that was established to implement the previous Government's Prevent agenda. Commentators have argued that the city of Bristol managed to turn the implementation of Prevent into a genuine collaboration between public authorities and Bristol's Muslim communities, which manifested itself in the re-branding of Prevent as 'Building the Bridge'. Building the Bridge emerged as a participatory mechanism for community engagement that established a new institutionalised relationship between Bristol City Council, the Police, various statutory agencies and Bristol's diverse Muslim community. Building the Bridge was widely celebrated as a story of local success and a model of good practice, particularly in comparison with how Prevent had been implemented and received elsewhere. Our research examined in greater detail to what extent Building the Bridge facilitated a genuinely participatory engagement between public authorities and Bristol's Muslim communities. In this report, we discuss our findings regarding the organisations' dynamics of participation and representation, the kinds of activities initiated by Building the Bridge, and offer some reflections on a possible future for Building the Bridge, beyond Prevent. Although its activities were chiefly concerned with the overall aim of preventing violent extremism, Building the Bridge enabled interventions that addressed some key community grievances and facilitated the engagement of young people, women and mosque communities in the city. For a short period of time, Prevent funding enabled a regulated form of community engagement, some of which has continued even after the withdrawal of resources.

Key findings

- Although initiated by a nationally defined political agenda, individuals involved in Building the Bridge were keen to establish a joint understanding of locally specific problems and potential solutions. Participants in Building the Bridge felt that the forum enabled them to raise public authorities' awareness of community concerns and discuss the implications of local politics and policing practices.
- Bristol's approach to implementing the previous Government's Prevent Programme provided several institutional mechanisms for Muslim community involvement, including leadership capacity-building, agenda setting powers and representation of a variety of perspectives in an advisory body.
- This ad-hoc organisational structure had a significant impact on the density of contacts and interactions between local authorities and the Muslim community, and thus addressed some of the previous deficits regarding Muslims' political representation in the city.
- The availability of funding enabled the provision of community activities, including workshops and skills development for young people and Muslim women in Bristol. Building the Bridge

provides evidence that there is great need for such opportunities beyond the limited scope of a Prevent agenda.

- While Building the Bridge sought to give voice to a diverse and multi-faceted constituency and made continuous efforts to expand its reach, a few Muslim groups preferred not to get involved with the forum. Some participants expressed concern that a number of Muslim organisations received more attention within Building the Bridge than others, and its remit could have been extended with regard to ethnic and class based diversity.
- A currently ongoing discussion within the Muslim community concerns the role and the participation of Muslim women within Building the Bridge and mosque committees in Bristol more generally.
- The continuation of Building the Bridge meetings and activities after the discontinuation of Prevent funding demonstrates that the organisation has potential to act as a post-Prevent democratic and consultative forum and could continue to enable community engagement with the local authority and statutory agencies in the future.

Recommendations

Bristol has developed a unique participatory approach to implementing the Prevent Programme, which facilitated a hitherto unprecedented level of civic engagement between local authorities and minority communities. The city should draw on this success and develop this model further:

- The institutionalised relationship between public authorities and minority communities should be used to further improve the Local Authority's and other statutory agencies' ability to address minority groups' concerns. A commitment to the institutionalised cooperation within Building the Bridge is required, which also implies financial support for the maintenance of the organisational structure.
- The ad-hoc organisational structure of Building the Bridge should be further institutionalised through a regulatory framework which specifies a rotation principle and the electoral procedure for its leadership. This framework should determine the frequency of meetings and offer criteria for an improvement of the representativeness of Building the Bridge.
- Developing this collaboration would require a new constituting moment for Building the Bridge, which includes a clarification of future aims and objectives. We suggest the future of Building the Bridge could be taken into three directions, each of which has implications for the organisations' profile and composition. It is possible that elements of the three models could be combined with each other.
  - **Model A: a countering extremism forum** (a forum that draws on the Prevent legacy but is extended to challenge various forms of extremism)
  - **Model B: a Black and Minority Ethnic communities forum** (a consultative forum for Bristol's established and newly settled Black and Minority Ethnic communities)
  - **Model C: a Muslim forum** (a post-Prevent Muslim forum that provides a democratic space for Muslim communities)

Contents

1. Introduction

Building the Bridge is a Bristol-based forum that links Bristol's Muslim communities and groups with the City Council, police and other statutory organisations in the city. It aims 'to encourage and support the Muslim community to play an active part within the communities of Bristol'.[1]

This report is the outcome of a seven-month research project studying Building the Bridge. The project is based on collaboration between the Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship at the University of Bristol and Building the Bridge. It was carried out within, and funded by, the *Productive Margins: Regulating for Engagement* research programme.[2] The Productive Margins research programme seeks to connect academics and communities in Bristol and South Wales to co-produce research that explores mechanisms for more effective 'bottom-up' engagement of communities in decision-making across politics, policy and the arts.

Based on interviews with individuals involved in Building the Bridge, documentary analysis and review of secondary literature, this report explores and evaluates the history and development of Building the Bridge as a mechanism for Muslim community participation in local governance in Bristol. It analyses Building the Bridge's achievements, reflects on the challenges it faced, and frames some proposals for its future development.

This report is the culmination of the first phase of the research project. The second phase of the research will comprise participatory research with Muslim groups in the city focused on the question: what are the effective mechanisms for Muslim women's engagement in decision-making? The report also feeds into the wider work of the Productive Margins research programme, addressing the programme's objective to deepen our understanding of how

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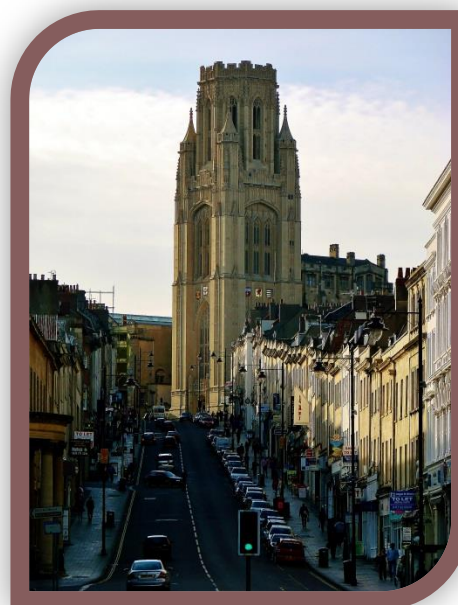
[1] http://www.allmosquestogether.org/building-the-bridge/
[2] This research programme is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council's *Connected Communities* funding scheme. It involves research teams from the University of Bristol and Cardiff University and community organisations and social enterprises in Bristol and South Wales. See: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/public-engagement/events/margins/

communities can generate bottom-up approaches to engagement, by sharing experiences and analysis across projects and initiatives within the programme.

Background to Building the Bridge

Building the Bridge emerged in 2008 as Bristol's approach to implementing the Labour Government's Prevent agenda. It was funded by Bristol City Council with Prevent funding, and became a key mechanism for the local delivery of Prevent in the city. This report explores the implications of Building the Bridge's origins in the government's counter-terrorism agenda, as well as the extent to which Building the Bridge assumed a role and purpose that went beyond the Prevent agenda (and the scope for this in the future).

Prevent is one of four elements of the government's CONTEST counter-terrorism strategy that was introduced in 2003. Sitting alongside Pursue (focused on detection and intelligence gathering); Prepare (emergency services and contingency planning) and Protect (infrastructural security), Prevent aimed to counter violent extremist ideologies and the values underpinning (support for) terrorism. Following the 2005 London attacks, Prevent was re-launched in 2007 to respond to the threat of 'home-grown' terrorism through greater emphasis on working with Muslim communities to prevent violent extremism.

The strategy assumed that violent extremism is facilitated by a combination of interlocking factors, including (1) an ideology that justifies terrorism, (2) radicalisers and their networks, (3) individuals who are vulnerable to radical messages, (4) communities that are poorly equipped to resist and challenge extremism, and (5) grievances, 'some genuine and some perceived, and some of course directed very specifically against government'.[3] Based on these assumptions, Prevent was reconceived as a 'hearts and minds'[4] community engagement approach to 'challenging the violent extremist ideology and supporting mainstream voices'.[5] The revised strategy released £140 million worth of funding for initiatives aimed at: capacity-building within Muslim communities to strengthen resilience to violent extremism; community engagement and outreach; developing theologically-based counter-narratives to Al-Qaeda inspired ideology and promoting 'moderate' interpretations of Islam;[6] and youth engagement and counter-radicalisation.[7] Those local areas with significant numbers of Muslims were eligible to receive Prevent funding – including Bristol from 2007 to 2010.

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[3] HM Government (2008) *The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England. Stopping People Becoming or Supporting Terrorists or Violent Extremists* (London: HM Government), page 5.

[4] DCLG (2007) *Preventing Violent Extremism: Winning Hearts and Minds* (London: DCLG).

[5] HM Government (2008), page 6.

[6] E.g. the Radical Middle Way project, which received £350,000 of Prevent funding. See Engage (2009) *Figures for Government funding of Muslim organisations revealed*, Friday 27th March 2009: http://www.iengage.org.uk/component/content/article/290-figures-for-government-funding-of-muslim-organisations-revealed

Prevent and Muslim community engagement

In the years following its re-launch and implementation, Prevent came to be heavily criticised and, in the words of one commentator, widely regarded as 'failed and friendless'.[8] In particular, Prevent was often viewed with suspicion by those Muslim communities with whom government sought to engage, many of whom viewed Prevent as mechanism for the surveillance of Muslim populations,[9] or, as one contributor to a House of Commons committee put it, as 'Pursue in sheep's clothing'.[10] There was widespread criticism of the ways in which Prevent focused on Muslims and distributed funding for community projects through the prism of counter-terrorism.[11] Additionally, many were critical of the ways in which the Prevent agenda merged with the government's Community Cohesion agenda, arguing this dissipated the focus of Prevent, whilst securitising and undermining Community Cohesion.[12] Many critics characterised Prevent as an instrument of discursive and institutional control that incentivised engagement with what government determined as acceptable versions of Islam, where the political focus was predominantly on ideology and individual cognitive dispositions towards radicalisation and less on the marked inequalities among Muslims that might feed into perceptions of injustice.[13]

Nevertheless, analysing the local implementation of Prevent across three cities, O'Toole et al (2013a/b) have shown that there was significant variation in the ways in which Prevent played out at the local level.[14] In Birmingham, for example, they found that, subsequent to the Pathfinder year of 2007/8, Prevent came to be perceived as a highly securitised, police-led programme, and the capacity of Prevent initiatives to engage Muslim communities in the city was severely hampered by widespread suspicion towards Prevent, not least as a consequence of Project Champion.[15] Project Champion was a local policing initiative that involved establishing 216 overt and covert CCTV and ANPR cameras in two areas of Muslim settlement in Birmingham, with little and flawed community

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[7] E.g. Quilliam, a 'counter-extremism' think-tank, which received £1.2 million worth of Prevent funding. See Engage (2009).

[8] Paul Thomas (2010) 'Failed and Friendless: The UK's "Preventing Violent Extremism" Programme', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* (12, 3: 442-458).

[9] Arun Kundnani (2009) *Spooked! How to not Prevent Violent Extremism* (London: Institute of Race Relations): http://www.irr.org.uk/pdf2/spooked.pdf

[10] House of Commons (2010) *Preventing Violent Extremism: Sixth Report of Session 2009–10, Communities and Local Government Committee* (London: House of Commons), page 8.

[11] Yahya Birt (2009) 'Promoting Virulent Envy?', *The RUSI Journal* (154, 4: 52-58).

[12] Paul Thomas (2010); Charles Husband and Yunis Alam (2011) *Social Cohesion and Counter-Terrorism: A Policy Contradiction?* (Bristol: Policy Press).

[13] Birt (2009); Kundnani (2009); Aleksandra Lewicki (2014) *Social Justice through Citizenship? The Politics of Muslim Integration in Germany and Great Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).

[14] Therese O'Toole, Daniel Nilsson DeHanas, Tariq Modood, Nasar Meer and Stephen Jones (2013) *Taking Part: Muslim Participation in Contemporary Governance* (Bristol: University of Bristol): http://www.bristol.ac.uk/ethnicity/projects/muslimparticipation/documents/mpcgreport.pdf

[15] And see Arshad Isakjee and Chris Allen (2013) ''A Catastrophic Lack of Inquisitiveness': A Critical Study of the Impact and Narrative of the Project Champion Surveillance Project in Birmingham', *Ethnicities* (13, 6: 729-750).

engagement.[16] Elsewhere, Husband and Alam's (2011) study of the local implementation of Prevent in five boroughs in West Yorkshire also found that fears of local communities towards Prevent-funded initiatives meant that in practice often worthwhile initiatives struggled to gain community support due to their association with Prevent.[17] By contrast, in Leicester, O'Toole et al found that whilst there was significant local opposition to the implementation of Prevent, it nonetheless developed in a collaborative manner, with Muslim representatives and interfaith bodies playing a significant role in (re)shaping Prevent to address local cohesion objectives. Prevent in Leicester was rebranded as 'Mainstreaming Moderation', in an effort to avoid what was locally perceived as the negative connotations of 'Prevent', and from the outset Prevent in Leicester was focussed on addressing all forms of violent extremism – long before this became central government policy. In the London borough of Tower Hamlets, local agencies and community organisations there exercised considerable autonomy in interpreting and implementing Prevent,[18] drawing down funding to enable youth work, women's projects and inclusion initiatives among Muslim communities in the borough. Thus prior to 2010, only four of the 28 Prevent projects funded in Tower Hamlets had any connection with 'hard edge' security concerns, with the rest largely focused on community cohesion and social inclusion objectives.

Whilst the aims and rationale of Prevent have been widely criticised, and its implementation frequently hampered by negative and hostile perceptions, it is important to consider the local contexts in which Prevent has been implemented,[19] and to consider how local actors have responded to and shaped forms of community engagement conducted under the rubric of Prevent.[20]

Implementing Prevent in Bristol

The approach to the implementation of Prevent in Bristol has been celebrated as a story of local success and 'as a model of good practice'[21] and Bristol has been described as a 'market leader' in

[16] See Thames Valley Police (2010) *Project Champion Review* (London: Thames Valley Police), which found evidence of an explicit strategy of concealment of the counter-terrorism purposes of the cameras from the wider public. See also, Steve Jolly (2010) 'Birmingham's spy-cam scheme has had its cover blown', *The Guardian*, 23rd June 2010:
http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/libertycentral/2010/jun/23/birmingham-spy-cam-scheme

[17] Husband and Alam (2011); and see Yunus Samad (2013) 'Community Cohesion without Parallel Lives in Bradford', *Patterns of Prejudice* (47, 3: 269-287).

[18] Giorgia Iacopini, Laura Stock and Kerstin Junge (2011) *Evaluation of Tower Hamlets Prevent Projects* (London: The Tavistock Institute).

[19] And see Vivien Lowndes and Leila Thorp (2010) Preventing Violent Extremism: Why Local Context Matters', *The New Extremism in the 21st Century*, R Eatwell and MJ Goodwin (eds.) (Oxford: Routledge).

[20] And see Therese O'Toole, Stephen H. Jones, Daniel Nilsson DeHanas and Tariq Modood (2013) 'Prevent after TERFOR: Why Local Context Still Matters', *Public Spirit*, 16th December 2013:
http://www.publicspirit.org.uk/the-importance-of-local-context-for-preventing-extremism/

[21] Jay Edwards and Benoît Gomis (2011) *Islamic Terrorism in the UK since 9/11: Reassessing the 'Soft' Response*, Chatham House International Security Programme Paper - ISP PP 2011/03 (London: Chatham House).

Prevent work.[22] Commentators have argued that the city of Bristol managed to turn the implementation of Prevent into a genuine collaboration between public authorities and Bristol's Muslim communities, which manifested itself in the re-branding of Prevent as 'Building the Bridge'. A significant part in the mobilising and credentialising of a collaborative approach to implementing Prevent was the arrest of Isa Ibrahim in April 2008: a Bristol based convert who had been experimenting with explosives and planned to target the Broadmead shopping centre.[23] At the time, Avon and Somerset Police employed several community engagement officers who had established relationships with various mosques and Muslim organisations on the ground. Before Ibrahim could put his plan into practice, one of those community engagement officers received a call from a member of the mosque that Ibrahim attended. It was the first time a counter-terrorism intervention in the UK had been instigated by the Muslim community, and the emergence of Building the Bridge was seen as augmenting the constructive relationships that had been developing between Muslims and the police.[24] Building the Bridge has been credited with further facilitating bottom-up engagement between Muslims and the City Council, local agencies and the police, and with creating a space for dialogue and interaction between Muslim communities of different ethnic backgrounds in the city that had not hitherto existed. Compared to many other localities, the Bristol experience appears to exemplify a more participatory approach to the implementation of Prevent.

In 2010, the newly formed Coalition Government announced a review of Prevent and suspended Prevent funding. When its revised Prevent strategy was announced in June 2011, it made a series of changes to the aims and practices of Prevent, and identified 25 priority areas which would be eligible for Prevent funding, based on intelligence assessments, rather than 'simple demographics'.[25] Bristol was not included within these 25 priority areas under the new strategy, and thus no longer receives Prevent funding from the Home Office. Bristol City Council has continued to support Building the Bridge, and this report aims to feed into the wider processes of reflection on Building the Bridge's future.

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[22] Safer Bristol (2011) *Minutes of Safer Bristol Partnership Executive Board Meeting*, 19/05/2011, (Bristol: SBP): http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/community_and_safety/safer_bristol/Minutes%20Safer%20Bristol%20Executive%20Board%2019%20May%202011.pdf; Liban Obsiye (2010) *Prevention Strategy: Local Success but a National Disaster* (Bristol Somali Media Group: Bristol): http://smgbristol.com/2010/06/09/prevention-strategy-local-success-but-a-national-disaster/

[23] Steven Morris (2009) 'Turned in by his Community, the Extremist Who Wanted to Belong', *The Guardian*, 17th July: http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2009/jul/17/isa-ibrahim-profile-muslim-community; And see BBC News (2008) 'Teenager facing terrorism charges': http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7373929.stm

[24] Morris (2009), Edwards and Gomis (2011).

[25] Home Office (2011) *Prevent Strategy* (London: HM Govt): https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf, pages 97-8.

Building the Bridge as a mechanism for community engagement

Given the emphasis on collaboration and participation that has characterised Building the Bridge, the project examines the Bristol experience of Building the Bridge as a 'regulated form of engagement'.[26] We explore the strengths and limitations of Building the Bridge as a mechanism for bottom-up engagement and evaluate the participatory practices it brought about. In particular, we examine how participation was facilitated within the institutional architecture of Building the Bridge and investigate how dynamics of regulation, collaboration and claims-making unfolded in its activities. The study assesses Building the Bridge as a mechanism for the representation of Bristol's Muslim communities, and explores the participatory nature of its activities. Our analysis concludes with reflections on the possible future of Building the Bridge.

Defining a participatory approach

A key concern of our research is that terms such as 'collaboration' and 'engagement' can be invoked within participatory initiatives without necessarily entailing equality between participants or substantive participation. Political consultations, for example, can co-opt community representatives and merely serve to legitimise an otherwise top-down approach to policy development and implementation. It is thus necessary to present criteria for evaluating whether Building the Bridge facilitated or inhibited a genuinely participatory engagement between public authorities and Bristol's Muslim communities. Without claiming that the following list is complete, we suggest that a participatory approach requires that: a variety of perspectives is included in discussions and negotiations; definitions of problems, political objectives or the agenda are defined collaboratively; negotiations allow for shifts in opinion among participants; interactions generate trust and a sense that everybody's contribution is respected; pre-existing power imbalances are challenged and reduced rather than maintained; and the outcomes of the endeavour reflect a variety of interests.[27]

PARTICIPATORY ENGAGEMENT

- A variety of perspectives is included, and these are also reflected in the outcomes
- Problems, policy objectives and the political agenda are defined collaboratively
- There is scope for shifts in opinion and awareness of the interests of others
- There is trust among participants and a sense that their contributions are respected
- Pre-existing power imbalances are challenged or reduced

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[26] University of Bristol & Cardiff University (2012) *Productive Margins: Regulating for Engagement. Case for Support*, http://www.bristol.ac.uk/public-engagement/pdfs/productive-margins-case.pdf

[27] See Andrea Cornwall and Vera Schattan P. Coelho (eds.) (2007) *Spaces for Change? The Politics of Participation in New Democratic Arenas* (London: Zed) and Tehseen Noorani, Claire Blencowe and Julian Brigstocke (eds.) (2013) *Problems of Participation. Reflections on Authority, Democracy and the Struggle for a*
(footnote continued)

This project focuses on the extent to which Building the Bridge operated as a regulatory mechanism that created a space for and enabled substantive engagement of Muslim communities in local governance in Bristol.

Research design

We translated these criteria into a qualitative interview framework, which included questions such as 'would you describe Bristol City Council as an agenda setter or facilitator of Building the Bridge meetings and activities?' or 'did you have a sense that particular groups were empowered within Building the Bridge?' The research involved a desktop review of minutes of meetings and documents published by the Council, consultation meetings with Bristol City Council, the chairs of Building the Bridge and various Building the Bridge participants, as well as 22 qualitative research interviews with individuals involved in Building the Bridge. Research participants were identified through a variety of channels, including through published documents, snowballing and reaching out to Muslim organisations in Bristol.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- In what ways did Building the Bridge re-fashion spaces for engagement for Muslims in the city?
- Who participated in Building the Bridge and why?
- What were the mechanisms that facilitated inclusion and participation?
- Were there any obstacles to inclusion and participation?
- What was the impact of Building the Bridge on engagement between the City Council and Muslim communities in the city?
- How might Building the Bridge develop in the future?

Common Life (Lewes: ARN Press):
http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/sociology/staff/academicstaff/blencowe/participation/problems_of_participation.pdf

Overview of the report

This report concludes the first phase of our research into the history and emergence of Building the Bridge. We begin by offering information on the demographics of Bristol's Muslim population, their patterns of settlement and revisit key findings of previous studies on Black and minority ethnic communities' participation in Bristol's public life. The main section of the report describes the development of the institutional architecture of Building the Bridge and provides an account of its participatory dynamics. We then discuss the representativeness of Building the Bridge, and elaborate on the kinds of activities that were pursued through Building the Bridge. Finally, the report offers reflections on the possible future for Building the Bridge.

2.   Muslims in Bristol

Demographic profile

According to the 2011 Census, Bristol has a population of 428,000 residents and 22,000 of these self-ascribe as Muslim. The figure has risen considerably in the last ten years: in the 2001 Census, only 7,600 individuals in Bristol self-ascribed as Muslim (2% of the overall population). Comprising 5.1% of the total Bristol population, the local Muslim constituency is now slightly larger than the national average, which is 4.8%. The growth of the Muslim population in Bristol, similar to the national increase from 2.7% in 2001 to 4.8% in 2011, can be explained by a variety of factors. There is on-going marriage migration to the UK from the Indian sub-continent,[28] and higher than average birth rates among South Asian Muslims.[29] The number of White Britons who are reverting or converting to Islam is also on the rise, as is the salience of (at times perhaps even nominal) Muslim self-identification among young British-born descendants of migrants. Most importantly, Britain has received refugees and asylum seekers from African countries such as Somalia, the majority of whom are Muslim. Bristol City Council noted that between 2002 and 2010, the city issued the second highest number of National Insurance numbers to Somalis (after Birmingham, which had the highest number of new registrations in the UK).[30] The 2011 Census indicated that about 8,100 Somalis currently reside in Bristol;[31] the Council suggests this number might be an under-estimate as the Census did not necessarily register men living in informal accommodation.[32] The actual figure then

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[28] See Katharine Charsley, Brooke Storer-Church, Michaela Benson and Nicholas Van Hear (2012) 'Marriage Related Migration to the UK', *International Migration Review* (46, 4: 861-890).

[29] See Bristol City Council (2010), *Building Bristol Together. A City-Wide Community Cohesion Strategy 2010 – 2013* (Bristol: Bristol City Council), http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/community_and_safety/community_development/ Community%20Cohesion%20Strategy.pdf for evidence of high birth rates among Pakistani, Indian and Somali mothers in Bristol, page 6.

[30] Bristol City Council (2012) *Community Profile: Somali Community in Bristol*, (Bristol: Bristol City Council): http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/council_and_democracy/statistics_and_census_info rmation/2011%20Somali%20Community%20Profile_270212.pdf, page 6.

[31] Bristol City Council (2013a) *Census 2011 Topic Report. Community Cohesion Statistics*, July 2013 (Bristol: Bristol City Council) http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/council_and_democracy/statistics_and_census_info rmation/Community%20Cohesion%20Statistics_July%202013_0.pdf: Somalis were not classified as a separate ethnic group on the 2011 Census form, but were included in the 'Black African' and 'Black Other' groups. Bristol City Council estimated the number of Somalis living in Bristol by taking the number of 'Black Africans' and 'Black Others' who self-ascribed as Muslim and subtracting those Muslims born in parts of Africa outside Eastern Africa (page 7). Nearly 5,000 Census respondents reported that they were born in Somalia (page 14), a figure which of course does not include children born to Somali parents in the UK.

[32] *Census 2011 Topic Report,* Bristol City Council (2013a) page 7. This observation can be further supported by findings from a survey conducted by Ethnic Focus, which indicated that significant numbers of Somali respondents had not filled in the 2001 Census due to language barriers or because they found the form too
(footnote continued)

might be between 8,100 and 10,000 (compared to 6,863 Pakistanis and 2,104 Bangladeshis), which could potentially increase the overall number of Muslims in Bristol.

The ethnic composition of the Muslim population is diverse, with the largest three groups being Somali, Pakistani and Bangladeshi (and smaller Arab, Turkish or Iranian and Kurdish populations).

Settlement is spread across the city, with significant numbers of Muslims residing in each ward; although Muslims are particularly numerously represented in Ashley, Lockleaze, Cabot, Hillfields, Easton, Eastville and Lawrence Hill.[33] More recent arrivals have settled mostly in Lawrence Hill, Ashley, Easton and Eastville.[34] The largest growth of ethnic minority groups in Bristol has been within the Polish and Somali populations.[35] The 2011 Census showed that English is the main language spoken in Bristol, followed by Polish and Somali.[36] Urdu, Panjabi, Arabic and Bengali were among the top 10 languages spoken by local residents.

Drawing on 12 in-depth interviews and a survey of 1,000 Muslims in Bristol, a 2008 study by Ethnic Focus found that the Muslim community in Bristol has a young age profile, with around 54% of the respondents being younger than 34 years.[37] It also showed that the main reason for interviewees settling in Bristol was to be close to family and members of the same ethnic group; and most respondents had immediate and extended family living in Bristol.[38]

Due to recent immigration, according to the Council, schools in Bristol are diversifying much faster than the population of Bristol.[39] The 2010 Schools Census showed that 42.7% of children in Local Authority maintained nursery schools are from non-White British backgrounds.[40] Somali children are the largest non-White group with 2,237 pupils or 4.5% of the total population (white Eastern European children numbered 825 or 1.7%). The Council's Community Cohesion Strategy notes,

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complicated or intrusive: see Ethnic Focus (2008) *Muslim Communities in Bristol* (Bristol: Bristol City Council), page 39.

[33] *Census 2011 Topic Report,* Bristol City Council (2013a), page 33.

[34] *Census 2011 Topic Report,* Bristol City Council (2013a), page 3.

[35] The proportion of people who self-classified as not 'white British' has increased from 12% to 22% of the Bristol population (*Census 2011 Topic Report,* Bristol City Council (2013a), page 2.

[36] *Census 2011 Topic Report,* Bristol City Council (2013a), page 18.

[37] Ethnic Focus (2008), page 17.

[38] Ethnic Focus (2008), pages 19 and 27.

[39] *Building Bristol Together*, Bristol City Council (2010), page 5.

[40] *Building Bristol Together*, Bristol City Council (2010), page 5.

however, that only 4.4% of teachers were from BME backgrounds, and 1.79% of teachers were Black or Black British with just one Somali teacher.[41]

Quality of life

In its Cohesion Strategy 2010, the Local Authority signalled that the increasing diversity within Bristol's schools has also been accompanied by problems of inequalities and conflict, acknowledging there were 'tensions within some Bristol's schools around the intolerance of diverse family life, perceived unfairness of housing allocation, inter-racial tension, a rise in gang activity, 'Islamophobia' and anti-Somali feelings, and an increase in homophobic and disablist hate crime'.[42] The Ethnic Focus survey report found that Somalis had the lowest levels of participation in paid work compared to other ethnic groups, and unemployment was also high among Kurdish, Iraqi and African groups.[43]

Notwithstanding these tensions and inequalities, findings from Bristol City Council's most recent *Quality of Life in Bristol* (2013) annual survey highlighted some mixed trends among the ethnic minority and Muslim populations in Bristol.[44] Overall, 83% of respondents reported that they were satisfied with their neighbourhood, although satisfaction was significantly lower in deprived areas of the city, and among Black and minority ethnic and Muslim

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[41] *Building Bristol Together*, Bristol City Council (2010), page 5.

[42] *Building Bristol Together*, Bristol City Council (2010), page 8. See also Jan Dobbernack and Tariq Modood (2011) *United Kingdom: Challenging Diversity in Education and School Life*, Accept Pluralism, National Case Studies, Final Country Reports, www.accept-pluralism.eu, (Florence: Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies).

[43] Ethnic Focus (2008) pages 10 and 26. Labour Force Survey based research commissioned by the Equality and Human Rights Commission showed however that during the financial crisis, the unemployment rate of workers from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh had risen to 12%, while White British unemployment was at 7.8% and for new arrivals from Eastern and Central Europe unemployment hovered at 5%. Established minorities' employment patterns were thus most severely affected by the economic recession, Madeleine Sumption and Will Somerville (2010) *The UK's New Europeans. Progress and Challenges Five Years after Accession*, Equalities and Human Rights Commission Policy Report (London: Equalities and Human Rights Commission and Migration Policy Research Institute).

[44] Bristol City Council (2013b) *Quality of Life in Bristol: Quality of life in your neighbourhood survey results 2012*, May 2013 (Bristol: Bristol City Council): http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/council_and_democracy/consultations/qol2013-report_0_0.pdf

residents.[45] Nevertheless, Black and minority ethnic and Muslim respondents, despite their concentration in less wealthy areas, were more likely to say that they 'feel they belong to their neighbourhood' and were more likely to find that 'people in their neighbourhoods got on well together' than the population overall.[46] A significant proportion of Muslim respondents (75%) were likely to agree that local people are treated with respect, compared to 67% of the overall sample, whilst 31% of Muslim respondents reported they felt able to influence decision making in their local area, compared to 24% of the overall sample.[47] A majority (60%) of the Muslim respondents in the Ethnic Focus study, however, reported limited interest in getting actively involved in local decision-making, and this was especially evident among the Somali community.[48]

According to the Ethnic Focus study, most interviewed Muslims stressed that they would like to stay in Bristol and reported a strong sense of belonging to and satisfaction with their local area as a place to live.[49] Their report highlighted the importance of 'psycho-social benefits arising from having access to appropriate cultural and religious facilities within local areas'.[50] Nevertheless, the study also found that there was a lack of facilities for young people, especially young Muslim women, as well as crowded prayer facilities on Fridays, with a shortage of worship space for women in particular.[51]

Political representation

There have been some changes in the political representation of minorities in local structures of decision-making in Bristol over the last decade. A study that was conducted in 2001 by Bousetta of political representation and participation of BME communities suggested that ethnic minorities were effectively politically disenfranchised in Bristol.[52] Bousetta's research showed that despite a significant concentration of Black and minority ethnic communities in a small number of wards, their

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[45] *Quality of Life in Bristol*, Bristol City Council(2013b), page 10.
[46] *Quality of Life in Bristol, Bristol City Council* (2013b), page 46 and 48.
[47] *Quality of Life in Bristol, Bristol City Council* (2013b), page 50.
[48] Ethnic Focus (2008), page 38.
[49] Ethnic Focus (2008), pages 29, 33 and 37.
[50] Ethnic Focus (2008), page 11.
[51] Ethnic Focus (2008), pages 12 and 31.
[52] Hassan Bousetta (2001) *Extending Democracy: Participation, Consultation and Representation of Ethnic Minority People in Public Life* (Bristol: Centre for the Study of Citizenship and Ethnicity, University of Bristol).

votes did not seem to have any distinctive influence on electoral outcomes in these areas. The study found that poor electoral registration rates, negative perceptions of local authorities, under-representation within the Council and statutory agencies, lack of consultation, leadership problems, racism and the absence of a politicisation of race[53] were the main reasons for these participatory deficits. Bousetta argued that the Local Authority did not sufficiently take into consideration that ethnic minorities have distinct strategies for participating in politics (for instance via involvement in community organisations), which are related to their marginalised status in British society.[54]

In the run-up to the 2012 mayoral election, a report for Bristol Fawcett argued that women and ethnic minorities continue to be chronically politically under-represented in the City Council and other key structures of power in the city.[55] In that context, the Bristol Labour Party nominated Marvin Rees, who was raised by his British mother and Jamaican father in Easton, as its candidate for mayor. While Rees lost the vote to the independent entrepreneur George Ferguson, the fact that he ran for mayor was celebrated by many as a symbolic success for the political representation of Bristol's BME communities. Indeed, although the election was not an explicit topic in research interviews, several respondents in our study mentioned Rees as a role model for young people in Bristol. During the mayoral election, Building the Bridge was instrumental in organising hustings specifically focused on Muslim community issues with all candidates who ran for Mayor and Police and Crime Commissioner. The 2013 elections increased the number of Councillors with an ethnic minority background from three to five.[56] Four of these representatives consider themselves to be Muslim. One of the new elects, Hibaq Jama (Lawrence Hill) is Bristol's first (female) Councillor with a Somali background. In 2013, Faruk Choudhury, who is Councillor for Easton, became the first Asian, first Muslim and youngest ever Lord Mayor of Bristol at the age of 38.[57] Recently, Shaheen Chaudhry was appointed High Sheriff of Bristol, which makes her the first Muslim female in this office. Such developments indicate some progress since Bousetta conducted his research in 2001, and the establishment of Building the Bridge as an institutionalised link between public authorities, statutory agencies and community organisations has also had an impact on the representation of a particular group within Bristol's ethnic minority population in local structures of decision-making.

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[53] Bousetta found that the words race, ethnicity and multiculturalism were absent from digital and documentary self-representations of the Local Authority.

[54] Bousetta (2001), page 9.

[55] Natasha Carver (2012) *"The Right Man for Bristol?" Gender Representation and the Mayor for Bristol* (Bristol: Bristol Fawcett):
http://www.bristolfawcett.org.uk/Documents/CountingWomenIn/TheRightManForBristol.pdf

[56] These are: Faruk Choudhury (Labour) for Easton since 2007; Hibaq Jama (Labour) for Lawrence Hill since 2013; Jay Jethwa (Conservative) for Stockwood since 2007; Mahmadur Khan (Labour) for Eastville since 2011; and Afzal Shah (Labour) for Easton since 2013.

[57] Easton and Lawrence Hill Neighbourhood Management (2013a) *Up Our Street*, Newsletter of Easton and Laurence Hill, (Bristol: Easton and Lawrence Hill Neighbourhood Management).

Conclusion

The Muslim population in Bristol is expanding and diversifying: in addition to Bristol's long-established Muslim communities with roots in South Asia, the settlement of Somali Muslims in the city has been a notable recent development, and Somalis now comprise the largest ethnic group of Muslims in the city. Questions concerning the political representation and political inclusion of ethnic minority and Muslim groups need to attend to this diversity. Our brief overview here also signals concerns about the inclusion of Muslim women and younger people in community and political spaces in the city. Nevertheless, such questions cannot turn on numbers alone – whilst presence undoubtedly matters, voice and impact are also key to our analysis of whether Building the Bridge has facilitated the substantive participation of Muslims in local decision-making. In the following section, we consider how Building the Bridge emerged as a mechanism for Muslim community engagement, before analysing who came to be involved, and how, and the kinds of issues and claims that were addressed by Building the Bridge.
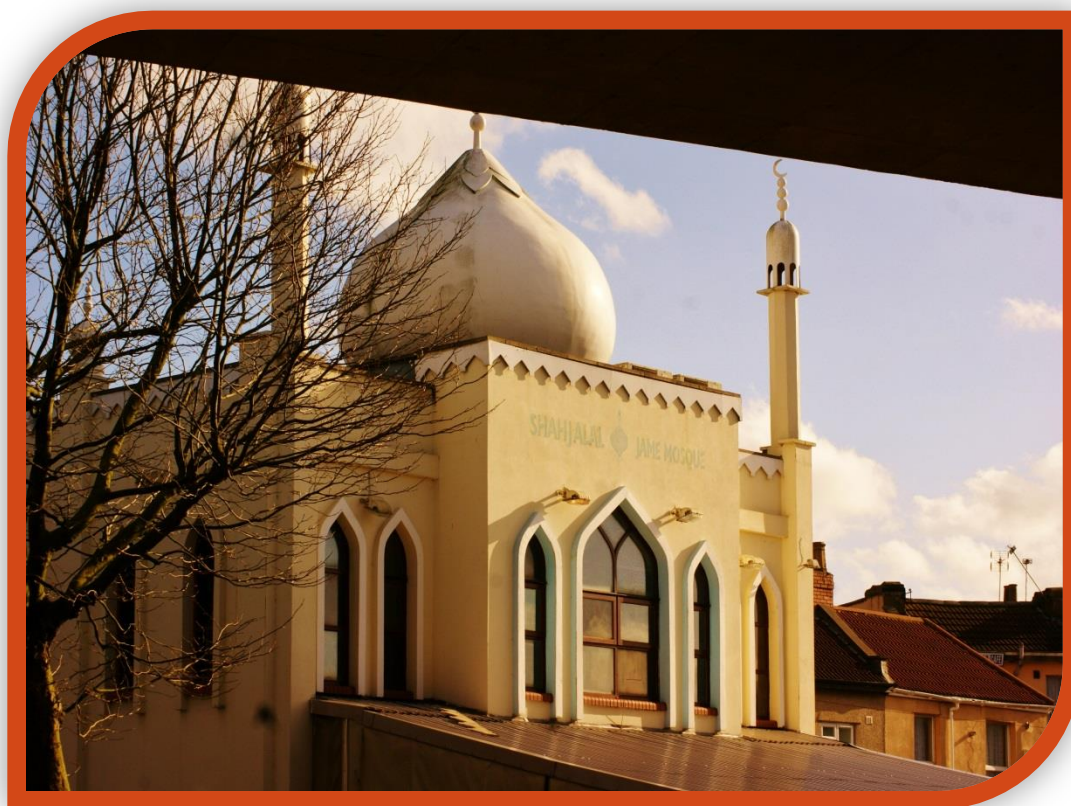
3. Development of Building the Bridge

Prevent in Bristol

In 2007, Bristol City Council secured a grant through the 'Preventing Violent Extremism' (PVE) Pathfinder Programme. This funded two academic studies of the Muslim community in Bristol, and then rose substantially in subsequent years, enabling a wider array of activities, with Bristol City Council receiving £125,000 in 2008/9, £150,000 in 2009/10 and £165,000 in 2010/11.[58] Initially, the Council commissioned the Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship at the University of Bristol to generate a myth-busting booklet on *Muslims in Bristol and Britain*, which gave an overview of Muslim organisations in Bristol, discussed popular misconceptions about Islam and rebutted them with research-based evidence.[59] In 2007, the Council also commissioned the London-based Ethnic Focus to provide a representative study of the Muslim population in Bristol,[60] to help the Council to develop 'a better understanding of the numbers and the diversity of Bristol's Muslim population' and provide 'responsible services'.[61]

This research based phase of Bristol City Council's approach to implementing Prevent was followed by a planning phase during which Bristol City Council set out to connect various statutory agencies and community organisations who had a role in the delivery of Prevent. The initiation phase was guided by the rationale that Bristol City Council, local Police, the Crime and Drugs Partnership 'Safer Bristol', the Youth Offending Team, the Criminal Justice Board, the National Health Service, and other statutory agencies including youth services or educational authorities were seeking to engage with the Muslim community, and these efforts could be coordinated with each other, rather than advanced separately. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) was put in charge of the delivery of Prevent and acted as Executive Board in the allocation of Prevent funding.[62]

The creation of Building the Bridge

The following sections present findings from our research into the institutional genesis of Building the Bridge, and give voice to individuals involved in its creation.

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[58] Bristol City Council (2009b) Preventing *Violent Extremism in Bristol* (Bristol: Bristol City Council).

[59] Fauzia Ahmed and Tariq Modood (2007) *Muslims in Bristol and Britain: FAQs, Myths and the Facts* (Bristol: Bristol City Council).

[60] Ethnic Focus (2008) *Muslim Communities in Bristol* (Bristol: Bristol City Council).

[61] Ethnic Focus (2008), page 5.

[62] Bristol City Council (2009a) *Care and Safer Communities Scrutiny Commission: Preventing Violent Extremism – Delivery in Bristol*, (Bristol: Bristol City Council):
https://www.bristol.gov.uk/committee/2009/sc/sc025/0217_10.pdf

The Prevent Programme Board commissioned Latif Ismail, the Director of the Chippenham based consultancy Transparency Solutions, who has a Somali background and lives in Bristol, to offer advice on how cooperation between various corporate actors and the Muslim community could be further institutionalised. Ismail told us that it was crucial that the individuals who initiated the cooperation, including Community Cohesion Manager Ian Quaife, at Bristol City Council, or Chief Superintendent Julian Moss at Avon and Somerset Police, supported the idea of an equal partnership with Bristol's Muslim community and the principle of collective ownership of Prevent. The fact that successful arrests of terrorist suspects had just taken place, and that Isa Ibrahim's arrest in particular had been enabled by a mosque initiative, contributed to a perception that a genuine collaboration with Bristol's Muslim communities was possible and in the interest of all parties. Public authorities had a sense that this very recent experience was also key to making the case to the Muslim community in Bristol for further preventative work.

Early meetings: problematising Prevent and community representation

To discuss the scope for such collaboration, Bristol City Council and the Police drew on pre-existing networks and invited Muslim community representatives to attend a series of meetings. Chief Superintendent Julian Moss told us how, at these first meetings in the City Hall, public authorities were faced with serious concerns on the part of the Muslim community about the Prevent agenda. As in other areas of the country, there was a sense that the name 'Prevent' itself and its city-wide implementation implied a suspicion of the whole of the Muslim community as prone to terrorism.[63] Moss described his impressions at the time:

> A confident community, which is great, and lots of energy and people turning up which was, for a community meeting, very, very unusual […] and there was a huge amount of sensitivity; I was really surprised about the sensitivity there was. […] I was really quite taken back at that meeting; I suppose there were a ball park figure of 50 people in the audience mostly from Muslim communities, and they gave us a really hard time.

During these meetings, Muslim community representatives problematised the name 'Prevent', arguing that it implied suspicion. They also criticised the authorities for inviting too few Muslim community members to the scoping meetings and expressed dissatisfaction that the meetings were chaired by a Councillor rather than a community representative. Chief Superintendent Moss observed that 'there was a huge drive from Muslim communities to be involved' and in a greater capacity; in his view, the most important thing at this stage was that local authorities, including the Police, 'did listen to what was being said'. Given the negative feedback their presentation had received, he realised that public authorities needed to take further steps to build a relationship with Muslim communities.

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[63] See O'Toole, DeHanas, Modood, Meer & Jones, *Taking Part* (2013a), Section 5 for responses elsewhere.

From Prevent to 'Building the Bridge'

One of the first initiatives that was realised during this planning phase was a community conference that was called 'Building the Bridge', to which a wider audience of about 150 Muslims from a variety of backgrounds was invited. The conference was held on 15th March 2008 at the Council House in Bristol.[64] It is against the background of these initial meetings that the name was changed from 'Prevent Programme Board' to the title of this conference, 'Building the Bridge', which was seen as a title that reflected a more community oriented approach.

The term 'Prevent' was met with hostility elsewhere, and in Leicester too, the term was jettisoned and the Prevent programme reformed and re-branded as 'Mainstreaming Moderation'. O'Toole et al's (2013a) research shows, under New Labour, and especially during the Pathfinder year of 2007-8, many Local Authorities reinterpreted or modified Prevent, using the funding that it released to pursue community engagement or cohesion objectives. In part, this was due to the vagueness of the policy guidance from central government,[65] but it was also a result of local actors seeking either to mitigate the negative aspects of Prevent or pursue more autonomous objectives or develop models that were more appropriate to local contexts.

The institutional structure of Building the Bridge

In response to Muslim participants' request that the Executive Board should be chaired by a community representative, Latif Ismail was appointed as initial Chair. He explained the rationale for his appointment as a Chair of Building the Bridge:

> I was an independent Chair, but I was an independent Chair from the Muslim community. The individuals involved were very clear that this project was about working with the Muslim community, which is why we needed to have someone from that community – and that was very different from how Prevent bodies were designed elsewhere.
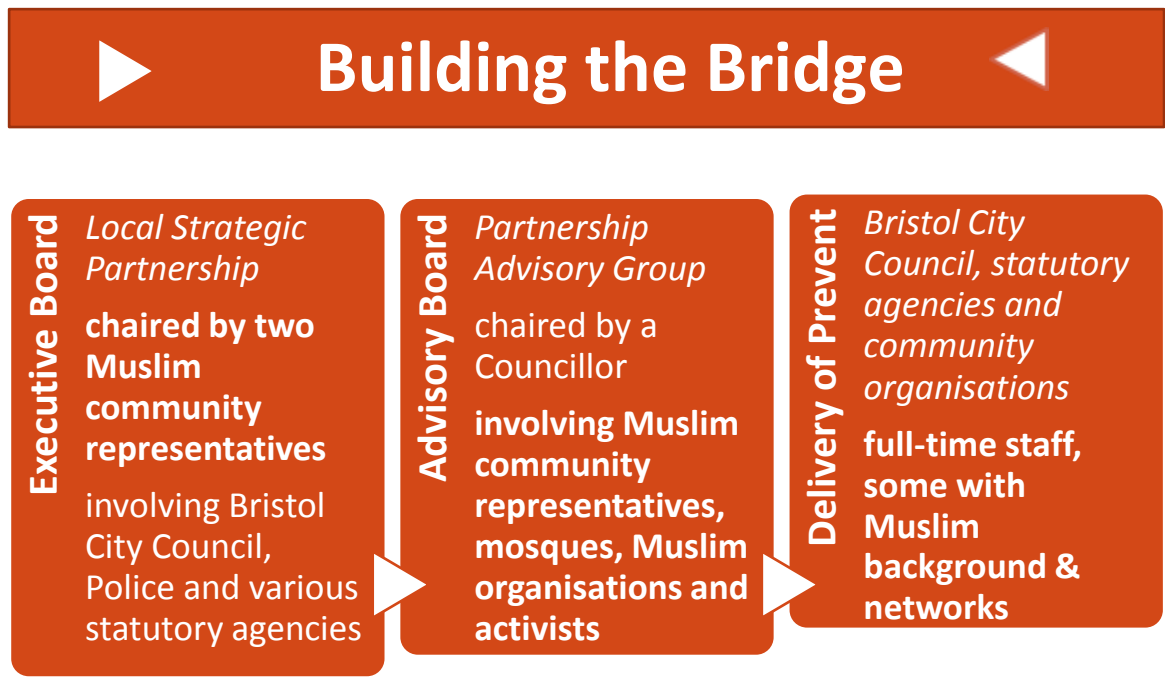
The decision to appoint a Muslim representative to chair Building the Bridge can be seen as a distinctive feature of Bristol's implementation of Prevent. Participants in these inaugural meetings of Building the Bridge expressed concern, however, that appointing a Muslim to the chairmanship of the Executive Board limited Muslim participation to one person and hence did not allow for the involvement of the wider Muslim community in Bristol. In response to this, a permanent Partnership Advisory Group (PAG) was set up, which consisted of a range of organised and non-affiliated Muslim community representatives who were to advise the Local Strategic Partnership. Bristol City Council

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[64] See: http://www.bbc.co.uk/bristol/content/articles/2008/03/14/muslim_conference_feature.shtml

[65] Reflecting recently on new Labour's Prevent strategy, a former Secretary of State at the DCLG, John Denham, suggested: 'With no clear national guidance on forging allies against terrorism, mistakes were inevitable […] Despite this, Prevent did good work in areas *where people worked through the challenges for themselves'* [emphasis added]. John Denham (2013) 'After Woolwich, we should not 'Prevent' certain views, but engage with them', *The Guardian*, 29th Mary 2013: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/may/29/after-woolwich-prevent-views-engage

and the Police furthermore appointed full-time staff, in several cases themselves with a Muslim ethno-religious background, to administer Building the Bridge meetings and activities. Table 1 illustrates how multiple mechanisms of community involvement applied that allowed for power 'checks and balances' on the part of Muslim community members.

Table 1: Muslim representation within the organisational architecture of Building the Bridge

Building the Bridge

Executive Board	Advisory Board	Delivery of Prevent
Local Strategic Partnership **chaired by two Muslim community representatives** involving Bristol City Council, Police and various statutory agencies	*Partnership Advisory Group* chaired by a Councillor **involving Muslim community representatives, mosques, Muslim organisations and activists**	*Bristol City Council, statutory agencies and community organisations* **full-time staff, some with Muslim background & networks**

Firstly, the Executive Board, which had decision-making capacity in the delivery of Prevent and was responsible for the distribution of funding, was chaired by two community representatives. Three additional community group observers attended board meetings. Funding was allocated via a Commissioning Group that consisted of Vice Chair of Building the Bridge, Mohammed Elsharif and representatives of various statutory agencies, and was chaired by Bristol City Council. A Vulnerable Individuals Steering Group (VISG) was furthermore installed, which was chaired by Zaheer Shabir. A second larger body was the Partnership Advisory Group (PAG), which was empowered to influence the agenda of the Building the Bridge Board (BTB Board). The PAG consisted of a wider number of Muslim community organisations and non-affiliated Muslims and was chaired by the respective Councillors responsible for Community and Neighbourhoods in the Cabinet.[66] Thirdly, Building the Bridge and its activities were administered by full-time staff, several of whom, such as Kalsoom Bashir and Shabana Kausar, had a Muslim background and drew on their own extensive community

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[66] Initially, the PAG was chaired by Peter Hammond, and in the following years by Gary Hopkins and Gus Hoyt.

networks (see Table 1). These two were particularly engaged in consulting various Muslim groups across Bristol and delivering some of the activities funded through Prevent.

Husband and Alam's (2011) study found that the involvement of Muslim officials in Prevent activities often served a useful legitimating role for Local Authorities, and lent authorities a reach into communities they otherwise found difficulty accessing. They also found, however, that the performance of such roles was often difficult for the Muslim officials involved and for their relationships with their communities – particularly where opposition to Prevent was high, and engagement with public authorities was low. This suggests that the efficacy of engaging Muslim staff within Prevent delivery can be fraught if mechanisms of Muslim community engagement within local governance more generally are sparse.

Once the scoping phase was completed and the partnership institutionalised, Building the Bridge participants agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair should be determined by an election process and a more formalised selection process, rather than via direct appointment by Bristol City Council. A call for nominations went out, and the shortlist was determined by a public vote among community representatives. Shortlisted candidates campaigned in their constituencies, and Bristol City Council sent out ballot papers to as many of their community and mosque contacts as possible. The election was followed by an interview process of the candidates with the highest number of votes.

Zaheer Shabir of Bristol Jamia Mosque in Totterdown, an immigration lawyer who had been nominated by the Council of Bristol Mosques, received the highest vote, followed by Mohammed Elsharif, who works for the National Health Service and was very active in the local community in Easton. Zaheer Shabir was appointed to act as Chair of Building the Bridge, and Mohammed Elsharif became Vice-Chair. Shabir, once appointed, was told this was going to be the 'the most powerful position for a Muslim in the city'; while he himself did not realise this at the time, he reflected that he had found this to be true during his time in office. He told us that the post not only endowed him with an influential voice within Building the Bridge, but it also facilitated access to local and national authorities, which included involvement in a variety of consultations and invitations by the British Prime Minister and the Queen.

Community ownership of Building the Bridge

The emergent institutional setup of Building the Bridge, however, was not universally appreciated. Chief Superintendent Julian Moss told us that there were critical voices within the Police and Bristol

City Council, who were concerned that the redistribution of power went too far, or who worried that extremists might slip into the group of representatives empowered within Building the Bridge:

> There was real nervousness from my own Special Branch who were saying, 'Hang on a sec; we can't be doing this. We can't let communities lead this work' [...] And you had nervousness from some of the leaders in the Local Authority who were saying, lots of them giving lots of support, but saying, 'Well, no, you can't have groups like this being led by members of the community. What happens if it's the wrong member of the community who gets to lead it?'

However, the architects of Building the Bridge had a strong sense that they needed to find the right balance between implementing central government objectives and achieving community ownership. Julian Moss argued that if they wanted 'this to be successful, then it's got to come from within the community', and added that cooperation 'can't be centrally government driven if communities don't feel like they've had a say in it'. The intention was to create 'a partnership right from the beginning, as opposed to something that was being Police led', as the latter approach had caused problems in other local contexts.[67]

Agenda-setting

Julian Moss' account illustrates how Bristol City Council and Police were aware of and self-critical about their relative institutional power, and were prepared to diminish power asymmetries. Moss reflected on public authorities' shifting role in the process, and the implications for the distribution of power within Building the Bridge:

> I think in terms of being agenda setters we had to help the ball start rolling by taking those positive steps; sort of bringing people together and listening to them because it was us that had the power and I think that was agenda setting in itself. Once momentum had been achieved I think we were able to play a much more facilitative role and once trust had become established you then were able to pass over that power and become increasingly comfortable with doing so and then you can become both facilitator and a participant in, 'Well, this is your Building the Bridge; not ours'.

Latif Ismail, the interim Chair, concurred that Building the Bridge was 'very much a partnership that was led by the community, and it was probably the first time that the community and the local strategic partnership sat on a table as equal partners'. Beyond the initiators' own views, a majority of participants in Building the Bridge felt that Bristol City Council and the Police initially acted as agenda setters in as much as they initiated the cooperation, but that they then took a step back and assumed a facilitator's role in Building the Bridge meetings and activities. However, this view was less shared by representatives of the Council of Bristol Mosques, who perceived Building the Bridge as police led,

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[67] As we noted earlier, this was widely perceived to be the case in Birmingham due to the secondment of a police officer from the local Counter-Terrorism Unit into Birmingham City Council to lead the Prevent programme there. See O'Toole et al (2013a).

including in terms of its securitised focus as well as regarding the purpose of meetings and interactions. Tahir Mahmood of Bristol Islami Darasgah in Montpelier, the oldest mosque in Bristol, argued:

> Dealing with extremism, whether it was to go undercover to find or expose people who were maybe going off the lines was a police operation anyway and it was manifesting itself with high ranking officers meeting with the community. So I think we always knew that they would be setting the agenda.

In the perception of individuals who held office and leadership positions within Building the Bridge, however, Building the Bridge was community led. Applications for direct funding through Prevent, for instance, were considered by a Commissioning Group that consisted of representatives of a range of key stakeholders involved, including Vice-Chair Mohammed Elsharif. He explained how the chairs' positions implied executive powers:

> The time we started leading it, I think the Council was just providing support and advice really – not making decisions about anything in the Board. We set the agenda, we set the priorities, we set the activities, we worked with community organisations to develop their own projects, so I think we were in charge in that period. [...] Since we started chairing it we were really scrutinising all funding and making sure the finance goes to the right organisations, going to the right projects as well, so we have had that, you know, power to do that.

Zaheer Shabir offered an account of how agenda items, whether they had been introduced by the Police, by the Council, or community representatives, were run by the Secretariat, the administrative arm of the board, and discussed in detail at BTB Board meetings:

> The Board would set the agenda, I would have a voice for the community as well and there were observers who also had a contribution to make – these were three organisations from the community. So it wasn't that City Council or Police said 'X should be done and it's going to be done', it was never that, everything was discussed, the positives and negatives, whatever issue came up [...]. So I would be sitting with my Secretariat and we would go through the issues of the day or catch up with actions from last meeting and decide what we could have as part of the agenda. [...] We had a fantastic structure that way and it was respected.

Ian Quaife, at the time Community Cohesion Manager at Bristol City Council and one of the architects of Building the Bridge, highlighted that key decisions were always outcomes of negotiations:

> Yes, funding was co-negotiated because we went through the Partnership Advisory Group – PAG – of Building the Bridge. If we wanted to fund a particular project it would have to go back to the Executive Board which had community representatives on just for ratification. Me and

one or two others always made sure that I was accountable to my seniors and that everything we funded was agreed and we kept records of the funding. [68]

The Chair told us that his most important objective was to make sure that everybody was given an opportunity to express their views. He further elaborated that a key concern for him and the Vice-Chair was that negotiation and decision processes were transparent and generated trust:

Due to the structure that was in place we would discuss everything at Board level, so it wouldn't go past me or over my head or behind me, it had to get through the Chair. Nothing was secretive in any way, it was very transparent, and I would make sure that that was the case – it was essential to me because that's what we campaigned for, transparency and trust were core aspects of Building the Bridge and remain to this date.

Both Chairs, Zaheer Shabir and Mohammed Elsharif, felt that Building the Bridge gave them an opportunity to convey community concerns to the authorities and process joint work on this basis. Both also perceived Building the Bridge as a collective effort in which everybody involved was genuinely open to other views and concerns, and that authorities, including the Police, were persuaded on a few crucial occasions to revise their initial plan or practices.

Conclusion

While we shall return to examples of such debates in the section on Prevent funded activities, we now briefly recap our findings regarding the institutional structure of Building the Bridge. The process that led to the establishment of Building the Bridge was driven by the recognition that the participation of Muslim community representatives was an essential and constitutive feature of the implementation of Prevent in Bristol. Although inspired and initiated by a political agenda that was pre-defined by central government, the individuals involved in creating Building the Bridge envisaged and advanced a collaborative approach, which was characterised by a preparedness to arrive – to the degree possible – at a joint understanding of locally specific problems and potential collective solutions. While the Police and Bristol City Council felt they needed persuasion to arrive at a shared understanding with Muslim communities, they were open to including Muslim representatives' contributions and problem perceptions. From the outset, Muslim community representatives were involved in designing Building the Bridge, not only through their presence at the table, but also by shaping its institutional design. The initiators within the Police were reflexive about pre-existing power-imbalances and ready to share institutional power with community representatives. This was

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[68] Building the Bridge was also subject to the previous government's Assessment Framework for Local Authorities National Indicator 35 on 'Building communities resilient to violent extremism'. This required Local Authorities to report on the effectiveness of their Prevent work in relation to 4 objectives: 1) understanding of, and engagement with, Muslim communities; 2) knowledge and understanding of the drivers and causes of violent extremism and the Prevent objectives; 3) development of a risk-based preventing violent extremism action plan in support of delivery of the Prevent objectives; and 4) effective oversight, delivery and evaluation of projects and actions.

not only reflected in the symbolic change of name from 'Prevent Programme Board' to 'Building the Bridge'; several mechanisms were put in place, which enabled community ownership of Building the Bridge, including agenda setting capacities, community leadership, and institutional representation within a novel advisory board. These various institutionalised roles of Muslim participants constituted a distinctive feature of the implementation of Prevent in Bristol and contributed to generating trust among those involved.

Perhaps because Building the Bridge emerged through participatory mechanisms, there was an early recognition that participation and inclusion needed to be widened and diversified. We now turn to a discussion of Building the Bridge as a body that became representative of Bristol's Muslim population.

4. Building the Bridge as a mechanism for representation of Muslims

Questions of who is able to represent or speak on behalf of any religious or ethnic group are typically heated,[69] and this has certainly been true in relation to questions of Muslim representation. O'Toole et al (2013) have shown that over the last few decades there has been much better recognition on the part of government that Muslims are a diverse community – ethnically, theologically and socially – and that reliance on a small group of community leaders does not allow for the effective representation of such diversity. In Bristol, the implications of the demographic changes among the local Muslim population that we outlined in Section 2 were cited as a concern for the representativeness of Building the Bridge by those involved in it. Participants were keenly aware that a diverse range of groups needed to be included within Building the Bridge. There was recognition that individual Muslim participants should not be assumed to be speaking for all Muslims, and that inclusion and representation required ongoing work and communication.

Addressing Muslim diversity

The most challenging task, according to the inaugural chair of Building the Bridge, Latif Ismail, was to gain an accurate and comprehensive representation of various Muslim voices across Bristol. While Bristol City Council and the Police drew on substantial networks, they were also advised to extend the circle of participants as widely as possible. Mohammed Elsharif, the Vice-Chair of Building the Bridge, perceived the Partnership Advisory Group as a unifying platform which also reflected the ethnic and religious diversity of Bristol's Muslim population:

> In the past there's no one unified Muslim voice in the city, so you've got the Bangladeshi community, you've got Somalis, you've got the Sudanese, Pakistanis, and so on, but now we're one community, so we sit in a room and we've got 50 people from different backgrounds, for the Mayor to come and see that, how many votes are behind that.

Several interviewees also highlighted that Building the Bridge not only created a regular dialogue between public authorities, statutory agencies and Muslims, but further institutionalised the on-going conversation between different mosques and Muslim organisations in the city. Shabana Kausar, who at the time worked as a Community Development Officer for Bristol City Council, explained:

> It didn't create discussions, but it helped to facilitate existing conversations taking place in the city. Building the Bridge was valuable, because it provided a safe space for different

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[69] For a wider discussion, see the Public Spirit special theme on 'Who Speaks for Us? The 'Who' and 'How' of Religious Representation': http://www.publicspirit.org.uk/themes/who-speaks-for-us-the-who-and-how-of-faith-representation/

communities to come together and address internal issues. The Muslim community is incredibly diverse, so providing a space for the congregations of all 13 Mosques was very much needed. Building the Bridge was successful in coordinating the existing work happening across the city.

Zaheer Shabir and Mohammed Elsharif, the Chair and Vice-Chair, both felt that Building the Bridge not only enabled them to express and address community concerns within the BTB Board and the Partnership Advisory Group, but that their role within Prevent subsequently led to further opportunities to speak on behalf of the Muslim community in other forums and arenas. Both chairs or Zaheer Shabir were, for instance, subsequently invited to join bodies such as the Independent Advisory Group to the Police, the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE), Bristol's Education and Attainment Partnership (BEAP), the BME Voice and Influence Steering Group, the Queens' Diamond Jubilee Steering Group and the Tension Monitoring Group. These appointments created working relationships that in Shabir's view contributed to nurturing mutual understanding and reducing access barriers to local authorities. They also opened up further opportunities to enter into a dialogue with a range of public authorities, including the Legacy Commission, the Bishop of Bristol, the office of the Lord Lieutenant or the Lord Mayor's office.

Research participants' accounts showed that they felt represented by the two Chairs in key areas of the debate, and that they had a sense they could bring up important issues that needed discussing. Several respondents stressed that the Chair(s) put their 'heart and soul' into Building the Bridge and thereby contributed to the quality of the dialogue. Interviewees also pointed out that elected representatives could never fully represent a community as a whole, however, and even if a number of representatives spoke for different sub-sections of the Bristol Muslim population, there was a need for an on-going exchange with the wider constituency. Rizwan Ahmed, a community development worker and project manager at one of the oldest Muslim organisations in Bristol, the Bristol Muslim Cultural Society, argued:

What we always say to people – you will never get through to the whole of the Muslim community by talking to me, or by talking to such and such, it's just not going to happen, that's not how the community works, unfortunately, it's just not realistic. You can talk to me and you will get through to a certain part of the community, you talk to such and such and you get through to a different part, etcetera. What ideally needs to be done is to map out the whole community and then you will get through to everybody, which is not going to happen by speaking to one or two of us.

In this light, the strength of Building the Bridge was the engagement of the chairs, which made Muslim concerns audible beyond the BTB board, and their ability to draw on regular consultations with the wider Muslim community within the Partnership Advisory Group.

Organisational capacity across Muslim groups

A number of research participants reflected on the fact that Zaheer Shabir is a member of the Council of Bristol Mosques, an umbrella body that unites a number of Bristol mosques associated with and frequented by the Pakistani community. Representatives of the Council of Bristol Mosques were frequently attending Building the Bridge meetings. While respondents mentioned that it was helpful in terms of representativeness that the Vice-Chair had a Sudanese background, many perceived Building the Bridge as an institution that was dominated by representatives of Pakistani mosques. Latif Ismail saw this as a structural feature and related it to the different communities' duration of settlement and 'know-how':

> So I think Prevent generally addressed the diversity in the Muslim community, and in Bristol it has addressed it to an extent but I would still say that Building the Bridge is dominated by the Asian sub-continentals, especially Pakistanis, so they benefited more. It's not because the authorities prefer them, it's because they're better organised, they've been here longer and they're able to speak the language and they have the know-how.

Other participants in PAG meetings, such as Sheila El-Dieb, a member of the Bristol Muslim Women's Network, reflected on the structural constraints that smaller community organisations face, for instance the Kurdish community:

> It takes time! […] They don't have their own buildings you see, they got turned down for mortgages and things like that. […] They still have to rent which means they are more inferior in their minds' position, so they have to fight a little bit harder to keep their own identity […] Somalis didn't come on board as well to start with, it took time, but they are very on board now.

Respondents explained that even if Somali, Kurdish or other smaller minority organisations lacked capacities to regularly attend PAG meetings, individual members within the more established Muslim community maintained good personal relationships with individuals within these communities. The Council of Bristol Mosques (CBM) reported that in such individual encounters, a variety of mosques in Bristol had expressed their approval and perception that the CBM attended 'on their behalf'. Tahir Mahmood explained:

> The Council of Bristol Mosques may be perceived as Pakistani organisation, although some of the Somalian mosques we invited to come on board said "We thought we were already on board and you were representing us." So a lot of mosques, even though they were not participating, felt they were being represented by the Council of Bristol Mosques. Those mosques that were not attending meetings felt represented as the CBM was present at the meetings.

While interview data suggests that this claim was not universally shared by representatives of mosque committees who are not members of the CBM, the CBM leadership also clarified that the CBM was open to receive new members and was not constituted on the basis of ethnic membership. Abdul Tariq, the Vice-chair of the CBM, explained:

The Council of Bristol Mosques has only recently received a new membership application from a mosque, which has been accepted. Our doors are open to all mosques - provided they have a permanent address and their own constitution, and are happy to accept the CBM's constitution. There is no restriction in terms of ethnicity or related categories.

Engagement 'refusers'

Research participants reported that some mosques did not get as involved with Building the Bridge as others. Among those that did not engage, some lacked institutional capacities, while others felt that participating in Building the Bridge made it more difficult for Muslims to distance themselves from outside perceptions of Muslims as associated with political terrorism. The rationale for the latter argument was that collaboration implied the acceptance that Al-Qaeda type terrorism was a problem that emerged from within the Islamic faith, which linked it to religious practice more generally, as opposed to treating it as a socio-political phenomenon that affected a small minority that was hardly connected to the overall Muslim community. Another group that actively refused engagement was to be found among the Salafi mosques that embrace a more conservative understanding of Islam. Ironically, perhaps, it was nonetheless one such mosque that had expressed concerns to the police about Isa Ibrahim's activities. As one respondent told us:

I would think a lot of the Somali organisations were very engaged. […] There were some mosques that didn't. And I guess that was more around, I suppose, Somali mosques. But again they are the mosques that are very Salafi in their ideology, very extreme interpretations, conservative interpretations. They don't engage with anybody. So it didn't matter. But they were the ones that did phone up and report Andrew Ibrahim.

It is worth noting that the reluctance of some religious groups to engage in governance initiatives should not be read as an indicator of violent extremism. As Maleiha Malik has argued, it is 'important to distinguish religio-political groups that are extremist from religious groups who choose to separate themselves from mainstream society because they are orthodox.' Such groups may be illiberal, but their 'main concern will be to sustain a way of life for its own members and to reproduce that culture or faith for future generations.'[70] More generally, a reluctance to engage in governance has been noted among many other faith groups, who view their purpose for coming together as primarily spiritual (to engage in prayer for example), rather than social, or wish to socially engage whilst maintaining a critical distance from governance.[71]

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[70] Maleiha Malik (2008) 'Engaging with Extremists', *International Affairs* (22, 1: 85-104).
[71] Richard Farnell (2009) 'Faiths, government and regeneration: a contested discourse', *Faith in the Public Realm*, Adam Dinham, Robert Furbey and Vivien Lowndes (eds.) (Bristol: Policy Press).

Representation of Muslim diversity within Building the Bridge

Building the Bridge, however, was not only designed to create better relationships between the police, and Muslim community groups, which in turn would enable conversations about potential suspects, embedded within Building the Bridge was the Prevent agenda's aim of capacity and resilience building within Muslim communities in order to enhance their capacity to counter violent extremism. This aim included promoting moderate groups that offer an alternative to extremist readings of Islam, and engaging groups within the Muslim community, whose voices are less often heard, such as women and young people. The timing and location of Partnership Advisory Group meetings were rotating to allow for maximum attendance and participation by a variety of Muslim viewpoints, including young people, women, men and older community members.

Engaging young people

A notable feature of Prevent nationally and elsewhere was its emphasis on engagement with young people, driven by perceptions that reliance on community leaders disenfranchised young people, and thus failed to connect with those vulnerable to radicalisation. At the national level this led to the establishment of the Young Muslims Advisory Group (YMAG) in 2008, and locally there was a focus on youth engagement for Prevent funding.

The involvement of young people in Building the Bridge, which will be discussed in greater detail in section 5, was perceived as an initiative that could have been taken further still. Waliur Rahman, one of the founders of the initially Bangladeshi, and later multi-ethnic youth organisation BAYS (Bristol Active Youth Service), and also a member of the YMAG, felt that the institutional structure and nature of exchanges within Building the Bridge were not designed to explicitly involve young people and address their needs:

So as Building the Bridge formed and started to develop and shape and mould, what I often found was the guys from BAYS, and especially the young people just thought it's not fit for me, they felt we're just here for the sake of being here. 'I give my opinion and it's not really listened to.' I don't think they fully understood how to engage with young people. [...] I'd say 'well I can't do it for everybody, you've got to have it embedded in your procedure, it has got to be part of the culture of that environment. Are there young people engaged in mosque committees?' No, not really, you just have to look in Bristol and see what the demographics of a mosque committee is, elderly, 50 plus, male, South Asian, unless it's a mosque that is predominantly attended by Somalis.

Engaging women

Nationally, Prevent emphasised engagement with Muslim women, largely, Katherine Brown argues, because government tended to view Muslim women as inherently moderating forces, who could, with support, be enabled to provide more liberal readings, and alternatives to combative masculinist versions, of Islam. This led to the creation of the National Muslim Women's Advisory Group (NMWAG) in 2008, with a particular remit to enable women's theological engagement, and support for initiatives locally aimed at engagement with and empowerment of Muslim women. This approach was criticised – indeed the NMWAG broke down acrimoniously in 2010, with many women members criticising the tokenistic nature of its engagement with women. Katherine Brown suggests that a key flaw of the government's focus on engaging with Muslim women was its instrumental view of women's involvement as significant for delivering on the counter-terrorism agenda, rather than in terms of wider objectives relating to equality or empowerment, which positioned women as peace-makers, rather than as citizens or political actors in their own right.[72] A key concern for Building the Bridge was inclusion of Muslim women as participants. As we discuss in the following section, the activities organised by and for women within Building the Bridge went beyond a narrow focus on women as peacemakers in a variety of ways. However, interviews with Building the Bridge participants also indicated that the modalities of women's participation and involvement in decision-making processes remains a salient point of discussion and subject of on-going negotiation within Bristol's Muslim community.

Mohammed Elsharif, the vice-chair, stressed that the very structure of Building the Bridge, and especially the Partnership Advisory Group, involved a similar number of men and women, which introduced a level of equality and empowerment for women:

> Just being there as a strong voice within the table where you've got mosques and you've got men who traditionally work separately, just having that equal voice within that context, I think that's a big, you know, empowerment for women.

Shabana Kausar, who at the time worked for Bristol City Council, but was also a member of the government's national Young Muslims Advisory Group, perceived Building the Bridge as an opportunity for the empowerment of both women and young people:

> From the first few community Prevent meetings I went to, it became clear that the definition of the 'Muslim community' in reality meant 'Muslim men.' I found that these men were often self-appointed community leaders who began to be the face of the Prevent agenda – women and young people had little or hardly any representation. It was interesting, because women and young people were at a double disadvantage where both Muslim men and the local authority failed to encourage them to shape the Prevent agenda. So it was quite refreshing when, at the insistence of the female Prevent lead, there was a real emphasis on creating

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[72] For a wider discussion, see Public Spirit's theme: 'Has UK public policy succeeded in empowering Muslim women?', http://www.publicspirit.org.uk/themes/

separate groups for young people and Muslim women. There were definitely continuing attempts by the community to keep the agenda male dominated, but it was great that Building the Bridge supported this work. The Prevent agenda did eventually encourage young people and women to be actively involved, but this was a while in coming, and arguably, did not go far enough.

Several research participants, both male and female, also reported that activities that problematised gender-based barriers for women generated a degree of tension between some of the mosque representatives and feminist activists involved in Building the Bridge. Kalsoom Bashir, who founded the Bristol Muslim Women's Network and also works with the Feminist Muslim Human Rights Organisation 'Inspire', found that some of her ideas, including a film that she co-produced for the national newspaper *The Guardian*,[73] were received critically by some community members. The key issues that women who joined the Bristol branch of the Muslim Womens' Network wanted to discuss included women's religious authority in offering contemporary interpretations of the Qur'an, women's role within practices of worship and ritual leadership as well as their decision-making capacities in religious bodies. Kalsoom Bashir pointed out that the women involved in the Muslim Womens' Network felt that womens' engagement in the city in general, but also in mosque communities in particular continued to face obstacles:

> Actually I was just challenging theology, patriarchal interpretations of faith and access of women to mosques. And they didn't like that. On a statutory level many mosque representatives are fine, but regarding women's rights some of them are the same as the organisations that they represent really.

Practices of accommodating women vary indeed considerably across Bristol mosques, and mosque committees adopt distinct decision-making procedures. While it is impossible to give a full overview of these practices within the scope of this study, the salience of the subject shall be illustrated with examples from established and recently created mosques in Bristol. Despite their varying approaches to women's participation, there was agreement among mosque committee representatives in Bristol that their organisational features had been shaped by the migration experience and their minority position in a historically Christian and secular country. Volunteers involved in the more established mosques traced their organisation's history back to an initially largely male migrant population, which predominantly adhered to the 'myth of return' and hence established basic and spatially confined provisional worship facilities, such as for instance, in the case of the oldest mosque in Bristol in Montpelier, Islami Darasgah, which is located in a terraced house. The need for additional facilities for women arose with growing family unification and marriage migration towards the end of the 20th Century. Several mosques in Bristol have raised money to either transform recently acquired, larger buildings or newly built ones, and mosque volunteers highlighted that the improvement or creation of facilities for women was at the core of

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[73] The Guardian (2011) *Muslim Resistance: Under the Prayer Mat. Video*,
http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2011/jan/18/muslim-resistance-under-prayer-mat-video.

these building works. Representatives of mosques in Bristol related a lack of women's spaces to financial constraints and the exceptionality of the post-migration experience, and highlighted that mosques in their country of origin provided space for both sexes. Muslim experiences across Western contexts vary in this regard, as Muslim migrants to the USA addressed the initial lack of space by creating integrated prayer spaces, and replicated traditional spatial arrangements once they had settled more permanently and began raising funds for expanded worship facilities.[74]

The following citations indicate a spectrum of roles that different mosque communities and their current leadership envisage for women and shows how different Islamic communities and leaders draw on a spectrum of visions for women's practices of worship and their religious authority as well as their influence in decision-making processes. While some mosque representatives associate female leadership with the private sphere, which includes educational and caring duties, others see it as a driving force behind local community politics. The spaces associated with women's engagement and plans to institutionalise their involvement differ accordingly within these accounts.

Tahir Mahmood of Islami Darasgah Bristol, for example, emphasised women's role as educators and located female leadership within educational facilities. In his view, women were unlikely to get involved in a management committee if the mosque itself was not yet able to cater for them:

> Unless the mosques organise activities and have facilities fully open to women, women are not going to get involved in all male committees. We are currently constructing new buildings to provide facilities for women and our youth, but it's a struggle raising the funds - but we will hopefully get there. We have committed to having a crèche, to having ladies' facilities and the next step is to get those ladies involved in running these facilities.

All interviewees representing mosque communities in Bristol stressed that prayers were obligatory for men, while women were not required to pray at the mosque. Women nevertheless attended prayers, albeit in lower numbers. There was agreement that women tended to attend social functions, including lectures and speeches. Manzoor Hussein, one of the Trustees at the Hosseinieh Foundation in Eastville, argued:

> Ladies' attendance is usually better when we have religious functions and not prayers. Also they have children with them up to the ages of ten, so they need more space. We have built that in the mosque when we structured our building. We encourage women to come and bring their children. We feel that the mosque is a place of education and also a place of connecting spiritually. If the adults remain disconnected from the mosque, the children will also be

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[74] Juliane Hammer (2012) *American Muslim Women, Religious Authority, and Activism. More than a Prayer*. Austin: University of Texas Press, pp. 126-127.

disconnected from the mosque, so therefore they will not have the affinity with their place of worship.

In relation to women's involvement in mosque committees, Hussein argued that women were represented through their spouses. His narrative allocates different spheres of engagement to women and men, implying the latter were the ones engaged in worship in the mosque, whereas women's interest focused on religious gatherings. His narrative sees women's voice being represented by their husbands, thereby implying they did not require direct representation:

> We have to bear that in mind this is part of the modesty aspect within the Islamic teachings and structure that women are not directly represented in mosque committees. However, that's not to say that we don't have women also voicing their opinions, which can be heard in sub-committees. In our mosque, they do voice an opinion and I'm sure they do in other mosques as well. At the end of the day, it's their husbands and families which are funding the mosques so the wife may not directly be voicing her opinion in the mosque but through her husband, we manage to hear all her concerns.

Similarly highlighting women's role as wife, mother and educator, Abdul Tariq, Liason Officer at Easton Islami Darasgah in Greenbank suggested:

> Islam gives a lot of importance to this. The first school for a child is his mother's lap, the child will learn more from the mother than it will from the father. If you make that woman weak, that lady weak, who is the mother, then you've made that child weak, so you've made the society weak. It's very important, education is a must.

His mosque, the Easton Islami Darasgah has recently moved to larger facilities, and is currently transforming this building into to a mosque and educational centre. The part of the building that will be used by women in the future is currently used as a prayer space for men, but will be available to women upon completion of the ongoing construction works. Tariq suggested that his mosque was also planning to set up a separate committee for women, which will feed into the

decision-making of the currently existing committee. He reasoned:

> So, this is where I think credit needs to be given. People are moving forward, people are doing that. If the system encourages those then others will see, okay it can be achieved. (…) It is in the interests of Muslim community itself to empower women. It is our interest, it is our aim, it's got to be done, this is our future, it must happen. What I'm saying is that this is the grand reality, it's going that way.

A more recently established organisation, the Tawfiq Masjid and Centre in Barton Hill, is drawing on this model and operates with two separate committees, a male and a female committee, which also held regular joint meetings. Khalif Abdirahman, the chair of its mosque committee, told us that it was women in the area who mobilised in favour of having a mosque nearby, and that the mosque was set up in response to their initiative. In his perception, women had a greater need for a mosque in Barton Hill because it provided them with a communal space:

> Men have their coffee shops where they meet and discuss Somali politics, whereas it's the women who look after the real needs of the community, and care about local issues, so it was women who wanted a social venue to meet. Mosques would not necessarily play this role in Somalia, but they definitely do here. Women were the driving force behind the mosque in Barton Hill.

These narratives show that mosques across Bristol are currently developing some novel approaches to involving women in their decision-making procedures. The committee of Easton Jamia Mosque on St. Marks Road reached out to women candidates in the last election. Arif Khan, a member of its committee, and the chair of the Council of Bristol Mosques, pointed out that women had full access to the premises of his mosque and had their respective study and discussion circles. He asserted:

> They're more than welcome and I don't think you'll find a single woman who said that she wanted to participate or become one of the mosque committee members and we refused.

Whilst these more specific questions of women's roles within community and religious structures in Bristol more broadly are outside of the scope of this study of Building the Bridge, its emergence as an issue within our data signals its significance as a topic of ongoing discussion and negotiation (as it has been in other religious, social and political contexts). Building the Bridge provided participatory opportunities for women and offered a forum for the ongoing dialogue about women's involvement in other decision-making spaces in the city. As Jones et al (2014) suggest, although prevailing discourses tend to depict Muslim women as politically and socially marginalised, community organisations have become a key portal for women's participation and in some cases leadership – and particularly those that are based on harnessing a spectrum of different forms of expertise.

Engaging across social class

A few respondents expressed a concern that key debates took place within the circles of Building the Bridge itself, but had only limited reach beyond the BTB Board or PAG. Suad Abdullahi, at the time a Bristol City Council community worker, who participated in Building the Bridge meetings, also raised the issue of elite representation. She felt that the individuals involved were not necessarily representative of the wider Muslim community, especially regarding their educational and class background:

> I think the people who were running it were very positive, very forward thinking people, but because they're professional and well educated they might be in a minority within their own community. So within the overall community they're probably the elite, you know. And I am not sure they come in touch with real issues, such as mental health and poverty, lack of education, all these kind of things, which then can lead to isolation and moving away from

mainstream … and that's when you're most at risk of becoming involved in terrorist activities because you're looking for a group, you're looking for recognition, you're looking for somewhere to belong because you don't really belong, you know.

Several research participants expressed concerns that Building the Bridge could have been advertised more widely, and that attempts to reach wider audiences could have been taken further still. Manzoor Hussein of the Hosseinieh Foundation in Eastville suggested:

Outside that immediate circle, I don't think that information filtered down to the general public, them to be aware of what was happening because it was very small and localised.

Conclusion

The interview data indicated that the initiators of Building the Bridge were conscious of and self-critical about the challenges that representation involved, but also that the representativeness of the organisation could have been expanded in key respects, most notably regarding ethnicity and class. A variety of perspectives was included throughout the process, but some Muslims groups in the city chose not to engage with Building the Bridge, while others felt that their voice was not sufficiently considered within the forum. Building the Bridge set out to challenge pre-existing power imbalances, mainly by reaching out to women and young people and embedding a dialogue with these constituencies in its very structure. However, these groups also felt that the sensitivity and responsiveness to their concerns could have been more encompassing. In particular, the Bristol Muslim Women's network argued that women's problem perceptions were not given full attention by all participants and that there was too little scope for a shift in pre-existing opinions among some community members. While all research participants reported that Building the Bridge had improved their networks within the Muslim community, meetings also brought a spectrum of different needs and opinions among participants to the fore. Moving on from the challenges that inevitably arise when an institution is designed to give voice to a diverse and multi-faceted group, the following chapter sketches the activities initiated and funded by Building the Bridge, which also intended to reach wider audiences beyond attendants of the BTB Board and the Partnership Advisory Group.

5. Key debates and initiatives

The possibilities for citizens or communities to achieve institutional or legislative recognition for the issues that concern them can be analysed by focusing on a) the capacities of citizens or communities to effectively articulate and mobilise around their concerns in order to make claims on the political system; and b) the openness of the political system in providing opportunities for these claims to achieve institutional or legislative recognition and accommodation. As Modood has argued, in the UK over the last few decades, Muslim organisations have become increasingly organised and engaged in claims-making, whilst multicultural policies have opened the political opportunity structure to recognising and accommodating Muslim claims.[75] This has been reflected in accommodations, such as modification of dress codes or uniforms, the provision of halal food in public institutions such as prisons, hospitals or schools, provision for Muslim burial, state funding for Muslim faith schools, or planning permission for the building of mosques.

In this section, we consider the kinds of issues and concerns raised by Building the Bridge participants and the extent to which Building the Bridge created a new political opportunity structure that enabled issues and claims of Muslims in Bristol to be recognised or accommodated. We begin with the themes which Building the Bridge participants perceived as significant in joint debates, focusing in particular on topics that were central for the Partnership Advisory Group. This section also offers an account of the activities that were initiated with the help of the funding that Building the Bridge was able to access via the Prevent programme.

Key debates and issues

A key thread within PAG discussions focused on the cultural pluralisation of public services in Bristol, and the need for a greater cultural sensitivity in their delivery. The PAG served as a platform for community representatives to problematise, for instance, a police proposal to publicise the role of the mosque that had alerted the Police about Isa Ibrahim's behaviour, the modalities of airport controls at Bristol airport, the lack of provision in the area of Islamic burials, and the policing of traffic around mosques during Friday prayers. In all these cases, Muslim representatives felt that their perspective was not initially considered in the delivery of these policies, but that Building the Bridge offered a mechanism that enabled them to challenge culturally insensitive practices and initiate their revision. In other words, Building the Bridge created a new 'political opportunity structure' for Muslim claims-making in the city, that enabled certain issues to be aired and addressed.

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[75] Tariq Modood (2010) *Still Not Easy Being British*, pages 8-12.

Public follow-up by the Police to the arrest of Isa Ibrahim

An early instance where Building the Bridge participants were consulted about issues relating to Muslims in the city concerned a plan by the Police to follow up the arrest of Isa Ibrahim by publicly demonstrating their gratitude to the mosque that had alerted the Police to Isa Ibrahim's behaviour. Initially, the Police had suggested hanging posters throughout the neighbourhood of Easton, in which they would thank the mosque that had passed on key information that had led to Ibrahim's arrest and the disruption of his plan to carry out a bomb attack. Muslim representatives felt, however, this was not an appropriate strategy to show gratitude and suggested to the Police that they choose more subtle means to express their appreciation, by, for instance, making a donation to the mosque's playground. Although the police officers had already taken first steps to realise their plans, they were persuaded that the campaign could be counterproductive and decided against running it.

Operation of airport security controls

The second occasion on which Muslim community members were able to intervene successfully was in the area of intrusive controls at Bristol airport. The introduction and use of Schedule 7 powers under the Prevention of Terrorism Act to 'stop, search and examine people at ports or airports in order to determine whether they are concerned with the commission, preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism'[76] have in practice been a source of controversy, with many Muslim travellers complaining of being routinely subjected to enhanced surveillance.[77] The introduction of body image scanners has also proved controversial for many Muslims – particularly in relation to issues of modesty.

Sheila El-Dieb, a community activist and member of the Bristol Muslim Women's Network explained how this had been raised and addressed in Bristol:

> … these new scanners came into the airports. It was a big problem for the Somali community at that time because the officials that were at Bristol airport didn't really know much about Islam.

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[76] Tufyal Choudhury and Helen Fenwick (2011) 'The impact of counter-terrorism measures on Muslim communities, *International Review of Law, Computers and Technology* (25, 3: 151-181).

[77] See Choudhury and Fenwick (2011) and Leda Blackwood, Nick Hopkins and Steve Reicher (2012a) 'I know who I am, but who do they think I am? Muslim perspectives on encounters with airport authorities', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (36, 6: 1090-1108).

It just needs a little bit of thought […] the person at the scanner should be the sex of the person that's doing it, and there should be a curtain behind him so people walking past can't see what he's looking at. So the Chief Superintendent, Julian Moss, said that's simple enough. Let's go up to the airport and talk to the authorities. And two or three of the group went up and explained what was going wrong. The hassle stopped.
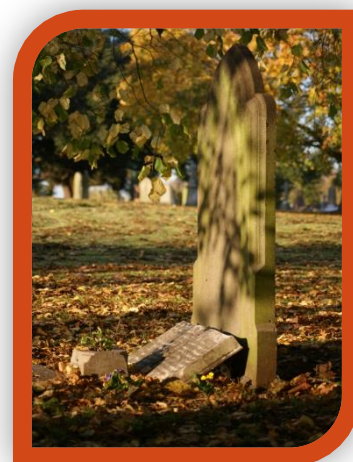
Several research participants told us about this initiative; they had gained a sense that their point of view was not only considered by the authorities, but also subsequently led to changes in policing practices. Further to the initial meeting at Bristol airport, members of the Bristol Muslim community were invited to shadow security staff and offer feedback on how airport controls could be improved. It was clarified that Police needed to give an explanation for why they chose to question an individual, and that travel related questions were appropriate, while further inquiries into mosque attending habits were inappropriate in this context. Thus, while this negotiation process in its local scope was not equipped to challenge the structural discrimination that use of Schedule 7 and Section 44 stop and search procedures imply,[78] consultation with the local Muslim community at least enabled a change to the modalities of these controls.

Muslim bereavement and burial

Another topic discussed in PAG meetings was the issue of bereavement and burial services in Bristol, which were perceived as not yet sufficiently addressing Islamic requirements. There was a sense that Islamic communities could introduce new collaborations among themselves to improve the way these services were currently delivered. While the discussion about suitable burial sites across Bristol and the scope of collaboration between different mosques is still ongoing, research participants appreciated that the issue had been initiated within Building the Bridge.

Initiatives

The following sections will discuss those activities that figured most prominently in interviewees' narratives and can thus be seen as creating a legacy among those who were at the frontline of Building the Bridge activities.

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[78] The Equalities and Human Rights Commission has published a report that problematizes the disproportionate frequency in which ethnic minorities and Muslims in particular are subject to 'stop and search' procedures, Equalities and Human Rights Commission (2010*) Stop and Think. A Critical Review of the Use of Stop and Search Powers in England and Wales*:
http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/raceinbritain/ehrc_stop_and_search_report.pdf

Educational and outreach initiatives

Social projects that were pursued within Building the Bridge, drawing on Prevent funding, included educational measures to 'challenge extremist ideology and support mainstream voices',[79] such as presentations to school staff and students as well as conferences and workshops about the roots of radicalisation. Within Building the Bridge this also led to initiatives to present more positive representations of Muslims. The inaugural Chair, Latif Ismail, suggested setting up a picture exhibition that was also circulated as a printed brochure and displayed online. It contained a celebration of ordinary Muslims in different areas of Bristol, giving insights into their professional backgrounds and views on Islam and highlighting individual contributions to the local community. The exhibit was on display in Bristol Central Library and Easton Community Centre and received extensive coverage by local and national media; it also won several awards, including the West of England Chartered Institute of Public Relations Award and the Community Cohesion Institute's Public Engagement Award for Building Bridges. Mosque committee members furthermore participated in excursions to other mosques across the UK, including Tower Hamlets, Leicester, Leeds and Bradford, which were perceived as a beneficial exchange of experiences and good practice.

The Police drew on Building the Bridge as a forum to consult the Muslim community about the design of training tools that they had been developing to inform wider audiences, including statutory agencies and educational institutions, about possibilities of early interventions. These training materials, funded through separate funding that Avon and Somerset Police had secured, included short films designed for diverse viewers, which were delivered by trained staff in participatory training workshops. The training material drew on extensive research on the case of Isa Ibrahim (and others); the short film 'Conviction', for instance tells the story of Ibrahim's path to radicalisation and flags up key situations in which health or social care providers as well as educational authorities could have become concerned and looked to explore the reasons for his behaviour. Another training package called 'WRAP' (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) was designed for statutory bodies and their partners. 'Conviction' has subsequently become established as a national training tool and also been used in other European countries. Detective Chief Inspector Martyn Triggol, the Police's coordinator for Prevent across the South West, suggested that Building the Bridge helped to fill a significant gap in the area of education, awareness training and early recognition. The educational tools intend to clarify to practitioners how radicalisation proceeds and suggest indicators 'to look out for, what to be concerned about'. The WRAP training package has been analysed in greater detail by Blackwood, Hopkins and Reicher, who contend that a number of over-simplified social-psychological assumptions informed its understanding of radicalisation as connoting alienation from the mainstream and vulnerability to recruitment by extremists.[80] The training package, Blackwood et al

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[79] *Preventing Violent Extremism in Bristol*, Bristol City Council (2009b).

[80] Leda M. Blackwood, Nick Hopkins and Stephen R. Reicher (2012b), Divided by a Common Language? Conceptualizing Identity, Discrimination, and Alienation, in Kai Jonas and Thomas A. Morton, *Restoring Civil Society: The Psychology of Intervention and Engagement following Crisis*, Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 222 – 236.

argue, constructs discrimination as an individual-level experience, and at the same time encourages yet more attention on Muslims within statutory bodies and public institutions. Thus institutionalised discrimination is not only not sufficiently problematised as part of the political ground on which radicalisation becomes possible, but potentially even reinforced.

Youth engagement and Proud 2B

Another set of activities was intended to 'support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists'.[81] These measures explicitly focused on youth engagement;[82] and included the creation of a Muslim scout group, the organisation of various sports activities and Street Art projects involving graffiti artists in Southmead and Easton, as well as a series of workshops called 'Proud 2B'.[83] The Proud 2B events were held at the City Academy in Lawrence Hill. Kalsoom Bashir initiated this series of events, and organised Proud 2B in collaboration with a group of young people, including Shabana Kausar and Waliur Rahman, who were also members of the previous New Labour Government's Young Muslim's Advisory Group (YMAG). The idea was to create safe spaces for discussion about young people's experiences, but also to foster a sense of confidence, that would help counter stereotypes that young Muslim often face in the wider public. Apart from offering a forum for discussion, the events were also intended to build skills, for instance in the area of political engagement. Shabana Kausar told us:

> We invited speakers from London to speak to young people about how to lobby their MP, how to write letters, and how to be active citizens. This was really important because these are not skills they teach you in school. These skills are often ones which you pick up from parents and peers, which set the predominantly working class, BAME young people at a disadvantage. Middle and upper class children know how to access key policy and change makers through their parents and networks. We wanted our young people to learn how to influence change through democratic means to ensure that their concerns and opinions were being represented.

Other activities involved drama and arts performances or discussions in small groups on issues such as 'stop and search' or 'Women in Islam'. The Proud 2B workshops evidently marked a milestone for Building the Bridge participants, as a majority of respondents mentioned Proud 2B at least once during the interview, commenting on it as a memorable success. The Council of Bristol Mosques and the Somali Development Group jointly held a larger grant which was spent on employing a male and a female youth worker for the duration of nine months. These helped to improve networks between young people from different mosques in Bristol, and organised a series of sports events. When Prevent funding was discontinued in 2011, Bristol City Council reacted to the positive feedback by offering resources to the interfaith charity Salaam Shalom to deliver follow-up projects with young people.

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[81] *Preventing Violent Extremism in Bristol,* Bristol City Council (2009b).
[82] The Guardian (2011) *Muslim Resistance: Under the Prayer Mat. Video*,
[83] A short film documenting the 'Proud 2B' workshops: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0VUG7kOSGs

Naseehah Community Advisory Network

Participants in Building the Bridge felt that community members' individual efforts to avert possible radicalisation processes within the community could be strengthened if they were coordinated more explicitly. This led to the proposal for the Naseehah Community Advisory Network, which was based on the understanding that the Muslim community itself could serve as a safety net, and particularly if a group within the community formed an advisory network that could be reached via a helpline. Thus, anyone concerned about a community member, who, for example, displayed unusual changes of behaviour or was considered 'vulnerable' to radicalisation could ring or email the advisory network. Rather than reporting a fellow Muslim, friend or family member to the police, concerned observers (and the individuals they were concerned about) could receive theological, psychological and personal advice and support from within the Muslim community. Thus, Bristol City Council, Avon and Somerset Police and 25 Muslim volunteers initiated the Naseehah community advisory network. Over the period of over a year, the 25 volunteers received training in recognising radicalisation and offering a counter-narrative to Al-Qaeda. Kalsoom Bashir coordinated the process on behalf of Bristol City Council and Lloyd Nethercott, the community police officer in Easton, helped to set up the website and offered technical advice to the newly appointed coordinators of the network. Respondents in this study perceived the initial collaboration between BCC, the Police and the community volunteers that led to the creation of Naseehah as marked by mutual trust and shared sense of purpose. Evaluating the first year of Naseehah's activities, Bashir explained:

> Within the first few months of the launch I received five referrals directly as I had been project manager, three of which were passed on to the police for further investigation. One was passed on to a member of the group and one was signposted to relevant advice. So that I felt was great. Now the website is still there. I still get the odd phone call or email asking for advice. […] The best thing about that is we have 25 people in Bristol that know what the risks are and can be called upon by members of the community or statutory partners for advice should it be required.

Kalsoom Bashir told us that the idea was to draw on Prevent funding to establish the community advisory network, but that the network was then to be run solely by volunteer community advisors. Sheila El-Dieb, who volunteered with Naseehah for several years, and acted as a coordinator in its initial phase, stressed that 'none of us walked away' when the funding ceased. However, while all interviewees perceived the initial training period as beneficial, the network's activities remained at a low level. Naseehah received very little publicity in the first place, and the communication between the respective Naseehah coordinators as well as between network members became rare after Prevent funding was discontinued. This was despite ongoing support for the initiative from senior police officers. Detective Chief Inspector Martyn Triggol, the Police's regional coordinator for Prevent across the South West, suggested that advisory bodies such as Naseehah would benefit from continuing financial support so that its members could keep up to date with recent developments within international terrorist networks. With the discontinuation of Prevent funding for Bristol City Council, Kalsoom Bashir was seconded into Avon and Somerset Police as a Prevent Trainer to deliver the national education tools developed within Building the Bridge. In 2012, Bristol City Council and Avon and Somerset Police obtained funding to implement the Channel process, a Prevent-funded

multiagency programme in which local authorities, police representatives and various statutory agencies collaborate in identifying and supporting individuals at risk of radicalisation. With the termination of Prevent funding for Naseehah, the coordinators of Naseehah decided that Channel would be better resourced and more up to date in dealing with referrals, and that individuals ringing the Naseehah helpline should be informed about Channel as a potential alternative resource. However, as regular Naseehah meetings had been discontinued by this time, the Naseehah volunteers were not briefed about this decision to rely on the Channel process. A number of volunteers, among them the initial coordinators of Naseehah, felt concerned about a potential blurring of boundaries between Naseehah, which was intended to enable a community service to respond to concerns about radicalisation, and the Channel process, which directly involved the local authority and the police in official capacities. The secondment of one of the Naseehah coordinators into the Police was furthermore perceived as creating a potential tension between police priorities and Naseehah's relatively more independent profile. There followed a series of resignations, through which Naseehah volunteers asserted their concerns regarding the importance of Naseehah being clearly seen as a community service that was independent of Channel and normal policing structures. The experience of Naseehah demonstrates the importance of collective and transparent decision-making and continual negotiation of trust for successful collaboration between community groups, local authorities and the police.

Women's initiatives and the Muslim Women's Network

A series of activities sought to 'increase the capacity of communities to challenge and resist violent extremists',[84] targeting mainly mosque communities, but also specifically Muslim women; Kalsoom Bashir, who drew on extensive and diverse community contacts established through her work as a teacher and community activist, organised various discussion events and forums with the local branch of the Muslim Women's Network, that she had set up for this purpose.[85] Activities included parenting courses which were 'to explore ways in which faith and culture may affect parenting' and British awareness and citizenship classes. However, the focus was not reduced to women's role as mothers of potentially 'vulnerable' young people; the relatively broad scope of Prevent objectives was also used to facilitate women's engagement and participation in a general sense. Shabana Kausar, a member of the Bristol Muslim Women's Network, explained how Prevent played a role in enabling an on-going conversation among women within the Muslim community:

> I was really pleased that Muslim women were given a space to develop and to shape the agenda; we held conferences, we had workshops, we invited prominent speakers to talk about women's rights. We spoke about women in Islam and what authority we have to govern ourselves and others. I remember speaking to Kalsoom at the time that I was quite sad that we needed Prevent to safe spaces to have these discussions; these conversations were already happening in small clusters but lacked real coordination. You know, we have a number of really

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[84] *Preventing Violent Extremism in Bristol,* Bristol City Council (2009b).
[85] *Preventing Violent Extremism in Bristol,* Bristol City Council (2009b).

powerful Muslim women in our community, but our voices were just not breaking through into the mainstream.

The Muslim Women's Network sought to bring professional women together, whose voice is less often heard. The rationale was that grassroots community organisations speak for parts of the community, while the contribution and perspective of female Muslim teachers, doctors or magistrates are less often publicly appreciated and valued. Kausar argued that the Muslim Women's Network and its focus on theology offered an important collective source of confidence for its participants, the 'powerful women' she mentioned above:

It gave us that extra confidence and knowledge. We needed to be able to challenge misogyny as and when we saw it and be equipped with the confidence to speak out against injustice. I think it was almost like giving us permission to have the authority to speak out, but we needed to hear it from Islamic scholars so that we could meet any backlash we were presented with. Too often religion was used as a tool to silence us. As a faith, Islam is founded on equality, but there is a difference between faith and religion: religion is a man-made institution […] and there are very patriarchal elements within religion which were, and still are, used to stifle women. We needed a safe space to come together and talk about how Islam actually is about the empowerment of all people and we needed to reclaim it for ourselves.


While respondents reported that they had gained a sense that Building the Bridge activities addressed at women in particular were valuable for those involved, Bristol Community Worker Suad Abdullahi felt that the circle of women who actually benefitted from these initiatives was limited to what she perceived as women who already are fairly empowered, and with class and educational advantages:

They could have worked with various women's groups out there, the kind of grassroots people who make everyday decisions about forced marriage, about FGM, you know, about whether a woman is going to be in to education or not, you know, they weren't tackling all that stuff.

Conclusion

In summary, Bristol's Building the Bridge made use of Prevent funding in such a way that key grievances within the Muslim community were aired and addressed to the degree possible within a programme whose main focus was on preventing terrorism. Most importantly, its activities were realised in cooperation with the Muslim community itself. The scope of subjects discussed at Partnership Advisory Group meetings was determined mainly by Muslim representatives, as was the thematic focus of key activities that were realised with the help of Prevent funding – within the parameters set by the national government's guidelines and objectives. Participants in the PAG felt that Building the Bridge enabled them to raise public authorities' awareness of community concerns and challenge culturally insensitive policing practices, such as for instance, security controls at Bristol Airport. In so doing, Building the Bridge created a new political opportunity structure for the articulation of Muslim claims, and enabled a reshaping of some institutional practices, which reduced some of the power imbalances between public authorities and Muslim representatives. While a great deal of activities reached out to wider audiences, there was also a sense that activities could have included an even broader array of Muslim constituencies. Especially women and young people felt that the thematic remit could have been expanded further, and that the discontinuation of funding for Building the Bridge's activities prohibited the exploration of neglected subject areas.
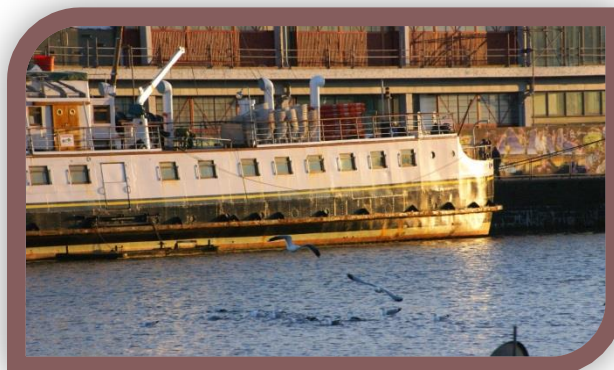
6. The future of Building the Bridge

The impact of the withdrawal of Prevent funding

Under the current Coalition Government's Prevent agenda,[86] Bristol is no longer a priority area for Prevent funding. The discontinuation of funding for activities and the organisation of meetings has of course had an impact on the institutional setup of Building the Bridge. Staff at Bristol City Council, who held full-time posts associated with the delivery of Prevent, have moved on to different tasks. A research participant described the current situation as follows:

> The Council's not involved as much as before. The police is not involved as much as before. All the agencies have disappeared because they're led by priorities and funding and they're gone, but the links are there and the community's there.

Ian Quaife, at the time Community Cohesion Manager at Bristol City Council, stressed that the current Government's approach to the separation between Prevent and integration shifted attention away from community cohesion policies, and that the work of Building the Bridge has also been affected by the general reduction of local authorities' budgets in the wake of on-going public sector reforms. The present Government's Prevent Strategy[87] explicitly separates Prevent from community cohesion policies, whilst the recent integration strategy is characterised by a greater emphasis on Christian identity and values as 'an important part in the heritage and culture of our nation',[88] it provides hardly any funding for community work and accentuates instead the role of localities, the private sector and civil society organisations in providing conditions for social integration.

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[86] Home Office (2011) *Prevent Strategy* (London: HM Govt):
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf
[87] Home Office (2011).
[88] Communities and Local Government (2012) *Creating the Conditions for Integration* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government):
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7504/2092103.pdf, page 11.

Nevertheless, Bristol City Council continues to deliver some of the youth work that was put together under the auspices of Building the Bridge through the interfaith charity Salaam Shalom. Shabana Kausar, who managed the charity until recently, told us that she very much drew on her experiences with Building the Bridge in this role:

> Our mediation project, for instance, continues some of the work that Building the Bridge touched on. Working with Salaam Shalom, I can continue this important piece of work. This shows that Building the Bridge did have some successes because it managed to mainstream the different projects that were explored under Prevent. The leadership of these projects were taken over by members of the community, and we have made them our own and taken them in a direction that we feel fit.

The women involved in the Bristol Muslim Women's Network also continue to remain in touch with each other, although the lack of funding has reduced possibilities to organise larger events. Even the Partnership Advisory Group continues to meet, although meetings are now scheduled twice a year rather than every six weeks. Bristol City Council's updated Neighbourhoods and Community Cohesion Strategy includes a continuing commitment to supporting the Partnership Advisory Group and Building the Bridge in general, and includes an annual evaluation of the PAG.[89] Building the Bridge also has a seat as a partner on the Local Enterprise Partnership BME steering group, SARI (Stand against Racism and Inequality) and the Bristol Manifesto on Race Equality and Inclusion. The organisation maintains regular contact with the Mayors' and the Police Crime Commissioner's office.

Thus, while a number of initiatives created between 2007 and 2010 are still on-going, including the public sector awareness training that is delivered by the Police, the Bristol Muslim Women's Network, and youth work that has been taken on by publicly funded third sector organisations, such as the interfaith charity Salaam Shalom, the overall institutionalised cooperation that defined Building the Bridge, and the scale of activities that was associated with it, have been significantly reduced. Kalsoom Bashir felt that especially the work of Building the Bridge around women's and young people's participation was discontinued at its climax:

> So I think that is a huge loss really, because young people wanted platforms to discuss sexuality, relationships, hard hitting subjects that they just couldn't do within a culturally sensitive environment. And we were starting to do that. But it was literally the line is drawn and we had to stop. So we couldn't do it. Certainly the mosques need a huge amount of work still, and I'm not quite sure what the answer is there really. I saw on Facebook, a mosque just had an election and two people are being elected. Well how many women are elected? None.

Bashir's view resonates very much with many other interviewees' assessment that key themes were picked up by Building the Bridge but not developed as far as they would have wished.

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[89] Bristol City Council (2013d) *The Neighbourhoods & Community Cohesion Plan Update for 2013/2014*, unpublished first draft.

Building Bridges Beyond Prevent?

Despite the discontinuation of funding, the Building the Bridge Chairs initiated a number of interventions, for instance by encouraging politically engaged young people with minority background to run for office at Council elections and holding hustings with all candidates for the offices of Mayor and Police and Crime Commissioner that focused specifically on Muslim community issues. During recent escalations in the conflict between Israel and Palestine, Building the Bridge co-organized an event at which Bristol's four members of Parliament and the Mayor discussed global foreign policy with the Muslim community. The Bristol MPs and the Mayor issued a joint call that problematized the disproportionate use of violence and appealed to the UK Government to promote a dialogue on establishing peace in the region.[90]

Responding to the EDL

Building the Bridge also coordinated a concerted response from Bristol's faith communities when the right wing extremist English Defence League held a demonstration in Bristol in July 2012. Prior to the rally, a delegation including Building the Bridge chair Zaheer Shabir held a meeting with the EDL leadership to discuss with them their reasons for organising a march in Bristol.[91]

During the meeting, the EDL was asked to explain why it had chosen Bristol as a location for its protest, especially as a majority of the local population felt that people from different backgrounds got on well with each other. According to Shabir, the EDL leaders presented a list of ten concerns about public life in Bristol, such as claims that there were no-go areas for non-Muslims in the city or that Muslim communities did not engage with other non-Muslims, each of which was discussed and countered on the basis of data, or experiences and evidence from Building the Bridge activities. The exchange concluded with an invitation to the EDL leadership to continue a constructive dialogue with Building the Bridge. Shabir suggested that the EDL nearly cancelled the march in response to this meeting, and that lower numbers of participants than were initially expected turned up on the day of the march. Building the Bridge also held a meeting with the organisation Unite against Fascism, and organised gatherings with a variety of community members.

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[90] Bristol City Council (2014): Bristol leaders issue statement on Gaza conflict and ceasefire, http://www.bristol.gov.uk/press/bristol-leaders-issue-statement-gaza-conflict-and-ceasefire.
[91] Such a meeting was an unusual, although not completely isolated, instance of Muslim actors seeking out meetings with EDL representatives to counter EDL claims head on. A similar meeting also took place in Leicester in 2011 between the FMO's PR Officer, Suleman Nagdi and the EDL, with Leicestershire Constabulary acting as intermediary.

These discussions revealed that many in the Muslim community did not want to be involved in any response, reaction, or counter-protest. A leaflet was prepared that offered information for young people. On the day, the BTB chairs and other community volunteers policed the streets in Easton and Lawrence Hill to make sure young people stayed away from the march and to de-escalate possible tensions. According to Zaheer Shabir, who coordinated these interventions, community members were out on the streets all day, exchanging news over the phone and keeping a wider network up to date via email. On the following day, Building the Bridge paired up with the Bristol Multi-faith Forum and invited Muslims and non-Muslims across Bristol to join them for a Peace Walk. The Peace Walk was not designed as a protest against the EDL, but as a celebration of Bristol's diversity.

Some research participants felt that this intervention introduced a new post-Prevent focus and added a multi-faith profile to Building the Bridge, which was widely appreciated. Waliur Rahman, the founder of the youth organisation BAYS, argued:

> Building the Bridge was quick to react and get on there, meet with the police, meet with the council. I'm on the email list and I would get updates on what's happening from the police through Building the Bridge – real time, this is what happening now, this is how many arrests have happened, this is where they're moving on to, this is the bit to avoid etc., etc. So for me that's a real positive and I think that's a real big success of the community coming together and being informed of a potential issue. Because actually a whole group of young people could have mobilised, young Muslim guys could have mobilised and tried to fight them and who would have been on the front page of the Sun? You know, not the EDL. So there's some good work in that sense about mobilising the community.

Other research participants felt that the initiative did not go sufficiently beyond the discursive logic of Prevent, inasmuch as it assumed young Muslim's vulnerability and likeliness to engage violently with the EDL and was intended to prevent such potential escalations. Several respondents felt that the danger of a violent retaliation was overstated, and that as a consequence, a Muslim voice was missing on the counter-march. Farooq Siddique of Easton Jamia mosque, for instance, felt the absence of Muslim speakers on the counter-march had sent the wrong signals:

> I believe if you don't have the confidence or the willingness to stand up for your own rights, it's only a matter of time when other people get tired of standing up for your rights. […] And to be honest with you, I doubt if any young Muslims would have turned up, […] or whether their parents would have let them turn up, or said, we don't want to get involved in this – but I would have left the choice to the people.

Regardless of how enthusiastic or critical a variety of community members felt about this initiative, it demonstrated that Building the Bridge is willing to engage with the current Government's revised Prevent strategy, which explicitly refers to tackling right-wing extremism as well.[92]

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[92] Home Office (2011).

Three models for Building the Bridge

A majority of research participants felt Building the Bridge had not only created momentum, but set up a collaboration that was beneficial for all parties involved. Many stressed that regular exchanges between representatives of minority groups, statutory agencies and public authorities had created valuable relationships that both community members and local authorities continued to draw on.

Farooq Siddique argued:

I do genuinely see a future. I think it's a crucial step. I think it took a long time to get there, and anyone who's – as far as I know – anybody who's been involved believes it should exist, in its current form, the way it's set up at the moment. I think it we're not taking full advantage of that scenario. But in terms of actual engagement, there is no other process. There is no other way that our statutory agencies can engage with the Muslim communities, for example.

There was furthermore wide agreement among participants in Building the Bridge, including the two Chairs, that if Building the Bridge were to be continued, it required a new orientation, specifically in terms of its thematic focus, its composition and leadership. Farzana Saker, who works for the Multi-Faith Forum, which collaborated with Building the Bridge in organising the Peace Walk, suggested:

When Building the Bridge was set up it didn't have a constitution, it didn't have a rolling steering committee. It just had people from different organisations steering it. And it obviously didn't have volunteers. The group really needs to become a constituted group and take other people on board.

Several interviewees felt that after five years of successful collaboration, Building the Bridge would benefit from a new regulatory framework that would define its purpose and structure by taking it beyond its initial task, that is, beyond the implementation of the Prevent Programme. Chair Zaheer Shabir suggested specifying a rotating leadership and identifying a clear procedure for new elections.

Based on our data, there are different visions of how this new orientation could look, some of which could potentially be combined with each other. For illustrative purposes, we group these various visions into three models. None of the 'models' presented below has been identified as the only possible solution, and none of the individuals cited below explicitly limited their vision to just one model. In fact, some research participants suggested a number of variations. The reason why some respondents are quoted within Model A, B or C is thus indicative of the fact that the argument they made exemplified a key rationale of one of those models.

Model A: a countering extremism forum
A forum that draws on the Prevent legacy but is extended to challenge various forms of extremism

The first model draws on Building the Bridge's past profile and experience with implementing Prevent, but extends its remit beyond tackling Al-Qaeda terrorism to addressing other forms of extremism, such as right-wing political activism and recent activities by the so called Islamic State (ISIS). The vision draws on the current Government's Prevent Strategy, aiming to identify areas in which vulnerable young people might be responsive to violent ideologies and developing targeted action to prevent these people from joining radical groups. Ian Quaife, Bristol City Council's Community Cohesion Manager, also told us about the announcement of Al-Shabaab, a Somalia based terrorist organisation, to recruit young Somalis in specific areas in the UK.[93] Bristol was named as one of these areas for targeted recruitment. The Council felt Building the Bridge provided an appropriate format to address and discuss this issue:

> There are lots of perceptions, negative perceptions of Somalis, so we need to challenge some of that, but also to alleviate any panic in the community to say that this is … you know they might've done a video but that doesn't mean that all young Somalis are going to become terrorists. But also to open that up so we can find out what the Somali community in Bristol think and offer help for them to tackle the issue really, if the issue exists, I am not sure if it does yet.

Research participants who advocated this model felt that a new focus on all forms of extremism not only required a thematic reorientation, but also an extended circle of participants in Building the Bridge. The proposition was to maintain a focus on faith communities, but broadening it by involving the Bristol Multi-Faith Forum, a charity that engage faith communities across Bristol:

> There's got to be a platform where we have different communities coming together and addressing those issues together. […] The Multi-Faith Forum is doing a huge amount of work in engaging communities, especially around the topic of extremism and other things as well. The work that the Partnership Advisory Group did should be handed over to this organisation because they're doing such a fantastic job.

Farzana Saker, who works for the Multi-Faith Forum, felt that Building the Bridge would benefit from extending its scope and board beyond the Muslim community by including other faith groups. While she saw her organisation's objectives very much consistent with Building the Bridge, she suggested she could not take on further tasks without additional help from Building the Bridge. Joining efforts with Building the Bridge, she argued, would require that Building the Bridge would bring own resources into such an alliance.

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[93] The Bristolpost (2013) *New Al-Shabaab Video Aimed at Potential Terrorist Recruits in Bristol:* http://www.bristolpost.co.uk/New-al-Shabaab-video-aimed-potential-terrorist/story-19953144-detail/story.html, ITV (2013) *Masked Jihadist Aims Al-Shabaab Video at Potential British Recruits*, http://www.itv.com/news/2013-10-17/masked-jihadist-aims-al-shabaab-video-at-potential-british-recruits/

## Model B: a Black and Minority Ethnic communities forum
A consultative forum for Bristol's black and minority ethnic communities

The second model envisaged by several respondents was an extension of the existing Partnership Advisory Group to include a wider array of Bristol's Black and Minority Ethnic communities, and one that, importantly, provided a space for established and newly settled groups. A representative of this group would then regularly report to the Local Strategic Partnership. Mohammed Elsharif told us that there was a sense of common issues among Black and Minority Ethnic communities in Bristol and a perception that a joint PAG membership could enable them to address shared concerns more effectively. In his view, an institutionalised forum could give more recent arrivals such as the Polish or Somali communities an opportunity to learn from more established groups, and those who are more established could learn from new arrivals. The forum could also draw on a wider network of working groups, with thematic organisation, to discuss concerns around mental health, education, employment, discrimination, or political participation. In the current Vice Chair's view, such collaboration would reflect the profile that Building the Bridge has adopted since the discontinuation of Prevent funding:

> Building the Bridge has started becoming more about community cohesion, community empowerment, development, you know. We use the links and expertise on the board to develop that. […] I think that's what we need in Bristol, is having joined up minorities. It's not only to involve them in activities, but also to have a platform where they can co-ordinate with each other. […] We did start to set something up very informally, so we had meetings with Marvin Rees from the Afro-Caribbeans, invited some people from Asian communities, Somalis, a professional network to come together to think about what our vision for the BME communities is. Some people from Eastern Europe as well … it just started like an informal dinner, we meet every three months, just to talk and chat, but I think that's maybe something we can build on with Building the Bridge.

The rationale of this model is not primarily focused on the prevention of violent extremism, but to address all kinds of issues that affect minority ethnic communities in particular. Research participants advocating this model argued that any new Prevent Strategy would not allow for a continuation of the community work that made Building the Bridge activities so valuable, so the organisation should dissociate from Prevent all together. Sheila El-Dieb, for instance, suggested:

> Even if funding is made available under that agenda, I'm not sure that the new Prevent strategy is actually going to be useful in that way […] Building the Bridge should live on and it should spawn a lot of baby-Building-the-Bridges and community work across communities, across Muslim
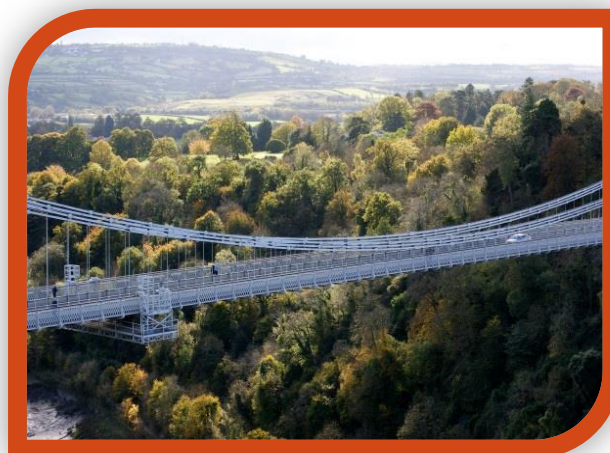
and non-Muslim communities, tackle unemployment issues, food banks, all this kind of thing which is needed everywhere […] I don't see the big society giving us, oh, come on, let's give them some money to help the communities integrate. I don't see that any time soon.

Model C: a Muslim forum
A post-Prevent Muslim forum that provides a democratic space for Muslim communities

Several interviewees felt that the Partnership Advisory Group replicated organisational structures that had already been in place prior to its establishment. While the focus on Prevent and its funding stream justified the creation of the PAG, this group of respondents argued that the varied membership within Building the Bridge did not allow for a discussion of concerns beyond the scope of Prevent, especially regarding matters that concerned relationships or issues within the Muslim community itself. These research participants proposed that the BTB Board should be retained as a mechanism for Muslims' engagement with statutory agencies, the Council or Police, but that the PAG should be reconstituted as a Muslim Forum. Farooq Siddique made an attempt to establish such a Muslim Forum in the mid-2000s, and Building the Bridge subsequently absorbed the Muslim Forum's membership. The forum was intended to link Muslim organisations across Bristol, who were to meet every three months and discuss issues and potential solutions within a plenary and smaller working groups. In Siddique's view, the board of Building the Bridge could serve as a mechanism to present the results of such gatherings to local authorities. The maintenance of a Muslim Forum that precedes BTB board meetings would require an organisational budget. The rationale of a Muslim 'only' Forum is that specific themes, such as the participation of women within mosque committees, or other internal matters, for instance, can be more effectively debated with this audience. The PAG, which was chaired by a Councillor and attended by the Police or other agencies, in contrast, offered a platform to discuss issues that concerned everybody present, such as airport controls, burial services or parking around mosques – rather than acting as a space for debates among Muslims. There was a sense that there are issues that particularly affect the Muslim community, and that public institutions require help in addressing some of these concerns appropriately. Suad Abdullahi argued:

> I think it could become a Board or a particular organisation supporting issues around Islam, because in today's world there is a need for it. Working at a local level in Bristol, working with public agencies as well as schools, I think schools need the support more and more, especially teachers with the single Equality Act, there's quite a lot of issues around promoting different protected characteristics, or sex education, how do you deal with that in an inner city school?

Conclusion

This report has documented the emergence of Building the Bridge as a participatory mechanism for community engagement that established a new institutionalised relationship between Bristol City Council, the Police, statutory agencies and Bristol's diverse Muslim community. We discussed the organisation's dynamics of participation and representation, some of the key activities initiated by Building the Bridge, and offered some reflections on a possible future beyond its initial basis as a Prevent initiative.

Bristol's approach to implementing the previous Government's Prevent programme has had a significant impact on the density of contacts and interactions between local authorities and representatives of the Muslim community, and thus addressed some of the deficits regarding certain minority communities' political under-representation in the city, which had been diagnosed by previous observers.[94]

Nevertheless, also embedded in the institutional set-up of Building the Bridge was a focus on one particular group among Bristol's minorities – the Muslim community – and on engagement with Muslims under the auspices of the government's counter-terrorism strategy. Engagement through Prevent nationally has been subject to widespread criticism for creating limited and securitised engagement between government and Muslim communities (although as we have noted, local responses to Prevent have varied a great deal). Although its activities were fundamentally linked to the overall aim of the prevention of violent extremism, Building the Bridge enabled interventions that addressed community grievances, and enabled the empowerment of Muslim young people, Muslim women, and mosque communities in the city. The initiation of a partnership with Muslim community representatives can thus be seen as driven by an overarching security concern, rather than necessarily inspired by the goal of enhancing participation in decision-making as such. Once Prevent funding dried out, exchanges and consultations became rarer. For a limited period of time, however, Prevent funding enabled a regulated form of community engagement, some of which continued even after the withdrawal of resources. In a unique way, and more durably than other ad hoc consultative bodies, Building the Bridge enabled Muslim community representatives to bring community concerns to public authorities' attention and facilitated changes to local policies and policing practices.

This report explored the extent to which Building the Bridge facilitated or inhibited a genuinely participatory engagement between public authorities and Bristol's Muslim communities (for a reminder of the criteria we adopted, see the box on the following page).[95]

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[94] Bousetta (2001).
[95] See Cornwall A. and Coelho V.S.P. (2007) and Noorani T., C. Blencowe and J. Brigstocke (2013).

We found that public authorities recognised early on in the process that there was a need to include a variety of Muslim constituencies in the implementation of Prevent in Bristol, and undertook continuous efforts to widen and diversify this group. Several mechanisms institutionalised Muslim community involvement in Building the Bridge, including leadership capacities, agenda setting powers and institutional representation of a variety of groups in the Partnership Advisory Group. A dialogue with women and young people was embedded in the institutional set-up, and activities funded with the help of Prevent resources reached out to wider audiences in the city. While Building the Bridge sought to give voice to a diverse and multi-faceted constituency, a number of research participants expressed concern that some Muslim organisations received more attention within Building the Bridge than others, and a few Muslim groups preferred not to get involved with the forum. There was a sense that Building the Bridge activities could have expanded their remit especially with regard to ethnic and class based diversity.

Although initiated by a nationally defined political agenda, the individuals involved in creating Building the Bridge were keen to establish a joint understanding of locally specific social problems and potential collective solutions. The schedule for Partnership Advisory Group meetings was decided in collaboration with Muslim representatives, as was the thematic focus of key activities that were realised with the help of Prevent funding. Participants in Building the Bridge felt that the forum enabled them to raise public authorities' awareness of community concerns and challenge culturally insensitive policing practices, such as, for instance, security controls at Bristol Airport. Overall, Building the Bridge made use of Prevent funding in such a way that central Governments' vague guidelines regarding 'genuine or perceived grievances'[96] within the Muslim community were addressed to the degree possible within a programme whose main focus was on preventing violent extremism.

PARTICIPATORY ENGAGEMENT

1) A variety of perspectives is included, and these are reflected in the outcomes

2) Problems, policy objectives and the political agenda are defined collaboratively

3) There is scope for shifts in opinion and awareness for the interests of others

4) There is trust among participants and a sense that their contributions are respected

5) Pre-existing power imbalances are challenged or reduced

The institutional structure of Building the Bridge itself was designed to facilitate an on-going dialogue, and representatives reported that they felt they could challenge or influence public authorities' views. The Chairs sought to create a space in which all views could be articulated and discussed. The scope of themes that were debated within Building the Bridge demonstrate a degree of openness to a wide array of subject matters; key initiatives reflected public authorities' preparedness to revisit policing practices and strategies and make them more responsive to Muslim concerns. And while

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[96] Home Office (2008), page 5.

tensions remained in areas in which opinions could not be shifted on either side, especially between some of the constituent Muslim organisations involved, Building the Bridge created a forum in which contentious subjects could be debated or taken to different arenas. Individuals involved in Building the Bridge reported that the preparedness of public authorities to share institutional power and their interest in representatives' concerns and grievances were crucial for generating trust. While the experience of Isa Ibrahim's case certainly assisted public authorities in making a case for the importance of mutual trust, research respondents reported that it was mainly their readiness to listen and take Muslim representatives' views on board that helped build trusting relationships. It was also obvious from interviews with representatives of Bristol City Council and the Police that Muslim community representatives' critical, constructive and engaged contributions were highly valued by public authorities and helped to build trust on their part.

Some areas in which trust among Building the Bridge participants could have been improved was in relation to debates about the participation of women, young people and with respect to issues of representation and the maintenance of transparency. While young people were given particular attention in a variety of Prevent funded activities, their participation could have been embedded more systematically in the institutional structure of Building the Bridge. We also gained a sense from interviews that some well-established Muslim organisations were concerned that Building the Bridge was replicating or seeking to replace pre-existing organisational structures. Building the Bridge nevertheless helped to shift pre-existing power imbalances inasmuch as it created a novel mechanism of engagement between Bristol City Council, the Police, various statutory agencies and the Muslim community. Building the Bridge offered a new political opportunity structure for Muslim representatives to subject political and policing strategies to scrutiny, and to make public authorities aware of some of their concerns. While Bristol City Council and the Police were reflexive about pre-existing power-imbalances and prepared to share their agenda setting power, it is regrettable that the interest in engaging with Muslim communities was driven first and foremost by an instrumental rationale, namely getting Muslim communities to collaborate in preventing violent extremism. However, once in place, Building the Bridge developed its own dynamics and facilitated interpersonal relationships that then took its activities beyond the narrow scope of Prevent. The implementation of Prevent thus created institutional structures which could be used in the future to further improve local authorities' ability to address minority concerns.

Whether the collaboration within Building the Bridge is continued with a new broadened thematic focus beyond Al-Qaeda-type extremism, or beyond the prevention of violent extremism, and whether the forum extends its circle of participants to include a wider Muslim constituency, or also invites different faith groups or ethnic minority communities to the table, it is clear that any further collaboration would require a new constituting moment for Building the Bridge. Such a new beginning would involve the provision of a specified budget, a discussion about future objectives and a regulatory framework, which, among other things, would specify a rotation principle and electoral procedure for the leadership of Building the Bridge, determine the frequency of meetings and include a reflection on how the representativeness of the organisation can be improved in the future.

Technical Appendix

Research Design, Methodology and Sample

The research is based on documentary analysis and 22 qualitative research interviews which were conducted between September 2013 and June 2014. The aim of the interviews was to learn about the experiences and perceptions of a variety of individuals who were involved in Building the Bridge in different capacities, including through their work with Bristol City Council, the Police, Muslim organisations and community activism and volunteering. Respondents were recruited through a variety of channels; preliminary meetings with Bristol City Council and the chair of Building the Bridge provided a starting point. We contacted individuals whose names were mentioned in publicly available minutes of the 'Safer Bristol' Strategic Partnership meetings, and community representatives who publicly speak out about Muslim concerns in Bristol. Each interviewee was furthermore asked to recommend other suitable research participants (snowballing). Respondents were contacted by telephone or email. Interviews lasted between 30 and 100 minutes, and more or less followed a semi-structured interview schedule which drew on the participatory criteria discussed in this report. While themes started recurring after 14 interviews and we gained a sense of saturation, the initially intended 16 interview could not be achieved by the end of 2013. As there had been a high proportion of non-response to invitations to participate in a research interview, a further series of research interviews was conducted in spring 2014, after access had been successfully negotiated.

Prior and during the interview, we guaranteed full confidentiality and the option to remain anonymous if research participants preferred not to be named in the report. Respondents could furthermore reject the recording of the conversation and choose to disclose their identities in relation to parts or all of their interview (or not at all). The data were fully anonymised, securely stored on the Bristol University Server and analysed with the help of the software package NVivo. Before direct quotes and references were included in the final report, we contacted each research participant so they could specify how and in what terms they wished to be reported. No data were released or published that would have permitted the actual or potential identification of research participants without their consent.

List of interviewees

1. **Khalif A. Abdirahman**, Chair of the Mosque Committee Tawfiq Masjid and Centre, Barton Hill

2. **Suad Abdullahi** (Training Manager Ashley Housing Association, former ESOL Coordinator Community Learning West)

3. **Rizwan Ahmed** (community development worker and project manager at the Bristol Muslim Cultural Society, Coordinator of Naseehah)

4. **Kalsoom Bashir** (Founder of the Bristol Muslim Women's Network, Project Manager at the Charity Inspire, and Regional Prevent Trainer at Avon and Somerset Police, previously the lead Prevent Officer at Bristol City Council – the respondent spoke about a time period during which she worked for Bristol City Council and Avon and Somerset Police but expressed her personal views rather than speaking as a representative of these organisations)

5. **Sheila El Dieb** (Community Activist, Member of the Bristol Muslim Women's Network)

6. **Mohammed Elsharif** (Vice-Chair of Building the Bridge, NHS Health Improvement Manager)

7. **Latif Ismail** (Inaugural Chair of Building the Bridge, Chair of the Bristol Somali Forum, Director of Transparency Solutions)

8. **Manzoor Hussein** (Trustee at the Hosseinieh Foundation)

9. **Shabana Kausar** (National Schools Engagement Officer at Women's Aid, previously a Community Development Officer at Bristol City Council, manager of Salaam Shalom, and a member of the national Government's Young Muslim Advisory Group)

10. **Arif Khan**, (Chair of Council of Bristol Mosques, Easton Jamia Masjid)

11. **Tahir Mahmood**, (Chair of the Mosque Committee Bristol Islami Darasgah)

12. **Julian Moss** (Chief Superintendent, Head of the Criminal Investigation Department, Avon and Somerset Police)

13. **Lloyd Nethercott** (Community Beat Manager, previously Muslim Community Liason Officer, Avon and Somerset Police)

14. **Janice Pearson (**Prevent/Channel Coordinator for the South West Counter Terrorism Intelligence Unit)

15. **Ian Quaife** (Community Cohesion Manager, Bristol City Council)

16. **Waliur Rahman** (Community Activist, Co-founder of the Bristol Active Youth Service BAYS, member of the previous national Government's Young Muslim Advisory Group)

17. **Abdul Tariq** (Vice-Chair of the Council of Bristol Mosques, Liason Officer at the Easton Islami Darasgah)

18. **Farzana Sakar** (Development Officer Bristol Multi-Faith Forum)

19. **Zaheer Shabir** (Chair of Building the Bridge, Bristol Jamia Masjid, Immigration Lawyer)

20. **Farooq Siddique** (Easton Jamia Mosque, Columnist for the Bristol Post, previously Head of Prevent at the Regional Government Office South West)

21. **Martyn Triggol** (Detective Chief Inspector, Regional Prevent Coordinator for the South West for the Police)

22. **Stacey Yelland** (Communications Officer at the Easton and Lawrence Hill Neighbourhood Management)

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