

South East England Faiths Forum –

Newport, Isle of Wight – Monday 23 March

Hopefully Taki would have been able to give SACRE members some feedback on SEEFF so I will just add my impressions from the day. This is only a very brief report.

Around 15 people representing various organizations met on Monday at Albany House, courtesy of Albany prison. We were divided into four consultative groups and had three workshops as well as time for general feedback and discussion.

There was an agreed consensus that the role of SEEFF should be that of promoting, creating and supporting opportunities for dialogue and of social action.

The following are but a few of the issues raised and consulted on:

- Organization and development of the Forum
- Its Action Plan
- Its remit
- How would it work?
- Its mission statement
- Membership
- Focus/foci
- The need to define 'Spirituality' and 'Faith'
- Evaluation – who and how?
- Monitoring – who and how?
- How to ensure inclusivity
- Involvement with SACRE, other organizations

All four groups agreed that key to the work of the Forum are respect, tolerance and patience. It was felt that the betterment of all should be at the heart of the work of SEEFF.

The Solent's four SACREs - Isle of Wight, Southampton, Hampshire and Portsmouth - were represented in the Newport and Basingstoke conferences.

There was a lovely sense of fellowship and representatives felt that SEEFF was offering a 'clean slate' on which a true grassroots dialogue, cooperation and change can grow.

It must also be noted that the organization of the day was excellent and what is more the lunch, so kindly cooked and served by Fatim and Alice, was delicious and made everyone even happier.