



Initiatives of Change  
United Kingdom

# Annual Review 2019

Building trust across  
the world's divides

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# Where can we find wisdom during this time of crisis?

The world looks very different from when I was writing the introduction to last year's Annual Report. Covid-19 has had a huge impact; but there are other changes which may be even more significant in the longer term. The rising force of nationalism in country after country; the awakening, provoked by the Black Lives Matter movement, to the need to address historic and current injustices; the ever-increasing challenge to the democratic way of life from authoritarian regimes and internal corruption.

No one can predict what the world will look like as we work through these challenges. But we can be sure that one commodity will be more valuable than gold - wisdom.

One definition of wisdom is the ability to be able to come to well-chosen pathways when confronted by a challenging situation.

Wisdom is not an innate ability, it comes with experience and a willingness to learn. It comes as we:

- Listen to and learn from others, whilst exercising our own judgement;
- Confront challenging situations, either voluntarily or through circumstances – and draw lessons from our experiences;
- Listen to diverse voices – without preconceptions;

- Get ourselves out of the picture and look objectively at each situation;
- Gain knowledge;
- Apply what we learn in our daily lives.

The Book of Proverbs says that 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.'

As we align our lives to God's will, or as much of it as we can grasp, we will be given the gift of wisdom.

Perhaps the greatest need at this time is to admit that human wisdom will not be enough. We need divine inspiration if we are to come out of lockdown into a healthier situation for all, whatever their creed, gender or racial identity. All of us need to work to establish a new 'normal', that is a radical improvement on what we had before.

Initiatives of Change stands ready to work with all who seek to bring about constructive change.

The following pages describe some of the initiatives that are already under way.

**Philip Boobbyer**

*Previous Chair of Trustees*

## From the new Chair

After more than fifty years of service to the vision of lofC in the UK and around the world, it is a great honour for me, as incoming Chair of the Board of Trustees, to contribute a brief acknowledgment to you in this year's Annual Review.

As I write, we in the UK face a double challenge as we navigate the complexities of Brexit in tandem with the national impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite all the external challenges of 2020, I am encouraged by the way that the lofC UK team has responded and worked through the challenges as a team: the work and the outreach has continued, and grown, albeit largely through the virtual environment.

Like my fellow trustees, I continue to be inspired by the extraordinary work of lofC and by the amazing people who are our staff, volunteers and wider fellowship. The vision laid down by Frank Buchman almost a century ago has never been more relevant than in today's world: that global change begins with me: and that we all have a part to play, if we listen deeply, and answer that call.

I hope you too will be inspired by the following report as we work to serve the vision for a world remade.

**Margaret Cosens**

*Incoming Chair of Trustees*





# About IofC

We build trust across the world's divides. For more than 80 years, we have mobilised, engaged and empowered people to make personal changes that lead global change.

Through our initiatives, campaigns and network of volunteers, we build stronger communities, a just, peaceful and equal society, a sustainable planet and an ethical global community.

## Our approach to change

We believe that change starts with 'me'. Our role is to empower individuals to create personal change leading to global change.

Based on the values and ethics of our founder, Frank Buchman, we focus on the practice of quiet time and applying the absolute standards of honesty, unselfishness, love and purity of motive in everything we do. We encourage and provide safe places for open dialogue, trust-building and a new way of thinking.





Through our unique approach, we have mobilised and empowered people to create personal change leading to global change for **over 80 years**.



#### **Core Values and Silent Reflection:**

We apply the standards of absolute love, honesty, unselfishness and purity of motive in everything we do. Our core practice is listening in silence to divine inspiration, or the inner voice, as a source of truth and renewal.



#### **Change starts with me:**

We believe that everyone has the power to create personal and global change. Everyone can 'be the change' they wish to see in the world.



#### **Creating safe space for dialogue:**

By creating safe space, we can have the difficult and honest conversations that matter, building trust one step at a time.



# Driving Ethical Leadership

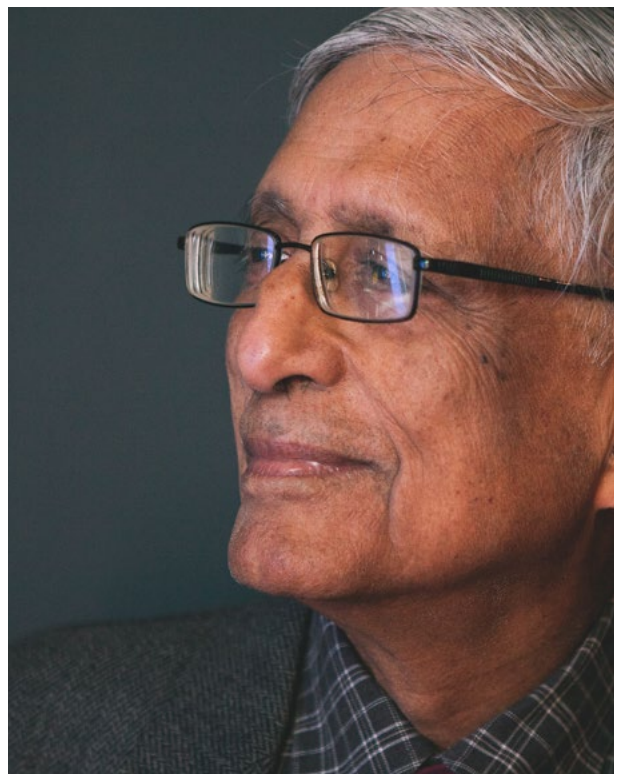
Our ethical leadership initiatives bring a diversity of talented people together to support change across a wide range of issues. All our groups achieved great things this year, helping to spread the message of the power of ethical change and leadership around the world.

## New Leadership and Accompaniment

This initiative delivered a series of training seminars on Unconscious Bias in the UK working with Matthew Freeman, international consultant and co-author of *Overcoming Bias*. This resulted in three separate internal team training sessions for all staff at lofC as well as training, delivered with partners from Integrity UK, on understanding Far-Right extremism.

Flat 14, lofC UK's residential centre, has been a hive of activity with more than 50 events hosted across the year. We were privileged to host Professor Rajmohan (pictured right) and Usha Gandhi for three weeks during their time in the UK, where our team was responsible for their care and extensive programme.

The initiative also held discussions with members of the Indian lofC team on collaborative training and the forthcoming School for Changemakers event in Panchgani, Western India.



## The IofC Business and Economy programme

The IofC Business Programme aims at changing the mindset in the business world and the economy by anchoring spirit, values and social engagement into organisations.

As part of the Ethical Leadership in Business (ELB) conference in Caux, the UK Business Programme ran daily community groups supporting Managing Director Annika Hartmann. These offered participants a safe space to reflect on their personal experiences in relation to the conference discussions.

We have also worked towards supporting women in business across all our initiatives, and this year we drafted a paper for a Women in Business programme that brings together the work being done across our initiatives.



## School for Changemakers

Since 2010, NLA has organised an annual residential summer school called School for Changemakers. In 2019, the summer school was replaced by a series of training offerings aimed at building the capacity of the School's alumni, numbering around 200 people.





## Refugees as Re-Builders™

In 2019, 35 professionals of refugee background from Azerbaijan, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and Syria, enrolled on the Foundation Level Refugees as Re-Builders™ course. Twenty went on to the Intermediate Level of the course and in January 2020, 15 of those started the Advanced Level, which concluded in April.

The course is designed to strengthen the capability and expertise participants already possess as rebuilders, providing them with the resources and practical tools needed to potentially design and facilitate workshops within their diaspora communities and countries of origin.

# Trust building

Trust building is an important part of all the work we do, and helps to promote sustainable change around the world.

# Impact story

## **‘EK’ is an activist and alumni of the RRB course.**

He said the course boosted his self-esteem, developed his confidence and ability to negotiate with people.

The course has helped him to acknowledge the impact words have on us; and to know when to speak and when to hold back.

- ‘EK’ said he now understands the value of making connections and the difference having a firm bond with someone makes to a successful negotiation;
- Realises that taking this approach is likely to have a much more effective outcome than having an argument because people will want to listen and learn from you.
- Learnt about human behaviour and how important it is to take a balanced view, without which situations can result in chaos.
- Introduced to models and theories during the course helped to make processes meaningful and he learnt how to apply them in practice.







## Agenda for Reconciliation

The main hub for the AfR network is a weekly open meeting at lofC's London centre. In 2019 those attending were mainly people of Ethiopian, Eritrean, Nigerian, Somali, South Sudanese and Ugandan origin, whose initiatives to promote reconciliation among their diasporas have been supported by lofC UK.

Apart from the *Refugees as Re-Builders™* course, two training courses have grown out of AfR:

- **Qualities & Strategies of Peacemakers** - an introduction to lofC's approach to peacemaking – a new short course based on films of outstanding peacemakers made by lofC film-makers, which was piloted in May and repeated in October.
- **Learning to be a Peacemaker** - a course for young European Muslims and their non-Muslim peers, which was delivered to 11 young people at the lofC's Swiss conference centre in July. Participants then took part in the Caux Forum's Tools for Changemakers - Building Trust in Europe. A reunion of LPM alumni took place in lofC's London centre in December.

Tasnim Idrees, from Tunisia, co-facilitated a 2½ day team-building workshop for students and young professionals.

We would like to express our appreciation to Rt Hon Tom Brake, who lost his parliamentary seat in the December 2019 election.

For 20 years, he has consistently hosted a wide variety of lofC and associated events in Parliament, including the launches of the *Refugees as Re-Builders™* and the *Learning to be a Peacemaker* courses.



# Impact story

## William Nkata

I came to know about Agenda for Reconciliation (AfR) through a colleague who introduced me to Peter Riddell. Peter invited me to attend over 18 months ago, and I have missed not more than five meetings since.

From the first meeting, I found a space that I fitted in straight away. People were talking about humanity, the prospects of meeting human needs as well as challenges and the thoughtful but diverse contributions from different lived experiences. Attending the AfR meetings has enhanced my listening and sharing skills. Working in community engagement, I have been able to use the values and skills learned in these meetings in my day-to-day work.

Being around a team of reconcilers makes me feel validated, empowered and sometimes

challenged. I am learning to relate and compare how others are trying to deal with the challenges and opportunities of reconciling with others of a different thinking.

My belief in building synergies has been made clearer and more meaningful in the struggle to building sustainable positive initiatives than can be co-owned. Peace and development can only be achieved through participation and not necessarily being superior in one way or another.

By joining the AfR meetings, it gives us the space to reflect and sharing of ideas that can bring about personal change that ultimately contributes to the goals of peace and development.





## Migrants and Refugees as Re-Builders

2019 saw the end of a three-year project to create a package of educational resources for Adult Educators of migrants and refugees, entitled *Migrants and Refugees as Re-Builders*.

The educational resources consist of a Curriculum, a Competence Self-Assessment tool, and Social Micro-Indicators to measure the effectiveness of the training, all translated into seven languages: English, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish, Arabic, Somali and Tigrinya, and in Braille (in English).

The project was delivered by lofC UK and partners in Spain, Sweden and Turkey and funded by a grant from the European Union Erasmus+ educational fund. lofC UK was the lead partner, responsible for the curriculum and developing training for refugees who wish to contribute to rebuilding their countries of origin.

In March, the Spanish partner launched the Social Micro-Indicators. Held in Madrid, the event was attended by 65 representatives of organisations providing services to migrants and refugees. A senior councillor in the city's municipality promised to recommend the SMLs for use by the city's administrators.

In August 2019, the partners launched our education package at the Erasmus Festival of Learning and Experience Exchange in London. Panels of experts, including representatives from the International Organisation of Migration from both Turkey and the UK and from the Universities of Sanctuary, contributed their perspectives on the situation of migrants and refugees.



## Creators of Peace

In 2019, CoP UK held six Creators of Peace Circles across the UK in places including Newcastle, London, Essex and Brighton. Each group explored what it takes to create peace in our own lives and in the world around us, using creative tools as well as discussion. Women also shared from their own personal stories and spent time in reflection.

One participant said: “The Peace Circle has helped me realise that rather than my life reacting to events and people, I can take responsibility for the direction it is meant to take. In that process I can also include others who want to make a difference, but who doubt their own ability.”

The CoP team also took part in the Oxford Women’s International Festival – a community wellness day at Sandford Village Hall in Oxford, attended by more than 100 people.

## Derry Initiative

Following the devastating bomb attack in the City of Derry and the murder of the journalist Lyra McKee in the spring of 2019, Mike Amesbury, MP for Weaver Vale, Shadow Minister for Employment, and Mike Kane, MP for Wythenshawe and Sale East, Shadow Minister for Schools, made a joint, short and non-political trip to the city, to visit stakeholders from across the community. The visit was planned and organised by a member of IofC staff, who accompanied the visitors.

During their visit, the delegation visited Oakgrove Integrated Primary School and met with representatives from the City of Derry and Strabane Council Executive. In addition to visits to several regeneration projects, the Members took part in a roundtable discussion with representatives from the local community in Derry’s Ráth Mór Centre.

The visitors met with representatives of the Derry University Group (DUG), and discussed the vision for an independent university for Derry, that would cross the sectarian divide and serve the whole of the community and would help to facilitate sustainable regeneration of the city.

The impact of the MPs’ visit has been on-going. Following an intervention by Mike Amesbury in the House of Commons, and under the initiative of Lord Adonis, there followed an emergency debate in the House of Lords, to address the need for an independent university in Derry. Lord Adonis subsequently invited the DUG representatives to meet with him in London. The meeting took place in the House of Lords in the autumn and included Lord Adonis and both MPs. At the meeting, they expressed their wish to return to Derry to take part in a public discussion about the independent university. The visit is due to take place once the Covid-19 emergency is in retreat.

IofC UK continues its engagement with its friends in the Derry community, including with the Derry University Group and hopes to take part in a future cultural event, to celebrate the 1500-year anniversary of St Columba, who had significant links to the city.





# Sustainable Living

## Sustainable Communities Programme

### A New Partnership

Since January 2019, the Sustainable Communities Programmes and the International Centre for Eritrean Refugees and Asylum Seekers (ICERAS), have been working with United Against Inhumanity (UAI) to host a number of events. January saw more than 40 people from a wide range of backgrounds take part in a consultation on the way to address the global inhumanity crisis in a united spirit. The group discussed protecting children in conflict, eliminating inhumanity in the asylum process, starvation and the situation in Yemen, and the arms trade.

In February, 50 people came to hear Vicky Hawkins of Médecins Sans Frontières speak about detention camps in Libya. Maurice Wren and Laura Wilson of the Refugee Council also spoke about the asylum and resettlement processes in the UK.

# Impact story

## Adeel Younas

Being part of the Sustainable Communities Team gives me an opportunity to give back and be part of something that is action-led and has community at the heart of its work. It means that I can be part of inspiring grassroots initiatives that can make a real difference in our community, wherever we are.

Through the programme, I have learned the practice of silence and inner listening through a different lens, as this is already imbedded in my Islamic faith in the form of prayer. I have discovered the art of conflict management in practice through working with a diverse team.

Through the relationships gained, and friendships made, I have connected with people across different faith traditions who are deeply invested in grassroots' work and contemporary issues. It's the small actions that make a big difference and everyone can play a part in changing the world. I feel that the Sustainable Communities team really put the effort to intentionally connect and support local initiatives.

It's inspiring, uplifting and encouraging to be part of a team that is outward looking. It's deeply satisfying to work with a team that has a common vision towards a better future for all. By being part of the Sustainable Communities network, there is an opportunity to be challenged, to be part of a community that can make you feel that you are part of something greater than yourself. You'll work towards a more meaningful vision for the world and experience first-hand local, national and international issues and be part of providing a solution.







## Interfaith Work

The Head of the Sustainable Communities programme, Amina Khalid, was invited to give the keynote speech at Newcastle Central Mosque in celebration of Ramadan at the Fourth Annual Peace & Unity Iftar, attended by over 100 people of different faiths and none.

With support from the Sustainable Communities team the annual 2019 interfaith event was hosted in Newcastle in collaboration with Newcastle's Council of Faiths, and Northumbria University under the theme of 'Common Humanity'.

The team has also hosted a series of events with partner organisations. Along with two partners from Islington mosques and Muslim Aid, we held a gathering of 2,000 people in a street Iftar in May, to break bread together in remembrance of the Finsbury Park 2017 terror attack.

## World Refugee Day

Initiatives of Change UK in partnership with four other organisations including Safe Passage, hosted a thought-provoking event in celebration of World Refugee Day on 26 June. Guests were welcomed with music and traditional African Arabian food prepared by young refugee chefs.

## Leadership training

International Centre for Eritrean Refugees and Asylum Seekers (ICERAS), the Sustainable Communities Programme, the Pearl Leadership Institute and Ethar Relief hosted a two-day leadership development training workshop in London and Birmingham for African youths, emerging leaders and other changemakers. The training, delivered by Gemma Perkins, was an opportunity to engage in deep levels of personal reflection, quiet time and group discussion in order to explore personal leadership strengths, areas for development, concerns and goals.

## International Human Rights Day

In celebration of International Human Rights Day, we hosted an event at Greencoat Place in partnership with ICERAS and United Against Inhumanity. The evening opened with keynote speaker David Wardrop, Chairman of the Westminster United Nations Association under the theme: 'How do we build trust and promote human rights in such challenging times?'.





## International Women's Day

A two-part celebration event took place in March in collaboration with ICERAS, Muslim Welfare House, Network of Eritrean Women UK, and Arab Cultural Forum. Women from Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Algeria and the Caribbean shared inspirational stories to a full room of guests at Greencoat Place. They talked about the practical solutions they found to inspire, equip, and connect people to become trust-builders in their family, community and society. More than 130 people attended the second day of celebrations to mark International Women's Day in London.



## From local team to international support

Amina Khalid was invited to represent lofC and speak about the work of the Sustainable Communities Programme at the Annual Diaspora Forum of the Parliamentary Network on Diaspora Policies on; "The democratic participation of diaspora", in Istanbul, Turkey, on 10 June 2019. The event was hosted by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. Over 100 parliamentarians, and civil society organisations from 22 countries took part.



## Peace Begins at Home

Ian Montague, Chair of Glasgow's Family Action in Rogerfield and Easterhouse (FARE), Michelline Safi Ngongo, a Labour Islington councillor, and Sakira Suzia, a Metropolitan Police Officer working on youth violence in London and abroad, were part of a UK panel discussion, facilitated by Paul Gutteridge, IofC UK National Director. The panel addressed the impact of knife crime on communities, followed by two training sessions on 'intergenerational dialogue - Peace Begins at Home'.





# Impact story

## Aziza Ahmed

I was invited to participate in the Peace Begins at Home intergenerational dialogue training held at my local community centre, the Light Project Pro International education centre, in Islington.

As a parent with three energetic teenagers, I began to question my parenting skills when I came to the UK as a refugee 10 years ago. Everything looked and felt different from my homeland Algeria. The training gave me the space to connect with my children in a way that I never could before. Our communication is much better now - with less shouting and more listening. We enjoy each other's company more now.

The conflict resolution and listening skills as well as the different models of communication

which we learned during the sessions helped us to better connect with each other and communicate more effectively.

I now feel part of the team and community at large. I feel confident in sharing my experiences and learning of the Peace Begins at Home training with my friends and others. Since the training I have also attended other Initiatives of Change activities with my children.

By taking part in Peace Begins at Home you will gain a space for parents and children to actively listen to each other without blame and learn together. You will learn creative ways to communicate and listen to our teenagers and youth. I am grateful for the long-term mentorship and friendship from the team.





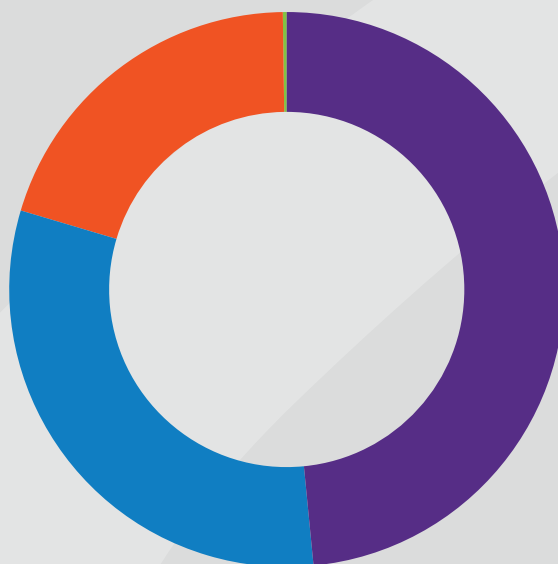
# Finance 2019

Initiatives of Change relies on voluntary donations to be able to focus on building trust and reconciliation, strengthening communities and developing ethical leadership. We also make our centre in London available for events and conferences, the income from which contributes to our work.

## Where our funds come from

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<b>£589,837</b>	Investments
<b>£379,016</b>	Donations and legacies
<b>£245,635</b>	Lettings and Catering
<b>£2,747</b>	Charitable activities



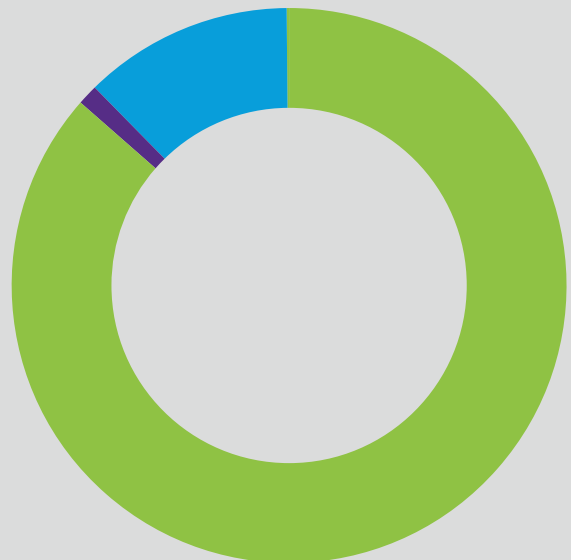


## How we spent our money in 2019

**£1,406,185** Charitable activities

**£19,264** Fundraising and investment

**£198,335** Letting and Catering



## Our Finances in 2019:

In 2019, we received a total of £1.2m which enabled us to spend over £1.6m on the activities described in this review. The generosity of previous donors has enabled IofC to build up an endowment fund, the income from which helps cover our administration costs. These charts show a summary of our finances. The summaries of income and expenditure on this page are for illustration. They are derived from the audited accounts to 31 December 2019 of The Oxford Group operating as Initiatives of Change, charity number 226334 registered in England and Wales. The Report and Accounts for 2019 can be downloaded from our website.





Help to support individuals and teams working to build trust, strengthen communities and develop ethical leadership.

Our work relies on the generous donations of individuals who want to make a difference in the world and believe that the longest journey starts with a single step.

By making a donation now you can help equip people who are prepared to start the process of change within their own lives and use their experiences to support their communities.

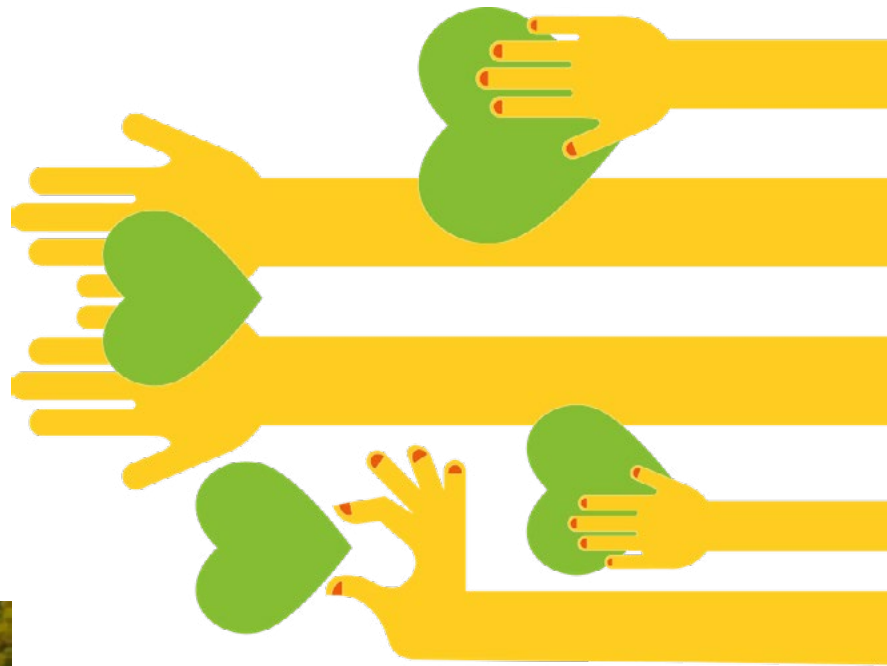
# Donate: A gift from you makes all the difference

To donate, please visit our website:  
[iofc.org.uk/donate](https://iofc.org.uk/donate)

## Leave a legacy

If you would like to support our work now and in the future, you can choose to leave a legacy to lofC.

A legacy is a strong and valuable way to show your connection to our work and our values, and it will help us to continue with existing programmes, or fund new programmes that bring people together across divides – wherever they are in the world.



## The Richard Hawthorne fund

Richard Hawthorne was dedicated to the work of lofC for much of his life. In particular, he played a part in many activities in Nottingham and the Midlands. As a committed member of his church, he reached out to people of different faiths and believed that together they could play a part in bringing about a better society. He had a remarkable outreach into local communities, including in some of the most deprived areas, building friendships with people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds across all ages and genders. He was recognised for his work with an MBE. In his will, Richard left a generous legacy to further the work of lofC. This is the basis of the Richard Hawthorne Fund.

### The Richard Hawthorne Fund supports:

Furthering lofC's work in building links of trust between people of different faiths in order to create a society which is more harmonious and value-driven;

Enabling young people, particularly those from less privileged backgrounds, and individuals who work closely alongside those young people, to attend lofC gatherings in the UK and overseas.

To find out more about how to set up a legacy and what to do next, please contact our Company Secretary, **Jacqui Begley** at **Jacqui.begley@iofc.org** or call **020 7798 6000**.





**Initiatives of Change**  
United Kingdom

[www.iofc.org.uk](http://www.iofc.org.uk)

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