One city... many cultures

A rudimentary guide to minority cultures and religions in Portsmouth
Special thanks go to those community and faith organisations which gave their time to ensure regional accuracy:

African Women’s Forum Group
Anglo-Arab Society
Bangladeshi Welfare Association
Caribbean Islands Association
Cheburashka-Russian support group
Church of England Council for Social Responsibility
Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
Family Learning Service
Iraqi Kurdish Community
Polish Community Group
Portsmouth African Group
Portsmouth Chinese Association
Portsmouth College
Portsmouth Vietnamese Association
Portsmouth and Southsea Hebrew Congregation
South Hampshire Reform Jewish Community
Zanzibar Organisation

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Foreword

Portsmouth City Council and all other public authorities have responsibilities under a range of equality and diversity legislation which is soon to be brought together and further strengthened as the Equality Bill passes through government processes.

Currently there is a clear duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote race equality
- Promote good race relations between people of different racial groups

Public authorities must make sure that they approach race equality in a proactive way. One aspect of this is making sure they equip their staff with awareness of the cultural differences in the communities they serve.

Portsmouth comprises many different minority ethnic communities – the main being:

- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Kurdish
- Irish
- Indian
- African
- Caribbean
- Polish
- Russian
- Filipino

It is very difficult to give numbers at the moment as the 2001 census figures are well out of date. Like other public bodies we are eagerly awaiting the results of the 2011 census.

“One City, Many Cultures” provides practical advice and guidance for staff to help them avoid causing unwitting offence. Local communities have been consulted to make sure the information given reflects the cultures in Portsmouth.

We are updating this guide as we accept the importance of having a working strategy to equip our workforce with greater knowledge of our society’s cultures. As a result we can ensure that service provision is sensitive to diverse needs within the city, thereby working towards fulfilling our commitment to all our residents.

It is necessary to recognise the importance of our role in encouraging community cohesion. Residents of Portsmouth may have different backgrounds and different cultures, but they share common goals - being able to access relevant services when necessary, living in peace with their neighbours and being part of a thriving community based on trust and mutual regard. These cannot happen if we do not try to understand each other’s basic cultural differences.

“Treating everyone the same will not provide equality of opportunity for people who are substantively disadvantaged and discriminated against and whose culture may not be understood. By consistently delivering services, which fail to take account of issues specific to certain cultures, barriers to people accessing those services persist.” Macpherson, 1999

(Signed by)

Louise Wilders
Head of Customer Services
Comments slip

We need your help to ensure that we are giving our staff accurate information. If there is anything in this book which you feel is incorrect, for any reason, then please let us know.

Furthermore, if this book did not provide you with the information you needed then fill in the slip below with your comments and send it to:

Customer services
Civic Offices
Portsmouth
PO1 2AL

Telephone: 023 9283 4069
Email: equalities@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Monitoring information

We collect the following information in order to provide us with valuable feedback on what you think of our service. This data helps us to identify gaps in the service we provide and is always treated confidentially.

What age group do you fit into?

☐ 16-24  ☐ 25-34  ☐ 35-44  ☐ 45-54  ☐ 55-64  ☐ 65-74  ☐ 75+

How would you describe yourself?  ☐ Male  ☐ Female

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Do you consider that you have a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act definition?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

☐ Vision  ☐ Mobility  ☐ Hearing  ☐ Other

If other, please specify

Which of the following ethnic groups do you belong to?

Asian or Asian British  Black or Black British  Mixed

☐ Indian  ☐ African  ☐ White and Asian

☐ Pakistani  ☐ Caribbean  ☐ White and Black African

☐ Bangladeshi  ☐ Other  ☐ White and Black Caribbean

☐ Other  ☐ Other
White  Other
☐ British  ☐ Chinese
☐ Irish  ☐ Other
☐ Other

If other, please specify

What is your religion or belief?
☐ Agnostic  ☐ Buddhist  ☐ Humanist  ☐ Muslim  ☐ Other
☐ Atheist  ☐ Christian  ☐ Jain  ☐ Sikh
☐ Baha’i  ☐ Hindu  ☐ Jewish  ☐ No religion

If other, please specify

How would you describe your sexuality?
☐ Bisexual  ☐ Gay man  ☐ Gay woman / lesbian
☐ Heterosexual / straight

If you prefer to define your sexuality in terms other than those used above, please let us know

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User guide

• This manual is designed to offer a basic introduction to Portsmouth’s diverse communities. If you are involved in customer care, family liaison or organising consultation, conferences, meetings or home visits, this publication will be invaluable.

• Sections cover faiths and other aspects of individual cultures adhered to in Portsmouth. This booklet aims to give basic and rudimentary information but does not propose to be an in-depth study, or be able to represent every aspect of cultural variation.

• Although statistical and demographic information can provide you with introductory knowledge, it is vital to discuss specific requirements with the individuals concerned.

• This guidebook focuses on the principal minority ethnic groups in Portsmouth. Contact details for established and emerging community groups, as well as relevant service providers, are included in the directory section.

• Individual religious festival dates have not been issued in this booklet because many alter according to the lunar calendar. For up to date information consult the internet or contact the Equality and diversity team.

• If you require further guidance, please contact the Equality and diversity team on (023) 9283 4069.
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Community Information

- There are many different reasons for Portsmouth’s community coming from such diverse backgrounds

- As a port, it has attracted traders from different countries for many centuries

- Commonwealth countries were invited to support the war effort in the 1940’s in return for their families being able to settle in this country. Rebuilding the country following the war meant more jobs, more housing and a better standard of living for everyone, which encouraged immigration

- In 1948, the arrival of HMV Empire Windrush was a major event in bringing the first economic migrants from the Caribbean Islands to settle here, in answer to this promise

- Portsmouth’s Chinese population increased in the 1960’s when British passports were issued to residents in Hong Kong - many had links with people who had already migrated and were working in the catering industry

- The majority of Vietnamese people arrived during the early 1970s. Vietnamese refugees were named “Boat People” because of their mode of transport to neighbouring countries

- Ethnic Chinese people represent a minority community in Vietnam, but constitute the majority of Britain’s Vietnamese people. Many will consider themselves Vietnamese while still maintaining some Chinese traditions

- Instability in African and South East Asian countries during the 1960’s and 1970’s resulted in higher immigration to Britain from those countries

- The University of Portsmouth attracts large numbers of overseas students who contribute to the life of the city

- More recently, Portsmouth has become a dispersal centre for Asylum Seekers, creating new, emerging communities

- Currently, there is a recruitment drive to fill vacancies in a range skills in certain areas, for example education and nursing. This is bringing into the country a diversity of qualified people, fulfilling a real need in our society

- In recent years there has been economic migration from the european accession states for example Poland and Romania

Language

- Because of the diversity of its population, there are many different languages spoken in Portsmouth. In 2008 79 languages had been identified throughout the city

- It is important to remember not everyone may be literate in their first language. It is equally important to understand that someone with good spoken English may not understand the written form

- Portsmouth City Council has a duty to make all public information available in a format that residents will understand

- A strapline should be attached to all written council literature, stating that it can be produced in different formats, and in translations upon request

For more specific information about language see the relevant community section
African communities

• Africa is not a single country. It is a vast continent made up of many nation states, each with their individual ethnicity, language, religions and culture

• Africans in Portsmouth are from African countries across the continent—there are people from Sudan, Congo, Somalia and Eritrea

Faiths

• Different faiths are practised across Africa. These include Christian denominations such as Church of England, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal and Seventh Day Adventist. Other religions, for instance, Zionist Christian Church, Islam, Judaism and other belief systems are also followed

See section on faiths for more information

Festivals

• The religious African calendar is very similar to the English Christian calendar celebrating Christmas, Easter and New Year. However, other calendar celebrations take place in Africa, for example, to celebrate the yam season, and also the masquerade season from which women are excluded

• The Notting Hill Carnival, held annually, attracts thousands of people and is a joyous occasion. Calypso, steelbands, folk, high life, Zulu dancing, township jive, gumboot dancing and reggae music are also enjoyed

• Drums are a key instrument in all African music
African communities

Language

- English is the official language and Spanish, French and Italian are also commonly spoken. This is largely because those countries were the principal colonising countries in the African continent.

- Various African languages may be spoken such as Yoruba, Hausa, Ibo, Swahili, Arabic, Setswana and Zulu.

- Pigeon English is a spoken language which is not generally written. It is a combination of African and English languages and will vary regionally. Tsotsi toal (Johannesburg) and Arabic are other examples of languages commonly spoken.

- Many African people will be bilingual.

Diet

- Religious dietary specifications will depend on the particular faith.

- Corn and maize are staple food and herbs rather than spices are used in different kinds of African cooking. There are regional variations and individual cultures have been influenced by the foods traditionally used in the cuisine of the colonising countries.

Marriage

- Marriage is held in high regard.

- Opinion on marriage will vary within the African communities in the UK, (as within any community).

- The format of the wedding ceremony will be determined by the particular faith. However, most weddings will continue for several days and as a result are often costly. Weddings organised in the UK are often not as lavish because of the expense.

- Clothes for the wedding are often ordered from Africa and are usually colour co-ordinated for the families and close friends of the bride and groom.

- Once married the bride becomes a part of her husband’s family.

- In marriage women will usually take their husband’s surname.

Naming Systems

- Those countries colonised by the British Empire will probably have a similar naming system to Great Britain made up of either one or two names followed by a family surname.

- West African naming systems are very complex. People may have as many as four personal names.

- The naming ceremony is where a child is given their personal names. When chosen these represent both sides of the family.

- During the ceremony salt, pepper, sugar and honey are among the foods taken to the baby’s mouth to taste, symbolising different aspects of life. There is a large family gathering and family and friends share a large meal. Guests usually bring a present for the child.
African communities

Family Relationships

- In a traditional village environment extended families live in clusters very close to one another. As a result, aunts, uncles and cousins live in close proximity. The elder women have a collective caring role. After marriage a bride will move to the husband’s family compound. Although this is impossible in an urban setting family ties remain strong.

- Women play a key role in all forms of family care.

- Grandmothers have a prime role in childcare and will expect to have a level of responsibility and involvement in rearing the children. However, during migration, children were deprived of daily face to face contact with relatives of a different generation.

Health

- African people are concerned with their hygiene and may require frequent access to washing facilities. African skin is particularly prone to dryness therefore African people routinely moisturise often with coconut oil, Vaseline or Nivea lotion. Therefore, patients may require assistance with moisturising.

- A dying patient may want several family members present. It is also important that clergy and religious leaders are able to visit for joint prayers.

- There are no objections to organ transplants. However, there may be resistance to organ donation. It is wise to speak sensitively to the family concerned.

Death

- Burial is preferred.

- The funeral is an important rite for family and friends and the proceedings will continue for several days. The bereaved family will not leave the house during the mourning period which will vary in length.

- Once the mourning period has concluded a waking ceremony is held to celebrate the deceased’s life. This is a joyous occasion where family and friends gather and share food and music.

- Very expressive grief is positively encouraged.

- The funeral service may include music from a choir depending on the family’s wishes.

- There will be a function following the service.

- The family’s house usually remains open for people to visit for some time for both condolence and prayer.

- It is important that from the beginning of the mourning period the bereaved family is not left alone nor should they have to prepare meals. Family and friends often provide support and financial assistance to those who are grieving.
Arab Communities

**Arab communities**

- This is the name given to the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa, Palestine, Syria, Jordan and Iraq and often applied to the peoples closely allied to them in ancestry, language, religion and culture.

- The Arabic language is the main symbol of cultural unity among these people, but the religion of Islam provides another common bond for the majority of Arabs.

**Local community**

- Many of the Arab community have fully integrated into society and cannot be easily distinguished.

- People have adopted the western style of dress and customs and mix with ease, having overcome barriers of communication and social difference. The younger generation may be more traditional than their parents.

- Newer arrivals, however, are not people who have immigrated here. Usually, a high proportion of them arrive as asylum seekers and refugees.

- It is more likely that they are recognisable as being Arab; from the way they dress and speak.

- It is more probable that these people retain their identity and perhaps form social groupings.

- Barriers of communication are therefore more likely as is lack of awareness of services and difficulties in reaching out for information.
Arab communities

Faiths

- The Islamic religion, which originated in the western Arabian Peninsula in the 7th century predominates in most Arab nations.

- It should not be assumed that all Middle Eastern Arab people are Muslim however.

- There are Christians, Jews and other religions represented within the Arab community.

See section on faiths for more information.

Language

- Arabic is a language, in which body language is used.

- You will find that some people are very animated when they talk. To an unaccustomed person it can be perceived as aggressive and loud.

- Arabic exists in two forms – classical and colloquial.

- Classical Arabic is the sacred language of Islam. Arabic is considered sacred since it is the language through which the Koran is believed to have been revealed.

- Classical Arabic language is the language of written communication and of most formal oral communication for speakers of Arabic dialects from Morocco to Iraq.

- Colloquial Arabic refers to the standard form of the language heard on TV and radio as well as in mosques.

- The diverse colloquial dialects of Arabic are interrelated but vary considerably among speakers from different parts of the Middle East.

- These dialects differ from standard Arabic and from one another in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar and usually labelled according to major geographic areas such as: North Africa - Egyptian - The Gulf - The Shan countries (Iraq, Syria and Jordan).

Diet

- Arabic people eat all types of food, whether it is fish, chicken, meat or vegetables.

- Spices such as cumin, cardamom and garam masala are used in preparation of dishes with herbs such as coriander and parsley. Food is rarely chilli hot, only spiced. People use a wide variety of fresh vegetables, pulses and natural yoghurt.

- Islamic Arabs will adhere to the requirements of Halal food.

See section on Islam for more information.

Family relationships

- Family is very important in a person’s life. There are very strong bonds.

- The elderly are respected for their accumulated life experience and wisdom.

- The elderly are cared for by the family.
Arab communities

- Large families are traditional. Nowadays, families are smaller in size, mainly due to economic reasons.

- Children are treasured and rarely leave home until the time they marry.

- Children do not usually become independent of family influence and continue to consult and involve their parents.

- Parents like to be actively involved in their children’s lives.

- Families have high expectations of their children’s academic achievement. It is preferable that children continue into further education, whether college or university.

- Children generally have an in-built responsibility towards each other, when young which also continues in later life.

- People do not usually search for ‘outside’ support with ‘problems’.

- Boys carry the family name and therefore it is perhaps perceived that they carry more importance than girls. However, boys and girls are treated and loved equally.

- Boys and girls take their father’s name. Women keep their father’s name when they marry; they do not take their husband’s name.
Bangladeshi Community

- Immigration to England gathered pace during 1942 – 43, when Indians sailed with the Merchant Navy, leaving Chittagong and arriving at Liverpool. Some left their ships and came to Portsmouth to work in H.M. Dockyard

- Portsmouth’s community grew further in 1963 when the Government issued labour vouchers and allowed those already resident in the country to bring their families to settle

- When India gained independence from Britain, it lost land on the East and West to a new Islamic state – Pakistan. Pakistan was made up of 2 wings separated by 1,100 miles of Indian territory

- East Pakistan became Bangladesh in 1971, after 9 months of civil war

- The area from which the majority of the community in Portsmouth originates is called Greater Sylhet – a vast area, predominantly rural and split into 4 regions. This lies in the northern part of Bangladesh

Language

- Bengali is the official language (both spoken and written). However, the predominant language spoken by the Bangladeshi community in Portsmouth is a dialect – Sylheti. This is a spoken language with no written equivalent. The official written text is used
Bangladeshi community

Faiths

- The main religion of Bangladeshi community members in Portsmouth is Islam. However, there are other religions practised, such as Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism

See section on faiths for more information

Festivals

- Many families make 25th December a festival day. They do not celebrate it as a religious festival. It has become a tradition for families to visit each other, wear their best clothes and have rich food. It’s a matter of choice if they exchange presents or not
- 26th March is Independence Day and marks the start of the conflict to win independence from Pakistan
- 16th December is Victory Day and marks the end of the conflict and the announcement of independence
- 21st February commemorates the death of students who fought to keep the Bengali language as Pakistan tried to enforce Urdu as the national Bangladeshi language
- Ist of Boishak is the start of the Bengali New Year. Boishaki Mela (Festival) celebrates the New Year by playing games, eating, dancing and music

Diet

- Traditionally, Bangladeshi communities have rich food – and lots of it
- The preference is for home-cooked food
- The national dish is curry – with a preference for fish with rice
- Other dishes include vegetable curries, such as lentils

Favourite traditional desserts include:

- Rosmalai (dumplings in creamy liquor)
- Rosigulla (dumplings in sugary liquor)
- Jeelabi (fritters)
- Halwa (a jelly-like pudding)

Naming Systems

- On the whole, this follows the Islamic system. However, more families are adopting the western approach of having a clearly identifiable family name last

See section on Islam for more information
Bangladeshi community

Family relationships

- In the eyes of the Quran, men and women are equal. However it is accepted that some families do not adopt this belief and the male is the dominant figure.

- Although arranged marriages still exist, many parents accept their children’s choice of partners. Some arranged marriages take place in Bangladesh. This sometimes means one of the couple must return to this country. They must apply to the British High Commission in Bangladesh to be granted a settlement visa for their partner to stay in the UK.

- As Muslims, they can marry up to 4 times, but this is very uncommon in Portsmouth.

- Divorce is acceptable and instant. Either the husband or the wife can invoke Talak - the traditional way of divorce. Either party can say they divorce the other 3 times and it is complete. However, they must go through the recognised process to be officially divorced in this country.

- Abortion is not allowed and any woman becoming pregnant out of marriage is shunned by her family and community.

Visiting a Bangladeshi home

- As Muslims, many Bangladeshi females will not be allowed to receive male visitors if they are home alone. You may need to be accompanied by a female colleague or wait for the male of the house to be present.

Medical Treatment

- Some Bangladeshis will not shake hands by way of greeting you – do not be offended if this happens. However, many have adopted this westernised greeting.

- Appropriateness of dress needs to be considered when visiting a family (revealing clothing may not be acceptable from either sex).

- All medical treatment which is permissible under the Quran is acceptable for the majority of Portsmouth’s Bangladeshi community.

- Many families do not recognise mental health problems, for example post natal depression. It is common for families to believe it is a stigma to admit to someone having these problems.

- Traditionally all males are circumcised at birth or as soon as possible after.

Death

- Death rites follow whichever religion is involved. There are no specific differences for Bangladeshi communities.

See section on faiths for more information.
Caribbean Communities

- The Caribs and the Arawaks peoples were the original inhabitants of the West Indies. The Arawaks were annihilated as a result of colonisation but the Carib community survived and although Portsmouth residents are unlikely to be Carib, their family may contain Carib heritage

- The Caribbean comprises several individual and independent countries, each with their own history and culture

- The cultures of the Caribbean Islands have been shaped by the experience of slavery. Millions of West Africans were forcibly taken to the Caribbean to work as slaves on sugar and cotton plantations owned by European settlers

- The Caribbean Islands are also inhabited by descendants of those originally from South and Southeast Asia who were taken to the Caribbean as indentured labourers after the emancipation of African slaves together with white European descendants of plantation owners who performed largely government and civil servant positions. Consequently Hinduism and Islam are practised by African, Asian and Chinese people

- During the post war period, Great Britain sought to fill large labour shortages with citizens of the Commonwealth. Over population, mass unemployment, low wages and inadequate opportunities for education drove many people to migrate in the hope that having raised some money they would shortly return to their families. As a result this wave of migration to the UK during the 1950s was largely male

- Since then many more people have migrated to England and today Britain has a diverse community of Caribbean people of African and Asian descent
Caribbean communities

• **African – Caribbean**: describes people from the Caribbean of African descent

• **Indo – Caribbean**: describes people from the Caribbean of Asian descent

• For most the move to the ‘Mother Country’ was not as pleasant as it had been advertised. Many suffered harsh socioeconomic conditions and faced brutal racism. When it became clear that a return home was financially impossible, they invited their families to join them

Faiths

• Different faiths are practised across the Caribbean islands

• These include Christian denominations such as Seventh Day Adventist, Pentecostal, Baptist, Roman Catholic and Church of England. Other faiths include Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Rastafarianism. The most notable is Rastafarianism, not because of the level of participation, but because it is a faith specific to the African Caribbean (black) community. Ritual practice will vary according to the island

• Religious festivals from a wide spectrum of religions are celebrated and enjoyed across the islands

See section on faiths for more information

Language

• English is the official language of the Caribbean although Spanish and French are also commonly spoken. This is largely because those were the principal colonising countries in the Caribbean

• The nature of the English spoken will vary across the islands and will be affected by regional adaptations to the language and accent

• **Patois** is a spoken language which is not generally written. It is a combination of African and European languages. Creole is an offshoot of this and is a mixture of an African language and English. The version of Patois or Creole will vary according to the region

• Many Caribbean people are bilingual and may speak Patois or Creole with family and friends

• Arabic, Hindi and other Indian languages are taught and spoken. Like English and other European languages these have also been adapted specifically according to the region
Caribbean communities

Social Traditions

- Carnival is a significant cultural celebration. It was regarded as a form of religious observation and social protest which originated in Trinidad.

- The Notting Hill Carnival, held annually, attracts thousands of people and is a joyous occasion. Calypso, folk songs and reggae music are also enjoyed.

- Anniversaries celebrating emancipation from slavery are observed. Also, dates commemorating independence from imperial rule, which vary according to the island are considered very meaningful.

Diet

- Religious dietary specifications will depend on the particular faith.

- Food from Caribbean islands will vary according to the cultural and geographical variation. Food may vary between African Caribbean and Asian Caribbean people although there may be similarities.

Marriage

- Marriage is held in high regard.

- Individual faith and culture will determine the format of the wedding ceremony.

- Traditional ceremonies take place within individual faith communities. Some communities may wish their children to marry within their community. However, a greater acceptance and tolerance now exists and as a result there are higher levels of inter-marriage in Caribbean society.

Naming System

- Countries colonised by the UK will have a similar naming system to Great Britain made up of either one or two personal names followed by a family surname.

- In some cases children may inherit their mother’s surname, reflecting the prime position women occupy in Caribbean societies.

- Increasingly, people are reviving traditional naming systems.

Family Relationships

- Women play a key role in all forms of family care.

- Grandmothers have a prime role in childcare and will expect to have a level of responsibility and involvement in rearing the children.

- Those children brought to the UK in the 1950s were deprived of daily face to face contact with their grandparents. As a result, links were maintained through letters and visits as often as was possible.

Medical Treatment

- Caribbean people are concerned with their hygiene and may wish for frequent access to washing facilities.

- Patients may want to have several family members present. It may also be important for the clergy and religious leaders to be able to visit for joint prayer.
Caribbean communities

- African – Caribbean skin is particularly prone to dryness therefore people routinely moisturise often with coconut oil, Vaseline or Nivea lotion. Therefore, patients may require assistance with moisturising
- There are no objections to organ transplants. However, there may be resistance to organ donation. This will depend on the particular faith. It is wise to speak sensitively to the family concerned
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Requirements according to faith will determine how the body is laid to rest

Death

- Requirements according to faith will determine how the body is laid to rest
- The funeral is an important rite for family and friends
- A wake takes place before the funeral which can last up to three days. In preparation family and friends help clean the house, offer financial support and provide assistance with childcare
- The funeral service may include music for example, from a choir or a steelband depending on the family’s wishes
- There may be a function following the service. The family’s house usually remains open for people to visit for several days for condolence, support and prayer
- It is important that from the beginning of the mourning period the bereaved family does not prepare food or spend time alone without support from family and friends
- Very expressive grief is positively encouraged
- The body may be sent to the island of origin to be laid to rest
Chinese Community

- The Chinese community is the third largest ethnic group in Portsmouth. Contact the Equalities Service for up-to-date demographic data.

- The Chinese have a long history in the UK. Migration first took place in the 19th century because of the trade links between China and Britain.

- Many Chinese sailors settled in English ports, for example Liverpool and Bristol. Liverpool claims the oldest China town in Europe.

- During the 1950s and 1960s, Chinese people largely from the New Territories of Hong Kong settled in the UK. It is estimated that people from this area make up 90% of the Chinese community in the UK.

- People also arrived as political refugees, particularly from Vietnam, as well as from Malaysia and Singapore.

- There will be differences according to the individual family and their area of origin, e.g. South, Central or Northern China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore or Malaysia.

Faiths

- Religious belief is not uniform. There are Chinese Hindus, Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Muslims.

- The two main religions are Buddhism and Taoism. Buddhism is the main religion among these two. The popularity of Taoism is in decline.
Chinese community

• Ancestor Worship is also an important part of the Chinese belief system, which is viewed as a product of the most common religions

• Many Chinese are now atheist or agnostic, following the influences of both Communism and western Capitalism

See section on faiths for more information

Chinese Festivals

• Chinese festivals are an important part of the culture and are not necessarily linked to faiths

• The main events are the Chinese New Year celebrations, the Dragon Boat Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival

• These festivals follow the lunar calendar and so the dates differ with each year

Chinese New Year

• This marks the start of the new lunar year and according to the Western calendar takes place during January or early February

• The Chinese yearly cycle associates one of twelve animals with each year. It is thought that people born in each year demonstrate characteristics associated with that animal

• The twelve animals are the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, ram, monkey, rooster, dog and the boar

• Preparations and celebrations can last as long as two weeks

• On Chinese New Year’s Eve a largely vegetarian meal is shared by family who gather together for the festivities

• Certain foods are prepared, for example dried oysters and seaweed, because their written Chinese symbols are similar to those for “prosperity” and “abundance”

• Children wear new clothes on New Year’s Day and wish their parents and elders prosperity and good fortune for the coming year

• Children are given laisee (lucky money) in red and gold envelopes from their parents and elder relatives with best wishes for good health and study over the coming year

• Red is a lucky colour associated with New Year, weddings and birthdays

• The Lion Dance is a major part of these festivities. Drums, cymbals, and fire crackers are used to frighten evil spirits away. Shopkeepers put out laisee and other gifts for the lion to catch

• This was begun to mark the death of Qu Yuan, a Chinese poet who committed suicide in the river Li

• The festival is commemorated with a dragon boat race

• Rice dumplings are thrown into the river to feed the fish, and cymbals are crashed to drive fish away and protect Qu Yuan’s body

• Rice dumplings are the traditional food for this festival

• This event is celebrated internationally
Chinese community

Mid-Autumn Festival

- The origins of this festival are unknown. It is thought to be about a woman who became a fairy by drinking a potion and flew to the moon to escape her husband who was pursuing her

- It is thought that she can be seen in Mid-Autumn when the moon is at its brightest

- The festival takes place on the 15th of the 8th lunar month, usually mid September

- This festival is celebrated widely. Families gather together and share a large meal

- Moon cakes are traditionally eaten which are round cakes with a sweet filling

Language

- The official language in China is Mandarin although hundreds of languages are in operation in China

- Each of these is very different, therefore it is unlikely that speakers of various languages will be able to communicate with one another

- The majority of Chinese people in the UK are from Hong Kong and its New Territories and parts of Southern China and are likely to speak Cantonese

- People from more rural areas may speak Hakka

- People from mainland China, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore are likely to speak Mandarin

- Other languages include Putonghua, Fukienese, Chiao Chow and Toi Shan

- A standard written Chinese language operates. This can be understood regardless of the dialect spoken because it is a pictorial language where symbols represent words. This was introduced over 2,000 years ago and is still in place today

我希望将来有一天我能访问中国

- Traditionally, written Chinese runs vertically from top to bottom. However, in the UK the language has been adapted to work horizontally from left to right across the page

- In China written Chinese is presented in a simplified form. In Hong Kong a traditional form is used

Dress

- Older Chinese people may dress in a traditional two-piece darkly coloured suit. However, younger generations are more influenced by Western fashion
Chinese community

**Diet**

- Diet is regarded as a fundamental part of Chinese culture
- A balanced diet is thought to be vital to a person’s general health. Moreover, in times of ill health, diet is used to combat illness.
- Rice is the staple ingredient, which is seen as a crucial source of energy.
- Vegetables, fruit, fish and seafood are also common features.
- However, grease, sugar and sweet desserts are rarely eaten.
- Levels of coronary heart disease are relatively low among Chinese communities.
- The principle of the balance between Yin and Yang inspires the importance of a balanced food intake. Yin represents the feminine and Yang the masculine. An excess of either is thought to have negative results.
- There are no restrictions on alcohol consumption. It often forms part of particular celebrations.
- Although there are few dietary restrictions, there may still be issues in relation to food provided by hospitals and other institutions. For example, there is very little sugar or grease in Chinese cuisine and therefore, some patients may be uncomfortable with certain dishes.
- Bread, pastry and dairy products are also rarely used. Chinese patients might prefer to eat food prepared by family members.
- It is important to discuss any special dietary provision at the earliest opportunity.

**Women**

- Traditionally, women have been regarded as responsible for childcare whereas men have been viewed as the principal breadwinner. However, the situation is changing with many more women occupying positions in the public sphere.

**Marriage**

- Arranged marriages were common practice at the turn of the century, mostly because of the strict social barriers between men and women. This is no longer the case.
- Traditionally young people are not expected to cohabit before marriage and some parents may prefer a Chinese partner. However, ideas have changed, especially in the big cities of Southeast China.
- If the couple is Christian, the wedding may take place in a church followed by a wedding banquet.
- Horoscopes can be used to select an auspicious date for the wedding.
- The traditional wedding dress is a red two piece garment often elaborately decorated. The dress may come from Hong Kong, mainland China or a British Chinatown.
Chinese community

- The most significant part of a Chinese wedding is the Tea Ceremony. This is where “special tea” is prepared for the elders by the newly married couple. Firstly, the grandparents are served then the parents and so on.

- The service is followed by a reception accompanied by a wedding banquet. This may be at home or at a hired venue.

- The guests give Laisee (lucky money) to the couple or their parents. This is usually an even amount, e.g. £42.

- It is customary to visit the bride’s family shortly after the ceremony.

- Traditionally the groom’s family provides for the wedding.

- The bride’s mother often gives her daughter jeweller.

- Older members of the Chinese community may not have documentary evidence of their marriage. A licence or certificate may not have been a requirement of their locality of origin.

- The divorce rate in China and Hong Kong is low compared to countries in Western Europe although it is rising.

- Social pressure on couples is fairly strong, especially if children are involved. Divorce is still a taboo in society.

- Traditionally, men were given custody of the children if the relationship broke down but this is no longer the case.

Children

- Chinese women may prefer to give birth in hospital, rather than stay at home. Traditionally, women gave birth at home with the help of either the mother-in-law or an experienced but not necessarily qualified mid-wife.

- There are no cultural restrictions on family planning.

- Mother and baby are usually at home for a month after which there is a banquet meal with family and friends to celebrate the baby’s arrival. Traditionally eggs dyed red are prepared, to symbolise new life.

- Traditionally, a lighting ceremony is held on the 15th day of the Chinese New Year specifically for newborn boys where illuminations last for one week.

- A lantern is made for each newborn baby. It is lit and taken to the family temple where it remains for the rest of the year elaborately decorated.

Naming System

- Chinese names are most often made up of three ‘characters’. This is not always the case, with many examples of names made up of two or four parts.

- The surname is the first part, followed by two personal names.

- Surnames are often associated with particular regions of China and Hong Kong.
Chinese community

• Personal names often have a specific meaning. Male names are usually associated with ideas of power and strength whereas female names are closely linked with words describing beauty and charm.

• Married women may keep their maiden surname and affix their husband’s in front of theirs for official purposes.

• Some families have reversed the system because of confusion over their name so it is wise to check if this is the case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Personal name</th>
<th>Personal name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese version</td>
<td>Leung</td>
<td>Mei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western version</td>
<td>Mei</td>
<td>Ling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Some families may also have anglicised their children’s personal names.

Family Relationships

• Traditionally, three generations of one family would live together. This family form is difficult to maintain so may not now be the case.

• Family values are nevertheless important with strong principles of respect for elders; a commitment to care for them; and concern that individual behaviour reflects on the family name as a whole.

• Respect for the family elders is considered important not just because they have greater knowledge and experience but because they are a living and unique link to the past.

• Relations are addressed according to their position rather than their name.

• Elders who are family friends will be addressed as an Aunt or Uncle out of respect.

• It is the children’s responsibility to care for their parents in general.

• Historically, Chinese families in the UK have been thought to be reluctant to integrate. This has been challenged and it has been accepted that this attitude has resulted in a pressure on families to be unnecessarily self-reliant.

• Traditional family structures reflect the importance invested in male decision-makers.

Birthdays

• Traditionally, birthdays are not celebrated. However, this may not be the case for children because of the influences on Chinese families living in the UK.

• One milestone which is traditionally celebrated is a 60th birthday. This is considered significant because it symbolises the existence of three generations and some families may celebrate with a large banquet meal shared with friends.
Chinese community

Medical Treatment

- Hospital patients may prefer Chinese food because they are accustomed to a diet which does not use a great deal of sugar or grease.
- The patient may wish to be surrounded by family, or be at home rather than in hospital.
- It is considered important that relatives, particularly those without immediate family members, should spend time with those who are unwell.
- Chinese medicine is increasingly used within the UK to address symptoms not dealt with satisfactorily by conventional medicine.
- Acupuncture and herbal medicine are two examples of Chinese medical treatment.
- Acupuncture uses tiny needles to stimulate areas of the body which can release healing processes.
- Herbal medicine involves an intricate diagnosis procedure. This allows the practitioner to decide upon an herbal prescription. This is then boiled and then imbibed as a bitter tea.

Death

- Unless religion stipulates otherwise, there is no cultural requirement.
- Chinese family members may request that the body is not interfered with and that its organs are not disturbed.
- The family may wish that the body be dressed in traditional burial clothes.
- The particular religion will dictate to some extent its format and specific requirements.
- White is the colour of mourning.
- Family and community members may collect money in a white envelope, called white gold, to go towards the funeral costs.
- Traditionally, the bereaved family should not visit other families without invitation so as not to bring about any misfortune.
- There are events in both April and September, which invite families to visit their ancestors’ graves.

Visiting a Chinese family’s home

Points to remember

- Always address individuals by their title and surname.
- Do not kiss or hug unless the hosts do so. Otherwise handshaking would be acceptable.
- If the family is Buddhist do not shake hands unless invited.
- Accept refreshment if it is offered.
Irish Community

Irish community

- The Irish community are the longest established minority ethnic group in Britain and in Portsmouth.

- The Irish are a minority ethnic community according to the 1976 Race Relations Act. The Irish community share a common culture and heritage, language, literature and religion, and are a minority within a larger host community.

- The first Irish people came to Britain in the twelfth century.

- The old Commission for Racial Equality recognised the Irish community’s status as an ethnic minority and “Irish” is a classification for the 2001 Census ethnicity categories.

- Their experience of racial harassment is qualitatively different to other communities. Issues of language, cultural differences and visibility are incomparable to other minority ethnic groups. However, the Irish community has a history of racial disadvantage.

- The first three waves of migration was during the Great Hunger (Great Potato Famine) 1845-9 when two thirds of Ireland’s population emigrated, many of whom came to Britain. After the Second World War, many more migrated to Britain in search of work and became part of the labour force recruited to reconstruct the country. The third wave of migration began in the 1980s when young skilled and qualified Irish people came to the largely urban centres of the UK looking for work.

- Cultural differences exist between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.
Irish community

Language

• Gaelic is the state language in the Irish Republic and is part of the educational curriculum although Irish people will speak English. Gaelic is growing in popularity in Northern Ireland.

Faiths

• The vast majority of people from the Irish Republic are Roman Catholic whereas in Northern Ireland, two thirds of people are Protestant.

• Religion is a very sensitive issue and false assumptions should not be made over which religion a person may practise.

See section on faiths for more information.

Family

• The family is an important part of Irish culture. The mother has a historically domestic role with high levels of respect for grandparents and people of older generations.
Kurdish community

- Prior to 1920, the Kurdish community had a state called Kurdistan which was a vast area, bordered by Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey
- In 1920 it was partitioned into 4 distinct areas, against the Kurds’ wishes
- The 4 areas were controlled by the 4 bordering countries
- The majority of Kurds in Portsmouth are Iraqi Kurds

Faiths

- There are many different religions observed by Kurds
- The predominant religion of Portsmouth - based Kurds is Islam
- Most Muslim Kurds in Portsmouth are Sunni Muslims

See section on faiths for more information

Language

- The main language is Kurdish
- The written form follows basic Kurdish script
- The main dialects spoken in Portsmouth are Sorani and Badini
Kurdish community

Traditions

- The loss of their homeland is so strong in Kurdish communities that they acknowledge the anniversaries of different cities falling to the opposing forces partitioning the land.
- 16th March – Halabj Day. This is the anniversary of the day a whole city was murdered by Iraqi troops who launched a chemical weapon attack, killing over 5000 people in one day.
- 21st March – New Year’s Day. This is followed by 3 days of celebration where families get together with traditional food, music and dancing.
- 2nd April – remembers the day when Iraq took over the governing of a quarter of Kurdistan and many Kurds were killed in opposing the take-over.
- Every Friday during Summer it is traditional to have picnics in the countryside.

Diet

- Muslim Kurds must meet the religious requirements of only eating Halal food.
- Traditional meals include: Kufta – boiled balls of rice and minced meat, Kuba – fried spiced meat balls, Yaprak – a savoury filling wrapped and cooked in vine leaves, Briyani – a dry, savoury rice dish.

Dress

- Men and women tend to wear western dress. However there are traditional garments worn by Kurdish communities:
  - Men wear hand made goat skin waistcoats and baggy trousers.
  - In Spring and Summer, men wear traditional handmade sandals.

Marriage

- Arranged marriages are not the norm for Kurdish communities – families may decide to meet with each other to discuss their children’s suitability as marriage partners.

Naming systems

- There are no surnames in Kurdish families.
- The naming system predominantly follows the Muslim system.
- Males are given a first name which both parents can choose. Other names will follow those of the father’s family.
- Females are given a first name of choice, but will then also be given the names of her father’s family.
- Women do not change their names when married.
- When addressing a Kurdish community member, it is acceptable to call him or her Mr or Miss/Mrs followed by their first name.
Kurdish community

Family relationships

- Family and its honour are very important to Kurds

- Men and women are considered equal but there are some families where this is not the case and the men are more dominant

- Women who conceive a child without being married are normally shunned by their family for bringing shame upon it

Medical treatment

- Apart from the religious requirements Islam places on medical treatment, there are no other specific restrictions other than not using blood from anyone over 45 years old if receiving a blood transfusion

See section on faiths for more information

Death

- Death rites adhere to whichever religion was being practised by the deceased

See section on faiths for more information
Polish community

• Polish minorities are still present in the neighbouring countries of Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania, as well as in other countries. Altogether, the number of ethnic Poles living abroad is estimated to be around 20 million. The largest number of Poles outside Poland can be found in the United States.

• The culture of Poland is closely connected with its intricate 1000 year history. Its unique character developed at the crossroads of the Germanic, Latinate and Byzantine worlds. Today these influences are evident in Polish architecture, folklore and art.

• Poland is the birthplace of some world famous individuals, including Pope John Paul II, Marie Sklodowska Curie, Kazimierz Pulaski, Nicolaus Copernicus and Fryderyk Chopin.

• Customs, manners and style of clothing have reflected the influences of East and West.

• Poland is a Republic, with a Parliamentary democracy.

• Law in Poland is based on written code of law with the main act which is the Constitution.

• Currency: 1 zloty = 100 grosz.
Polish community

Faiths

- Religion plays an important part in Polish Society and is deeply intertwined with Polish culture.
- Catholicism is the most widely practiced religion (95%). Life's milestones such as weddings, baptisms, funerals, first communion and confirmation are influenced by the religion.
- There are also Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, Jehovah's Witness, Jews and Muslims. Members of Protestant churches include about 77,500 in the largest Evangelical –Augsburg Church, and a similar number in smaller Pentecostal and Evangelical churches.
- Freedom of religion is now guaranteed by the 1989 statute of the Polish Constitution.

Festivals

- Poles are seen as a nation of fun lovers who enjoy festivities, traditions and centuries-old customs. Links with tradition are felt the strongest during the greatest religious feasts, such as Christmas, Easter, Corpus Christi processions and All Saints' Day and Independence Day.

Christmas

- Christmas is a very festive holiday in Poland and includes many customs like the Christmas tree.
- Another element of the traditional Christmas decorations are hay and straw. They were supposed to bring good crops and remind everyone of the poverty in which Jesus was born. The custom has survived in the form of a small bunch of hay put under the tablecloth. In some houses this is accompanied today by money, a fish scale or bone from Christmas Eve Supper put into a wallet - all to ensure affluence in the New Year.
- An extra set of plates and cutlery is laid on the table for an unexpected guest. Sometimes an empty plate is a reminder of those who have passed away.
- Christmas Eve was believed to affect the entire New Year. For this reason, it had to be spent in harmony and peace.
- Today it is still devoted to long preparations for Christmas Eve dinner, all the work having to be done before dusk.
- Traditionally, Christmas Eve dinner begins when the first star appears in the sky.
- The family share opłatek Christmas wafers that symbolise holy bread. Orthodox Christians do the same before their Christmas Eve meal by sharing proskura or prosfera, which is unleavened bread.
- The dinner consists only of meatless dishes. Traditionally, there should be twelve courses - reflecting the number of months in the year or, in different interpretation, Christ's apostles.
- After dinner, Christmas carols are sung and presents opened. Many people end the day by attending the Midnight Mass known as Pasterka (the Shepherds’ Mass) much the same way as the rest of Europe.
Polish community

Easter

- Easter is also a very important religious festival for Polish people - colouring eggs and eating zurek - sour soup with white sausage and polish cakes called mazurek

- Another religious festival of note is All Saints’ Day which takes place on November 1st. On this day Poles visit cemeteries to honour their loved ones who have passed away. All Souls Day (Zaduszki) is on 2nd November and is a day of remembering the dead

Holidays

- 11th November - the anniversary of the restoration of independence in 1918, after 123 years of occupation from Prussia, Austria and Russia

- 3rd May - the anniversary of the passing of Poland's first Constitution on 3 May 1791

- Other holidays, quite different in character, include Women’s Day - 8 March; today much less popular than under Communism, Mother’s Day - 26 May, Granny’s Day - 21 January and Children’s Day - 1 June

- A well-established Polish tradition is the celebration of Andrzejki (St. Andrew’s Day) - the last festive day before Advent, with fortune telling to check what the new year will bring. The best-known method is by pouring hot wax into cold water and “reading” its shapes

Language

- Polish is an official language in Poland, however the ethnic minority can speak Lithuanian, Byelorussian, German and Kaszubski

- Until recent decades Russian was commonly learned as a second language, but now it has been replaced by English and German as the most common second languages studied and spoken

Visiting a home

- When greeting someone use a good handshake, eye contact and a smile

- Address people by their title, ‘Pan’ for a man and ‘Pani’ for a woman, and their surname. Do not use first names until invited to

- At parties and other social gatherings, your hosts will introduce you, usually starting with the women and then moving on to the men

Dress

- Traditional Polish folk costumes vary by region, but are typically brightly coloured and decorated with embroidery

- Polish folk costumes are sometimes still worn for special occasions, like weddings, or in the most rural parts of Poland by members of the older generations

- Traditional dress varies by region
Polish community

- Headresses range from hats to wreaths of flowers, fabric colours vary greatly, and aprons, vests, and ribbons are used depending upon the origin of the costume

Diet

- Notable foods in Polish cuisine include: Polish sausage, red beet soup, Polish dumplings, flaczki (tripe soup), cabbage polls, Oscypek, Polish pork chops, Polish traditional stew, various potato dishes, a fast food sandwich zapiekanka, and many more

- Traditional Polish desserts include Polish doughnuts, Polish gingerbread, poppy seed cake and others

Marriage and naming system

- Until recently children lived with their parents until they married. This has changed due to the economic situation. Thousands of young Poles have emigrated to the UK

- Generally a woman takes her husband’s surname. She can also keep her maiden surname. Children take the father’s surname

- Polish language distinguishes masculine and feminine by the ending of the noun or verb. Most of the Polish surnames have a different ending for male and female

- A traditional Polish wedding lasts for two days. The first evening after the ceremony people eat, drink and dance until 5-6am. After some sleep they return the next day for a dinner

Family Relationships

- Poles cherish family life

- Children stay close to their parents throughout life and take care of the elders

- The role of the mother is very important. The proverb says: ‘the man is the head of the family but the wife is the neck’

- Grandparents play a significant role in families. They often help with bringing up grandchildren. They are the people who pass on the national tradition

Health and Medical Treatment

- No difference to other European nations

- There are no objections to organ transplant but this depends on the individual

- Family visits are much appreciated as are visits from the hospital priest are valued
Polish community

Death

- People are buried in graves; cremation is not very popular
- After the funeral family meet for a meal to remember the dead person
- Poles remember those who have died and graves are kept tidy and well decorated with flowers
- All Saints Day – 1st November is a very important day for each Pole. Whole families visit the cemeteries
Russian community

- The Constitution, adopted by national referendum on December 12, 1993 states that Russia is a federal presidential republic. The executive power is split between the President and the Prime Minister, but the President is the dominant figure.

- The capital of the Russian Federation is Moscow.

- Russia’s population (UN 2007) is 142.5 million.

- Russia has a rich cultural heritage that is expressed in the cities, the countryside and the small towns of this striking and proud nation.

Faiths

- Orthodox Christianity is Russia’s traditional and largest religion, deemed part of Russia’s ‘historical heritage’ in a law passed in 1997.

- Freedom of conscience and religion is guaranteed by the Russian Constitution.

- There are smaller Christian denominations such as Roman Catholics, Armenian Gregorian and various Protestant groups.

- Other religions include Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism.
Russian community

Festivals

- Russian Christmas 7th January (during the soviet time people were not allowed to celebrate Christmas and New Year was the most cheerful time. The Russian Orthodox Church still use the Julian calendar for religious holidays)

- Baptism 19th January – Orthodox holiday

- Defender of the Motherland Day 23rd February - Men’s Day, widely celebrated, established under Soviet rule and in post-Soviet Russia became a holiday

- International Women’s Day 8th March, men greet women with flowers and gifts

- Palm Sunday – Orthodox holiday

- Easter - Orthodox feast, Shining Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Curd with candied fruits eaten. Orthodox Christians greet each other and cry “Christ is risen!”, “Truly Risen”, and kiss three times

- Labour Day 1st May

- Victory Day 9th May – two day public holiday, the day when Nazi Germany capitulated in 1945 after 4year war with the Soviet Union and other countries. A military parade is held in Red Square

- Independence or Russia Day 12th June – some Russians spend this day on their ‘dachas’, small plots in the countryside where they grow vegetables. It has been celebrated very year since 1992

- Day of Knowledge 1st September – is the beginning of the school year. Students and parents congratulate the teachers and give flowers

- National Unity Day 4th November

- Day of October Revolution 7th November (25th October in the old calendar)

- Constitution Day 12th December – the Constitution of the Russian Federation was adopted in 1993

Language

- Russian is understood by 99% of Russian inhabitants and widespread in many adjacent areas of Eastern Europe and Asia

- National subdivisions of Russia have additional official languages

- There are also Russian dialects

Social Traditions/Culture

- Russian culture has a long history and tradition

- Russians are also fond of live performances at theatres – opera, musical, ballet, drama etc. Cinemas are also very popular

- Russian art and architecture, literature, and music composers have been extremely influential
Russian community

- A Matryoshka doll is a Russian nesting doll. A set of Matryoshka dolls consist of a wooden figure which can be pulled apart to reveal another figure inside, and so on. The number of nested figures is usually six or more. The shape is mostly cylindrical. The theme is usually peasant girls in traditional dress.

Dress

- Men and women tend to wear western dress. However there are traditional garments worn by Russian communities.

- For thousands of years, the basic clothing for both women and men has been the rubashka. This is a long calf-length dress or long shirt originally made of homespun linen, over the years, with commercial materials. The rubashka was more commonly worn in rural areas rather than the cities. Younger unwed women wore the rubashka alone, but when married, they wore it under a dress.

- Over the rubashka, women would wear a sarafan. This has no sleeves like a full length jumper. The shoulders were made stiffer and were decorated with ribbons, gold or silver thread or buttons. A full length apron, or perednik, was worn over the sarafan and could be highly decorated. For celebrations, the sarafan were made of silk or fine linen.

- Men also wore a rubashka. The linen trousers were tucked into high felt or leather boots. The kaftan, the outwear, was a loose hanging heavy robe that overlapped and was fastened to the left. In winter, the men wore a sheepskin coat and hat.

- Russia is known for its fur hats with earflaps, or ushanka, which keeps Russians warm during the cold, snowy days. The earflaps can be worn down over the ears or tied together on top of the hat.

- The hats are made from sheep and/or rabbit fur. A traditional womens headress was called a kokoshnik, and it matched the sarafan. It was rounded or pointed and tied in the back with ribbons. Sometimes the front on the forehead was decorated.

- Pavlovsky Posad, Russian shawls, are also known for their pure 100 percent soft wool fiber that keeps wearers warm in the winter and breathes in the summer. Each with an elaborate pattern, bright colours and long fringe. Pavlovsky Posad is a very small country town near Moscow where the craftspeople continue to follow the traditional art of fabric printing.

Diet

- Russian cuisine derives its rich and varied character from the vast and multicultural expanse of Russia.

- Its foundations were laid by the peasant food of the rural population – fish, poultry, game, mushrooms, berries and honey.

- Crops of rye, wheat, barley, and millet provided the ingredients for a number of breads, pancakes, cereals, kvass, beer and vodka. The first vodka was brewed in Russia in the 14th century.

- Flavourful soups and stews are centred on seasonal or storable produce, fish and meats.

- Russian products such as caviar and smetana (sour cream) have had a great influence on world cuisine.
Russian community

Marriage

• A couple has to conduct and register their marriage with government authorities first to be allowed to have a church ceremony performed (Church marriage is not official in Russia). Church weddings are becoming more popular.

• The most popular time for weddings in Russia is after Christmas and the weeks before the spring fast. This period is called ‘svadebnik’. Recently it has been more popular to wed from spring to the end of summer or beginning of Autumn.

• Traditionally, the rings, dresses and shoes for the bride are provided by the groom and the bride’s family provide a ‘dowry’ – linen, crockery and furniture. At the wedding meal table there must be a dish of poultry, symbolising a happy family life. Wedding cake in Russia is called ‘kurnik’. When the newly weds visit the groom’s parents house his mother meets them according to Russian tradition with bread and salt. A modern wedding usually lasts 2-3 days.

Naming systems

• Some Russian people, especially the older generation might be offended if addressed by their first name and not their full name.

• Example: Ivanov Boris Petrovich, where Ivanov is the surname, Boris is their first name and Petrovich – fathers name (patronymic). They often don’t realise that it may be extremely difficult for others to pronounce their first name and the patronymic. It is appropriate to use their surname.

Death

• Burial of deceased Christians takes place the third day after death.

• The Orthodox Church recognises the afterlife, and believes that a person does not die. The body becomes dead, and the soul continues to live. Its future path is determined in the first 40 days.

• Cremation is also accepted in the central parts of Russia.

• A vacant seat is left at the table where the deceased used to sit and there is an empty plate, with a knife and fork on top of the plate. During the period of mourning it is not usual to participate in recreational activities, wear bright clothing or organise entertainment activities.
Vietnamese community

• Thorney Island was a reception centre for Vietnamese refugees when they fled their country during the Vietnamese war.

Faiths

• Vietnamese people who are ethnic Chinese, are likely to be Buddhist, Taoist or Confucianist. However, Vietnamese people not of Chinese descent are likely to be either Buddhist or Roman Catholic.

• Ancestor worship is of great importance to Vietnamese people. This may include domestic shrines where incense is burnt daily to honour their family members.

• Those remembered may be national heroes and heroines in addition to family members.

See section on faiths for more information.

Festivals

• Tet is the Vietnamese New Year celebration. Family and friends gather together, presents are exchanged and children are given new clothes and money.

• The Moon Festival or Mid-Autumn Festival is normally celebrated in late August or early September. Moon cakes are traditionally eaten during this festival which are round or square cakes with a sweet filling. In Vietnam, each child will have a lantern with a candle to play with.
Vietnamese community

Language

- Although the majority of Vietnamese people resident in the UK are ethnic Chinese, who will speak Cantonese, many will also speak Vietnamese

Việt ngữ

- Locally based consultation revealed that the Vietnamese community does not require language support. However, some older people and women who have just arrived in Britain may have language needs

Dress

- Men and women tend to wear western dress. However, during official engagements women may choose to wear the Ao Dai which is a high necked closely fitting dress with a slit on either side

Diet

- Religious prescriptions will vary according to faith. For instance Buddhists may not eat meat at the beginning of the month, although this is not compulsory
- Vietnamese food uses a wide variety of vegetables and herbs. It is quite similar to Chinese food although less oil is used

Children

- The young family is left alone for the first month after the baby’s birth. After this, a party is held attended by family and friends

Naming system

- Vietnamese names are often made up of three parts; a family name and a complementary name followed by a personal name
- This has caused difficulty in the past and as a result some Vietnamese families have reversed the order so it is advisable to check
- Male complementary names are often ‘Van’ and female complementary names are often ‘Thi’ although a person’s gender is not always obvious from their name
- Married women do not necessarily take their husband’s family name

Death

- The body is usually kept at home for a single day where friends can make offerings of flowers, food and money
- On the day of the funeral a Buddhist monk or priest may visit the family to offer prayers
- During the funeral, children, grandchildren and other relatives of the deceased must wear a piece of white cloth over their head to respect the deceased
Vietnamese community

- Many Vietnamese families will have family altars dedicated to their ancestors. These will be covered in white cloth for one month out of respect to those recently deceased.

- Their memory will be honoured each year on the anniversary of their death. Offerings of food will be made on this day. Dishes are left on the altar and then shared by the family.
Faiths

Faiths in Portsmouth

- There are many faiths practised in Portsmouth. The 2001 Census carried a monitoring question on faith for the first time. (All figures regarding religion and population quoted in this booklet come from the 2001 Census results). From 186,701 people who took part in the Census in Portsmouth, the breakdown of the main religious beliefs was;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>% in Portsmouth</th>
<th>% in Britain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main religion in Portsmouth is Christianity – with believers from many different countries and ethnicities – for example British, Chinese, African, Indian, Caribbean.

Followers of the Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam (Muslims) come from many different areas – the Indian sub-continent, parts of Africa, the Caribbean, the Middle East and South East Asia.

It is important to note that cultural differences can affect the way all religions are interpreted when put into practise.
The Baha’i faith

- The Baha’i faith is a relatively young religion which originated in Iran in the nineteenth century
- It has embraced people from a variety of racial and cultural backgrounds
- It is a distinct faith, which has not been influenced by other religions
- The Baha’i faith is based on the teachings of its founder, Baha’ U’llah and promotes the unity of God and his prophets
- It upholds equality between men and women, universal education and peace
- No particular requirements exist in relation to hospital patient treatment
- There are no specific dietary requirements
- No particular rituals are undertaken either prior or after death
- Adherents have no objections to blood transfusions, organ transplants or post mortem examinations
- Undertakers may be used
- Followers are always buried and the burial place should be only a single hour’s journey from the place of death
Buddhism

- Buddhism originated in India around 2500 years ago
- Buddhists are followers not of a deity but of the teachings of a person - Siddharta Gautama, the son of a Hindu prince
- The word “Buddha” means “The Enlightened One”
- Buddha wanted to discover how to overcome suffering which he believed was caused by desire
- Siddharta Gautama became Buddha by achieving Nirvana or enlightenment through meditation
- Dharma is a guiding principle of Buddhism, its core being wisdom and compassion
- Buddhists must practice morality, mental development and wisdom
- The Four Noble Truths describe the origin of suffering and the Noble Eightfold Paths encourage:
  - Right view
  - Right intention
  - Right speech
  - Right action
  - Right livelihood
  - Right effort
  - Right mindfulness
  - Right contemplation
- There is no belief in a divine creator
Buddhism

- There are two main branches of Buddhism which operate in different geographical areas:
  - **Theravada** followed mainly in Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand
  - **Mahayana** followed mainly in Tibet, Mongolia, China, Nepal, Korea and Japan

- There are various narratives and texts but all branches of Buddhism refer to the **Tipitaka** scripture

- A Buddhist temple is called a Vihara

- These will vary in design between countries
  However, they will reflect the symbols of wisdom, water, fire, air and earth

- They will have a statue of Buddha and accommodation for monks and nuns

- Shoes should be removed as a sign of respect when visiting a Vihara

- Any headgear should also be removed

**Festivals**

- The Vaisakha Puja is celebrated during the full moon of the fifth lunar month (often May). This marks the enlightenment and the death of Buddha

**Dress**

- Buddhist monks may be dressed in saffron coloured robes and their heads are kept shaven

**Diet**

- Some Buddhists may be vegetarian because an integral Buddhist principle is against unintentional killing

**Children**

- Parents may take the baby to the vihara for a naming ceremony and monks may be invited to bless the baby by singing Buddhist scripture
Christianity

- Christianity believes in one God and encompasses many denominations within it.

- The main denominations are the Orthodox Churches (Russian and Greek being the main ones), Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism, Lutheran and a number of ‘free’ and independent churches.

- Central to the faith is the belief in one God in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit (the Trinity = three).


- Christians believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God both fully human and fully divine.

- Individuals are encouraged to pray to God regularly. The Lord’s Prayer is the main prayer, because it was given by Jesus to his disciples when they asked him how to pray.

- The main commands or codes of life for any Christian are laid down by Jesus; 1. To love God 2. To love their neighbours as themselves 3. To adhere to the 10 commandments in the Old Testament and hold in high regard the principles of justice and mercy.

- Christianity accepts equality of the sexes, but different cultures can affect the way this is interpreted.
Christianity

Roman Catholicism

- Roman Catholicism upholds the Pope as its lead authority
- Great emphasis is laid on prayer and the seven sacraments. These are Baptism, Holy Communion, Confirmation, Confession, Holy Orders, Matrimony and Anointing of the sick

Protestantism

- Protestantism developed out of a sixteenth century movement which sought to reform the Roman Catholic Church. The term protestant originally defined those groups which then 'protested' against the Pope
- Protestantism includes Methodists, United Reformed Church (URC), Baptists, and Quakers etc.

Anglicanism

- Henry VIII, who challenged the Pope’s supremacy, founded the Church of England in the sixteenth century and became its titular head. The reigning monarch continues to be styled Supreme Governor of the Church of England
- The Church of England is the name of the Anglican Church only in England
- The belief and nature of the Church of England was expressed in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer – the authorised form of worship that has only in the last 40 years been officially modernised. Unlike most other churches, it is founded upon a way of praying rather than a creed of views
- The Church of England is the ‘established Church’ in England meaning that it has an official position in the state. People often state they are members of the ‘C of E’ whether or not they ever attend its churches

Festivals

- Most celebrated festivals include:
  **Advent** – this is the period of preparation leading up to the birth of Jesus and lasts for the 4 weeks before December 25th.
  **Christmas** – A celebration period marking Jesus’ birth. This festival always falls on 25th December. The date is traditional rather than accurate. Celebration is accompanied for some by attendance at services at midnight and exchanging presents with friends and family.
  **Epiphany** – always falls on 6th January and marks the arrival of the 3 wise men from the East at Bethlehem, following Jesus’ birth.
  **Lent** – the 40 days before Easter Sunday. This is a preparation period reflecting the time when Jesus’ personal beliefs and trust in God were tested in the desert, following his baptism. It is sometimes acknowledged by Christians giving up some form of pleasure (predominantly dietary) or taking up some worthy cause for the 40 days.
Christianity

There are several days of religious importance within this period:

1. Maundy Thursday – Jesus celebrated the Last Supper (the last meal Jesus shared with his disciples) and his subsequent betrayal and arrest. This is the event from which Christians derive their service called Holy Communion (also known as the Eucharist, the Mass or the Lord’s Supper).

2. Good Friday – Jesus’ crucifixion and death on a cross.

3. Easter Day - is always on the Sunday after Good Friday and marks the third day which is when Christians recall that Jesus miraculously came back to life from the dead, - the Resurrection.

4. Ascension Day - always falls 40 days after Easter Day (always on a Thursday) and recalls the day when Jesus left his disciples permanently by ascending to heaven.

5. Whitsun (or Pentecost) – this falls seven weeks (50 days) after Easter Sunday and celebrates the day that Jesus’ disciples first felt the power of the Holy Spirit come down upon them.

Worship

- This can be church based although adherents can pray anywhere.
- The holy day for Christians is Sunday.
- If worship takes place within church, a priest, pastor, Vicar, Rector, Curate or minister may lead services, and sometimes a reader.
- Followers who have confirmed their allegiance to their faith (going through a ritual called Confirmation) can partake of Holy Communion – a celebration of the last meal of Jesus (“the last supper”). This is represented through the ritual giving of wine and bread to confirmed believers by the religious figure delivering the service.

Birth customs and naming ceremonies

- New members are welcomed into the church through a ritual called baptism (also known as christening) involving immersion under or pouring of water over a person three times in a spiritual washing away of sins. This can happen at any age.
- A child is given a first name – or Christian name – at birth. Children can be given more than one Christian name. Sometimes these names can be handed down through generations. The last name is known as the surname or “family” name.

Marriage

- Wedding celebrations continue after the ceremony. The couple are given presents to start their life together.
- Divorce is allowed.
Christians are equally accepting of burial or cremation

- A religious service of thanksgiving for the life passed and prayers for those who mourn normally precedes a burial or cremation

- Black is the traditional colour for mourning but is no longer strictly adhered to

- A Wake may take place after the service at the family’s home or elsewhere to celebrate the deceased’s life
Confucianism

- This is not a religion but a philosophy based on the teachings of Confucius who lived between 551-478 BCE (Before Common Era). His teachings greatly influenced Chinese culture, values and beliefs.

- He was a teacher of social and moral issues and wanted to raise people’s consciousness to remind them of their duties to the state.

- The main theme of Confucianism is the quest for balance and harmony (the essential nature and ingredients of life) and it follows five basic convictions that:

  1. the Way (the “Tao”) is the foundation of the cosmic movements, human experience and individual life.
  2. harmony once prevailed in the world when the way was understood and followed by ancient wise kings.
  3. the essentials of the Way have been recorded in the classics.
  4. the Way of the classics cannot be revealed unless through learning and practising.
  5. the world will be again in peace and harmony when the way is fully applied for our life.

- Men are expected to be “gentlemen”, serious, respectful and just.

- Happiness is best achieved by having rules for everyday life – orderliness or “Li” is extremely important.

- Ancestor worship is a principal activity in order to maintain a link with the past to benefit the younger generations – children should take care of their parents as they get older.
Confucianism

- Confucianism encourages treatment of others as people would wish to be treated themselves – kindness, respect and loyalty are key to living in peace with each other

- Remember to discuss any additional requirements with individuals and their families
Hinduism

Key works

Hindu: Describes a follower of Hinduism, and is derived from the name of the Indian river Indus.

Om / Aum: This symbol is synonymous with Hinduism and is Sanskrit for an eternal God.

Vedas: The most sacred of Hindu texts. Its name is derived from “vid” which means “knowledge”. These are also known as Sruti which translates as “heard”. They contain the word of God.

Moksha: Describes the soul’s release from the cycle of rebirth.

Brahman: Learned person.

Puja: Act of Worship.

Prashad: A food given to people as God’s blessing.

Karma: Acts by which the status of the next life is determined.

Dharma: Duty to family and to God.

Jatti: Caste identity.

Murtis: Idols.

Mandir: Temple.

Namaste: Greetings.
Hinduism

- Hindus worship Brahma (The Creator) who they believe to be the supreme deity. However, Brahma is expressed in the image of hundreds of individual Gods, each of which expresses a different quality associated with Brahma.

- Images of Hindu gods and goddesses show them to have more than one pair of arms which signifies that they have supernatural ability.

- Vishnu and Shiva are principal examples although these will be different for individual families because each family has different deities (kula devata). Moreover, there will be village deities (grama devata) and personal deities (istha devata).

- The four main stages which Hindus pass through towards achieving Brahman and the release of the soul from the cycle of rebirth are known as Ashramas.

The four ashramas are:

- **Brahmacharya**: Study of the Vedas and other sacred texts
- **Grishastha**: Marriage
- **Vanaprastha**: The handover of the family duties to the son
- **Sannyasa**: Relinquishing earthly possessions and family name to become a pilgrim

The central ideas of Hinduism are:

- **Karma**: Decent behaviour
- **Samsara**: Reincarnation
- **Moksha**: Achieving release from the cycle of reincarnation
- **Dharma**: Social duty

Caste System

- **Jatti** describes the Hindu caste system which used to underpin Hindu society.

- There were several breakdowns within the caste system.

- Each one would dictate what work its members could perform, what they could wear and who they could marry.

- The caste system used to constitute a major part of Hindu social organisation. The caste system has been unlawful in India since 1950. However, it may still operate with greater stringency in rural areas.

- These individual brackets are then grouped together to describe a group of sub-castes:

  - **Brahmins**: Highest caste, often performing religious functions, whose members are considered very learned.
  - **Kshatriya**: Formed the aristocratic class who often took up military office.
Hinduism

Vaisya  Merchant and trade class
Sudhra  Considered a lower class who were servants for families of a higher caste

Includes those called Dalits who were termed Untouchables and whom Gandhi call Harijans (“Children of God”)

- Brahmins will dominate as those performing wedding and funeral ceremonies
- The Hindu religion encompasses the thoughts of many religious thinkers who have contributed to the philosophy over a long period of time. As a result, there are several religious texts. Below are the most significant:
  - Bhagavad Gita (the Gita)
  - Vedas
  - Upinashads
- The Gita is the text which should be used in a court room for substantiating oaths
- Books in general are considered sacred. For example, if a book were dropped or touched with the feet, a Hindu would bring it to their forehead as an apology to Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge

Visiting a Hindu Temple

- The Mandir is the Hindu place of worship. It is regarded as the residence of the idols of the Hindu gods and goddesses (Murtis)
- The inner sanctum of the temple houses the image of the god or goddess that the temple is devoted to. The statue is actually placed within the garbha-griha, considered to be the ‘womb’ of the temple
- A spire covering the central shrine, represents a mountain which is considered to be the natural home of the gods
- Areas used for different functions such as food preparation and education are set apart from the rooms used for worship
- Outside the entrance, there is an area for ritual cleansing
- A bell is rung to announce visitors to the gods
- The inside of a Hindu temple is decorated with statues and pictures of Hindu gods and goddesses
- No particular day is stipulated for prayer
- Hindus are not required to come to the temple to pray
- Prayer may be segregated in some temples with men and women sitting on opposite sides of the room
Hinduism

Points to remember

- Shoes are removed out of respect for the gods because leather is considered spiritually impure
- Although not compulsory, women will usually cover their heads
- Accept any food you are offered as you leave the temple

Festivals

- Hinduism honours many hundreds of deities and as a result countless festivals are celebrated. Whether these are commemorated or not will depend on whether the gods honoured are those which are honoured by the family
- The temple is often the focus for the celebration of Hindu festivals
- Hindu festivals celebrate significant times of the year including the birthdays of individual gods and goddesses
- Hindu festivals follow the lunar calendar. Consequently the dates for festivals will alter slightly each year

- There are particularly famous festivals:

  **Durga Puja** - This festival usually occurs between September and October and is known as Dussehra and Navarati which means “nine nights”, the duration of the festival. This festival commemorates Lord Rama’s victory over the demon king

  **Diwali** - This is known as the festival of lights. It takes place on the darkest night of the lunar month some time in October - November. It lasts between 1 and 5 days and celebrates the return of Lord Rama and Sita to the Ayodha kingdom following exile

  **Holi** - This festival is one of colour and celebrates the end of winter and the beginning of Spring. This usually occurs in March. Bonfires are lit and people throw coloured dye at one another. Caste and other indicators of social status were discarded during this festival

  **Raksha Bandhan** - This celebrates brotherly protection. It usually occurs in August. Sisters tie brightly coloured thread, often tinsel, to their brothers’ arms. Sisters are given money in return. Cousins may be included because they can be considered to have as close a relationship as brothers and sisters

Language

- Hindus may speak Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Gujerati or Punjabi
Hinduism

Dress

- Hindu women may wear either a sari or a shalwar kameez
- The shalwar are a pair of baggy trousers and the kameez is a long loose tunic, which is worn over the shalwar
- A long matching scarf is worn with this called a dupatta
- The shalwar kameez is the traditional dress particularly in Pakistan. Women from India and Bangladesh are more likely to wear saris. A sari is a 6 yard length commonly of silk, chiffon or cotton which is wrapped around the body over a cropped blouse and a full length petticoat
- Another form of dress is a Ghagra which is a full pleated skirt worn over a blouse (choli) accompanied by a scarf (dupatta)
- Traditionally, brides wear a red and gold sari
- White is worn to represent bereavement

Diet

- Many Hindus are vegetarian. All life is viewed as sacred although vegetarianism is not compulsory
- Meat eating Hindus are unlikely to eat beef because the Cow is greatly revered. For instance the god Shiva rode a white bull
- Vegetarian Hindus will not eat fish or eggs nor will they eat vegetarian food that is put on the same plate as non-vegetarian food
- In strictly orthodox homes, men may eat first
- Fasting is important during festival time. Hindus may fast, especially prior to a festival, to remind them of the importance of the individual spirit
- Prior to eating, Hindus may make an offering to the gods out of thanks for their meal and as an expression of love
- Hindus eat with their right hand

Women

- Marriage is traditionally seen as men and women’s prime contribution to society. Women are expected to leave their family to reside with their in-laws
- Women are regarded as responsible for managing domestic responsibilities. This was symbolised in some families by the tying of keys to the end of a woman’s sari which demonstrated her control

Marriage

- They can be. However it must be stressed that it is not a system of forced marriage
- Jewellery, not necessarily a ring, is exchanged by both bride and groom
- Weddings can take place at the bride’s home although increasingly they are held at a hired venue to accommodate the guests
Hinduism

- The ceremony will differ between families but tends to follow the order laid down in the Holy Scripture, the Vedas.

- A Brahmin priest performs the service which can take several hours and is conducted in Sanskrit.

- The most important part of the proceedings is the tying of the bride's sari to the groom's chaddor. The couple then circle the sacred flame seven times to symbolise their unity.

- Divorce is permitted but is relatively uncommon because it is still disapproved of. However, things are slowly changing, although shame continues to be associated particularly with women.

Children

- There are various celebrations associated with children to mark significant moments in their lives.

- At birth, there is a short ceremony. Prayers are whispered into the baby's ear and a sweet mixture of honey and clarified butter (ghee) is placed on the baby's tongue.

- There is also a naming ceremony where the baby's horoscope is read. This is important because this often affects the choice of name for the baby.

- The baby's first outing may be to the temple.

- A ceremony is held to celebrate the baby's first taste of rice, symbolising adult food, called Anna Prashan.

- Boys are initiated between the ages of 8-11. This represents a second birth where these boys are given the opportunity to undertake further religious study.

Naming System

- Traditionally, Hindu names have three parts and are made up of a personal, a complementary or middle, and family name.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal name</th>
<th>Personal name</th>
<th>Surname</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Meena</td>
<td>Shonabai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Arun</td>
<td>Mangalibai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Although some married women change their name, not all will take their husband's surname.

- Those who have rejected their caste sometimes adopt the middle or complementary name as the family name, although this is not always the case. It is advisable to check with the individual family concerned.

- A complex kinship naming system operates within Hindu families.

- Each name for relatives is clearly distinct so that their relationship with the subject is obvious. For example, a maternal Aunt would have a different title from a paternal Aunt.
Hinduism

Death

- Hindus are cremated, although very young children may be buried
- The family may want to cleanse the body themselves. A family member of the same sex normally carries this out the day prior to the cremation
- In India the body would be burnt on a funeral pyre. The river Ganges in India is a highly sacred place and many would like this to be their resting-place
- In the UK the body is taken to a crematorium in a coffin
- The family may request readings from the Bhagavad Gita
- The closest relative will circle the coffin during the service with burning incense
- The body is thought to be transient and the soul eternal
- For 10 days family members abstain from cleansing. The closest relative may not wear stitched clothes, for example a shirt or shoes
- Between the 10th and 30th day following the cremation the shraddha ceremony takes place. This acknowledges the soul in its new form. A large meal is prepared to symbolise nourishment for the soul

Visiting a Hindu Home

- You may be expected to leave your shoes at the door. Many Hindus consider leather an impure substance and so shoes are removed
- Shake hands if invited by your host. The traditional Hindu greeting is “namaste” said with the hands clasped together
- Accept refreshment if it is offered to you
- An offer of help in the kitchen may be declined because this may be a private and religious area
- Traditionally women are responsible for childcare and religious education. Women are often the family religious representatives
- In some cases it may not be appropriate for a male officer to speak to a woman without a male family member present
- There may be a religious shrine in the house
- Fresh fruit and flowers are common offerings to a shrine
- Other features might include water collected from the river Ganges, incense and candles
- Sanskrit symbols such as the Om may be displayed
Islam

Key works

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allah</td>
<td>One Creator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Describes a follower of Islam. Literally translates as “one who submits”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qur’an</td>
<td>Islamic Holy Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosque</td>
<td>Place of congregational worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramadan</td>
<td>Month of fasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eid</td>
<td>Celebration of particular religious event. Literally translates as “Happy” or “Joy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halal</td>
<td>Literally means that which is permitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haram</td>
<td>That which is not permitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hijab</td>
<td>Modest style of dress made up of a headscarf and long loose robe which some Muslim women may choose not to wear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imam</td>
<td>Leads congregational prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammad</td>
<td>Last prophet whom Allah communicated the Qur’an to through the Angel Gabriel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunni, Shi’ite</td>
<td>These describe followers of the two main Islamic religious sects. Both follow the same central beliefs although differ over community organisation and legal practice. The majority of muslims in the UK are Sunni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Islam

The Five Pillars

- These are the five basic duties all Muslims are required to perform:

  - **Declaration of Faith (Shahada)**
    The belief that:
    - There is no God except Allah
    - Muhammad is Allah's messenger

  - **Prayer (Salat)**
    Muslims pray five times each day. Prayers are said facing the direction of Mecca where Abraham and Ishmail are believed to have built the first shrine to Allah

  - **Almsgiving (Zakat)**
    All Muslims are expected to give 2.5% of their income and savings to charity to help those who are disadvantaged. This contribution is often made during Ramadan

  - **Fasting (Sawm)**
    Muslims fast for 29 or 30 days (depending on the sighting of the moon) during the month of Ramadan, the 8th month of the Islamic calendar. Neither food nor drink is permitted during daylight hours. Disrespectful behaviour is also forbidden throughout this month

    Those who are unwell, menstruating or travelling are temporarily exempt and should make up any days missed. Elderly people, children and women who are pregnant are also excused

  - **Pilgrimage (Hajj)**
    All Muslims are expected to make the pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia (the holiest site in Islam) at some point during their lifetime if they are able

- The **Qur’an** is the holy text

- “Qur’an” translates into the command to “recite”

- Contains the revelation of the word of God as revealed to Muhammad through the recitations of the Angel Gabriel

- Other texts referred to by Muslims are the **Hadith** and the **Sunnah**

- The Hadith and the Sunnah are not considered to be the word of God. They are a collection of Muhammad's teachings, written down by those who knew him

Festivals

- Festivals are celebrated through the Islamic calendar

- The most widely celebrated are:
  - Eid-ul-Fitr which marks the end of fasting
  - Eid-ul-Adha which commemorates Abraham’s

- Parents may wish children to be excused from school for the day

- Hospital patients may wish to have more visitors on this day, or request to go home

- Family graves are visited

- Family and friends gather to celebrate Eid together where food is shared and children receive gifts
Islam

- The Islamic calendar is lunar and follows the movements of 93 the moon. Each month commences only once the new moon has been sighted. Consequently the dates for festivals each year will change. Contact the Equality and diversity team for up-to-date information.

Visiting a Mosque

- The mosque is the Islamic place of congregational worship.

- Purpose built mosques feature a large onion shaped dome and a tall minaret topped by a miniature dome.

- The onion shaped dome represents the universe. The tall and narrow tower is called a minaret.

- In Islamic countries the call to prayer is made from the top of the minaret five times each day by the muezzin. In the UK, minarets are narrower because they are not used for this purpose.

- Not all mosques in the UK are purpose built. Many are converted houses or disused chapels. However, these are often decorated with traditional Islamic symbols.

- The main prayer hall makes up a large part of the mosque. This is either carpeted with individual prayer places outlined or numerous prayer mats are laid down.

- Muslims face the qibla wall, which indicates the direction of Mecca, during prayer.

- Muslims are required to pray five times each day. The solar calendar governs prayer times and so these are subject to variation. Prayer must not take place during sunrise, noon or sunset.

- Any form of idolatry is prohibited. Often geometric designs and quotations from the Qur’an decorate the walls.

- Washing facilities will be situated near the entrance. In order to prepare for prayer, Muslims perform wudu. This is a form of ablation to ensure cleanliness before prayer. The mouth and nose, the hands and forearms, the head and behind the ears, and the feet are washed with running water three times.

- Friday is the religious day for special congregational prayer which is preceded by a sermon delivered by the Imam.

- The Friday prayers at midday are particularly important for Muslims to attend.

- Provided they are ritually clean, a Muslim can pray anywhere.

- Women are entitled to attend the mosque although tend to pray at home principally because of family commitments.

- A mosque acts as an Islamic centre. Therefore, classes, weddings and other activities may also take place there.

- Depending on the individual mosque, there may be a separate entrance for women, and prayer may be segregated.
Islam

Points to remember

- Women must cover their heads when inside the mosque and wear modest dress which conceals their arms and legs
- Shoes are removed before entering the prayer hall out of respect
- Quiet and respectful behaviour is required
- Dogs are not admitted inside a mosque because they are considered unclean
- Close contact with dogs is considered unhygienic, for example its nose or tongue. It is then necessary for clothes to be washed. This does not mean Muslims dislike dogs or would not keep them as pets. However care is taken over the nature of the owners contact with them. Pet dogs may be kept outside and owners may wear outside clothes when dealing with them
- No alcoholic drink is permitted either inside the mosque or to be consumed before entering. Alcohol is prohibited under Islam
- Muslims face the qibla wall, which indicates the direction of Mecca, during prayer
- When organising a conference, a prayer room should be available for prayers. This must be equipped with materials on which to pray and luke warm water for Muslims to perform wudu

Visiting a Muslim Home

- In some cases, staff may be required to remove their shoes
- In some families, it may be thought unsuitable for women to have any contact with men they do not know
- It is advisable to keep in mind that this may be the case and discuss with the individual what would suit them
- When a Muslim woman is introduced to a man unknown to her, shaking hands may be found offensive
- It may also be inappropriate for a female officer to meet with or visit alone with a married Muslim man
- Some individuals may not maintain eye contact. This does not indicate either disrespect or contempt

Points to Remember

- In some homes there may be a separate room to house the Qur’an. This room will be kept clean because it will be used regularly for prayer
- It is important that the Qur’an is not left either on the floor or where something can be placed on it
- When unused the Qur’an is not left open
- Some Muslims believe that only those who have performed the ritual ablution (wudu) may handle the Qur’an. Ensure that you have your host’s permission
Islam

Dress

- Principles of modesty and cleanliness are important for both genders.

- The Qur’an requires women to dress modestly so that only their hands and face are left uncovered. However, it does not prescribe a particular style of dress.

- Men must be covered from the navel to below the knee.

- It is also traditional that men do not wear silk or particularly gold jewellery, although this is customary for women.

- Some women may choose to wear the hijab to cover their hair.

- Some women will wear the Burkha to cover their entire body, leaving only a small lattice opening to see and breathe.

- Women are not expected to wear sheer or close-fitting fabrics which expose their figure.

- Modes of dress are reflective of individual cultures rather than religious persuasion. Consequently modest dress in the Middle East may be different from that worn in Indonesia.

- The shalwar kameez is a woman’s garment. The shalwar are a pair of, strictly, baggy trousers and the kameez is a long loose tunic, which is worn over the shalwar.

- A long matching scarf is worn with this, called a dupatta.

- The shalwar kameez is the traditional dress particularly in Pakistan. Women from India and Bangladesh are more likely to wear saris. A sari is a 6-yard length commonly of silk, chiffon or cotton which is wrapped around the body over a cropped blouse and a full length petticoat.

- A male costume is the kurta pyjama which consists of cotton trousers with a knee length tunic over the top.

Diet

- Pork products are forbidden. This may include animal fat and foods containing gelatine.

- It is unacceptable to eat food cooked with pork products or using utensils used to cook pork.

- Muslims are not permitted to drink alcohol.

- Halal literally means that which is permitted.

- In this country halal often refers to meat which has been prepared in an acceptable way.

- According to Islam, prayers are said and the animal is slaughtered to allow the blood to drain away completely.
Islam

Women

- Islam upholds equality between the sexes
- According to the Qur’an, women have property and inheritance rights
- Islam believes that both parents are responsible for child rearing and their religious education
- Although men are held responsible for the economic well being of the family, women are not restricted from economic activity. Islamic society highly values the domestic role
- The religion allows both partners to petition for divorce in the event of relationship breakdown, although women have no authority to demand divorce except in certain circumstances

Marriage

- An arranged marriage is initiated by both sets of parents and is consented to by both prospective partners
- A forced marriage is one carried out against either subject’s will. It is fundamentally unislamic to force a marriage
- The arrangement is entirely voluntary and either partner can withdraw at any time
- Festivities can last several days
- The wedding ceremony itself consists of the nikkah and walima, which are the marriage and the reception respectively
- The wedding ceremony can take place anywhere. Traditionally this is at the bride’s home but is increasingly held at a hired venue
- According to the Qur’an, men are permitted to marry up to four times providing they treat each wife equally in every respect
- Polygamy is illegal in the UK
- A Muslim cannot marry anyone who is not either a Muslim, Christian or jew. Also they cannot marry a non-believer
- Both parties are entitled to petition for divorce, although it is not encouraged
- Firstly, certain conditions must be fulfilled:
  - Efforts for resolution have been made
  - Two representatives from each side have been involved
  - A period of four months, after this declaration, has passed

Proceedings can then continue

Children

- A baby is always greeted with delight and happiness
- After the birth the call to prayer (the adhan) is whispered into the baby’s right and left ear
- A baby boy should be circumcised as soon as possible after birth
Islam

- Girls may be expected to wear the hijab after puberty
- Children may be expected to fast during Ramadan once they reach puberty

Naming System

- Muslim names are chosen according to their meaning
- Traditionally a hereditary surname does not exist. A title may be used instead, often indicating the owner’s gender
- Muslim families are increasingly using a family surname
- It is advisable to check with the family concerned

Health

- For both hospital treatment and doctors’ surgeries Muslims, particularly women, may prefer a doctor of their own gender
- Consideration should be given to Muslim women who may wish to remain covered while in hospital
- Muslims may wish to have a water jug (lota) for toilet facilities

Death

- In Muslim countries people are wrapped in a shroud and buried
- In the UK the body is wrapped in a shroud and placed in a coffin
- The family may wish the body to be washed and prepared for burial according to Islamic instruction by representatives at the mosque
- The body must be buried as soon as possible after death
- The face should be turned to the right and the body angled to face Mecca. In Britain this is a NE-SW position with the head at the SW end
- All funeral arrangements, including those to do with the headstone, should be very simple
- Muslims believe in a time of judgement and an afterlife for the soul
- The soul leaves the body immediately but departs permanently on the 40th day
Judaism

Key works

- Torah: Five Books of Moses
- Synagogue: Place of worship
- Kipah: Head cap worn by Jewish boys and men
- Tallit: Male prayer shawl
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah: Ceremony to initiate adherents into adulthood
- Kosher: Refers to food which is permitted
- Menorah: 7 branched candlestick
- Sabbath: Weekly Holy day from Friday evening to Saturday evening
- Yom Kippur: Day of Atonement (Holiest day in the Jewish calendar)
- Hannukah: Festival of lights

Who founded Judaism?

- Judaism has no one founder
- The three patriarchs of the nation are believed to be Abraham, his son Isaac and Isaac’s son Jacob
- The first religious leader was Moses, who received the law on Sinai
Judaism

- The two main sects of Judaism are the Ashkenazim and Sephardim. Jewish people who subscribe to Ashkenazi Judaism tend to be from Germany, Eastern Europe and Russia, whereas Sephardi Jews originate largely from Spain, Portugal, North Africa and Asian countries.

- There are differences in practice between Orthodox and Progressive Jews. Orthodoxy describes those who view the religion and its prescriptions as absolute, regardless of the historical context. The term ‘Progressive’ encompasses reform and liberal forms of Judaism. These groups are less strict and feel that Jewish scripture is subject to change.

- 3 out of 4 Jewish people in the UK are Orthodox.

- The following may be conducted differently according to whether the family or synagogue are Orthodox or Progressive:
  - the synagogue’s layout – men and women will be separated in an Orthodox temple
  - women are entitled to train as a rabbi according to Progressive Judaism
  - girls are not entitled to read from the Torah during their Bat Mitzvah in an Orthodox synagogue.

- When offering prayer, Jews face the direction of Jerusalem. In the synagogue the Ark, which stores the Torah, points eastwards.

- Judaism expects everyone to perform a form of voluntary work which benefits others.

- God is viewed as a spirit rather than a particular image.

What is the name of the Jewish holy text?

- The principal text is the Torah.

- This comprises the first five books of the Old Testament which are believed to have been imparted to Moses on Mount Sinai.

- The Torah is kept in the Holy Ark in the synagogue. It forms the basis of Judaism and is treated with great respect.

- The Jewish Bible contains supplementary books such as Judges, Kings, Prophets, Psalms, Proverbs, etc.

- The Talmud is a commentary on the Bible, written much later. It is a legal code and a record of Jewish religious practice, as well as narrative.

- The Torah is written on a scroll, meaning the text is written on a single long page and wound round wooden or metal rods. Embroidered cloths protect the Ashkenazi Torah, whereas the Sephardi Jews keep the Torah in an ornate metal case.

- A pointer (yad) is used while reading the Torah to ensure the parchment itself is never touched.

- The Torah is believed to be part of the covenant with God. In return for His protection, Jews are expected to abide by its regulations.
Judaism

Festivals

- The Jewish calendar has various festivals which are celebrated annually
- The Jewish calendar is lunar, therefore the Jewish months will differ year to year
  - Rosh Hashana Sept./Oct.
  - Yom Kippur Sept./Oct.
  - Succot Sept./Oct.
  - Hanukkah Dec.
  - Passover Mar./Apr.
  - Shavuot May/Jun.
  - Purim Feb.

The Sabbath

- This is the only religious day referred to in the Ten Commandments
- The Sabbath is observed weekly and lasts 25 hours beginning on Friday just before sunset and ending just after sunset on a Saturday
- During these hours, Jews should not work because it is considered a day of rest, worship, study and leisure
- ‘Work’ can refer to cooking or driving and may extend to using the phone and other electrical facilities except during an emergency. As a result the synagogue should be within walking distance and any food for that day must be prepared in advance
- The Friday evening meal begins with the lighting of candles, followed by Kiddush (sanctification, using a glass of wine), washing the hands and eating from two loaves of bread, and ends with traditional songs and Grace after meals

Rosh Hashana

- This is the Jewish New Year and the beginning of the Ten Days of Repentance
- Sweet foods in particular are eaten, serving to symbolise the hope for a sweet new year. Bread and apples are dipped in honey and it is customary to eat a new fruit
- Tablecloths at home are white to symbolise a fresh beginning to the New Year
- Rosh Hashana is also a time of self-reflection and to make peace with one’s peers as well as God
- This festival lasts for two days
- In the synagogue a ram’s horn (shofar) is blown to awaken the congregation to thought and action
Judaism

Yom Kippur

• Yom Kippur is the Day of Atonement
• Yom Kippur closes the Ten Days of Repentance. It lasts a single day and is a fast for 25 hours without both food and drink
• No work is permitted on this day. It is usual to spend all day in the synagogue for self-reflection, repentance and prayer
• Curtains in the synagogue are white and rabbis and cantors are dressed in white to symbolise a fresh beginning

Hanukkah

• Hanukkah normally falls in mid-December and is also known as the Festival of Lights
• The festival lasts for eight days and each day candles are lit, from one on the first day to eight on the last day
• The festival is over 2,000 years old and marks the rededication of the temple in Jerusalem to God after it had been desecrated by the Greeks. Jewish revolutionaries, after their victory, lit the eternal lamp with only a day's oil left. However, the lamp burned for eight days. Hanukkah commemorates this miracle and the triumph of the Maccabees
• To this day, food fried in oil is eaten, such as doughnuts and latkes (potato cakes)
• Each Jewish family should have an hanukkiah which is a 9 branched candle-stick. Eight candles are lit, using a servant candle, each representing one of the eight days of the festival
• One important aspect of Hanukkah is the responsibility to help others
• According to the Talmud, Hanukkah is a time to remember women's achievements in Judaism owing to the heroism of Hannah who is said to have committed suicide after encouraging her seven sons not to bow to the dictator
• Hanukkah is regarded as a time for family and friends. People gather together and have parties at which children receive gifts (lucky ones may receive a present for each day of Hanukkah)

Passover

• Also known as Pesach, this is the most significant festival in the Jewish calendar
• It gives thanks for the emancipation of the Israelite people from slavery in Egypt, and is a reminder of the historic events of that period
• Preparations are begun long in advance. The house is cleaned thoroughly to ensure that any evidence of leavened bread is removed. Unleavened bread is eaten to remember the haste with which people left, so much so that there was not sufficient time to allow the bread to rise
• Family members share a meal on Seder night when the exodus story is told, prompted by questions traditionally asked by the youngest child at the table. Certain foods form part of this meal to remember the exodus and other aspects of Jewish history, such as matza (unleavened bread), charoset (apples, nuts, cinnamon, wine), bitter herbs (horse radish), and four glasses of wine and drunk to symbolise the redemption
Judaism

- The festival lasts for eight days

**Sukkot**
- Also known as the Feast of Tabernacles, this festival commemorates the time that the Jewish people spent in nomadic lifestyle in the wilderness. It reminds one of the transitory nature of human existence
- ‘Sukkot’ translates as huts or booths, which families build in their gardens and decorate with fruit and flowers
- Sukkot lasts for eight days and during it families share meals in their booths. Some families may live in their booths throughout the festival, depending on the weather
- A ceremony is held, using a palm branch and a citrus fruit

**Simchat Torah**
- This marks the annual completion of readings from the Torah before beginning them again. It is perhaps the most joyous occasion in Judaism and is marked by song, dance and strong drink

**Shavuot**
- This festival commemorates:
  - The giving of the law to Moses at Sinai
  - The first fruits
  - The 49 days that have passed since Passover
- The synagogue is decorated with flowers
- It lasts for two days

**Purim**
- Purim celebrates the rescue of the Jews from Persian oppression due to the intervention of Queen Esther and her uncle Mordecai
- Concerts, fancy dress parades, charades, plays and many other games and amusements are common
- In Israel today this is a remarkable holiday and the entire population ‘lets its hair down!’

**Visiting a Synagogue**
- Synagogue is the name for a Jewish place of worship. It is sometimes called a temple or chapel in the USA
- Orthodox and Progressive synagogues may differ in relation to their lay out, for example, seating for men and women will be separate in an Orthodox synagogue
Judaism

- The Torah is housed in the Ark facing east and covered by an elaborately embroidered curtain
- An eternal light, known as the Ner Tamid, is lit above this to signify God’s presence
- Above this hang two tablets inscribed with the first words of each of the Ten Commandments
- A platform faces the Ark on which the rabbi stands to deliver a sermon
- The Menorah is a seven-branched candlestick, the symbol of modern Israel. This can be lit on special occasions
- The synagogue also functions as a community centre with facilities for religious education, weddings and other celebrations
- Daily services are held where the community is large enough. Prayers should be said three times each day in the morning, afternoon and evening. These can be said at home or at the synagogue. Prayer is of prime importance because it is considered to be a form of communication with God
- Some prayers are recited while standing and facing the direction of Jerusalem which is indicated by the wall in the synagogue where the Ark is situated
- Jerusalem is the holiest city in the world for Jewish people
- There is no written requirement to cover heads, however, this is usual practice. Men wear a cap called a kipah and women may cover their heads during prayer. Orthodox Jews may keep their head covered at all times
- The rabbi, cantor or a member of the congregation can lead prayers
- The synagogue is usually run by a committee structure
- The Beth Din is a regional court of rabbis who decide matters of religious or communal importance
- The rabbi is the central religious figure in the Jewish religion
- Rabbis train at a college
- The cantor conducts religious services, although he may not be considered a figure of authority
- Orthodox Judaism believes that women are not entitled to perform the functions of a rabbi. However, this is not the case for Progressive synagogues. Women have been ordained as Rabbis in Britain’s Progressive synagogues since 1976
- Jewish people are likely to attend the synagogue on a Friday evening or Saturday morning during the Sabbath

Language

- All services in Orthodox synagogues (and some in Progressive temples) are conducted in Hebrew. In Israel today the main language spoken is Hebrew
- Yiddish and Ladino are languages traditionally associated with Judaism but are now rarely used
- Hebrew reads from right to left and in the Torah text, vowels are omitted
Judaism

Dress

- Certain items are worn only by men. The Kipah is a skull cap worn by both men and boys out of respect for God
- The tallit is a prayer shawl worn by men while offering prayer
- The tefillin are worn strapped to the forehead and to the arm, while praying in the morning. They contain extracts from the Torah

Diet

- The Book of Leviticus has laid down very specific regulations relating to permissible and forbidden foods
- Jewish people eat meat but there are certain meats that are not permitted. The term kosher describes food which is acceptable
- These meats are from herbivorous animals with a cloven hoof. Fish with scales, backbone and fins are allowed
- The slaughter process must be compassionate and in accordance with Jewish law. The procedure is called shechitah
- Beth Din authorities, set up regionally, authorise kosher foods
- There are regulations which stipulate when groups of foods may be eaten. For instance, meat and dairy foods may not be eaten together. This means that butter cannot be used for meat sandwiches; or milk in tea or coffee following a meat-based meal
- Parve refers to foods considered neither dairy nor meat. These may mix with one of the two food groups. Examples of parve foods are cereal, fruits, vegetables, eggs, beans, peas and honey
- A minimum break of three hours is customary between food types
- Families have separate sets of crockery, cutlery and cooking utensils. Some families may have two preparation areas, including two sinks in the kitchen or two fridges

Marriage

- The ceremony is commonly held in a synagogue, although this is not compulsory, and is conducted by the rabbi
- The service is held under a canopy (huppah) which symbolises the future home
- Symbolic features of the ceremony include:
  - the couple sharing wine which has been blessed by the rabbi
  - the groom presenting the bride with a ring
  - the reading aloud of their special and unique marriage contract (ketubah)
  - the groom breaking a glass underfoot to prove they are mindful of the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem
- A Jewish wedding may not take place on the Sabbath. Sundays are more common
- The Jewish community recognises divorce although as a last resort. Often relatives or friends become involved in order to help bring about a resolution
Judaism

Children

- Boys are circumcised eight days after birth, even if this falls on the Sabbath. Family and friends gather together to celebrate this occasion. Illness however, would postpone the procedure.

- A celebratory or thanksgiving ceremony is held for newborn girls.

- Children may be named during these ceremonies.

- Jewish children are always given a Hebrew name in addition to their personal name. Their Hebrew name will be used in the synagogue and on official documents.

- Jewish children may attend religious instruction at weekday evening or weekend classes. Teaching will include Hebrew, scripture, and religious practice. Religious education is particularly valued for boys because of the requirements for their Bar Mitzvah which marks their entry into adulthood at 13.

- A similar service for girls is called a Bat Mitzvah. However, the ceremony differs according to the sect of Judaism. For instance, Orthodox synagogues will not perform the ceremony on the Sabbath for girls. Also, girls are not permitted to read aloud from the Torah. In a Progressive synagogue the service for girls is identical to that of boys.

Death

- Orthodox Jews are buried. Cremation is not permitted. However, it is more common with Progressive Judaism.

- Funeral services should take place as soon as possible after death and if possible within 24 hours.

- Funeral services should be plain and simple. Flowers are not encouraged in England although in Israel they are used.

- It is not thought decent for people to be alone when they die. Their family should be with them.

- The body should not be left alone during the period between death and final rest.

Visiting a Jewish Home

- A mezuzah is attached to the doorpost of Jewish homes. This is a scroll of prayer containing the shema (prayer) protected by a cover which is fastened to the right hand side of the doorframe. It is a sign that a warm welcome awaits the hungry traveller and that an observant Jewish family resides within the house.

- Other mezuzot may be affixed to doorframes inside the house. People touch these as they enter or exit to signify God's presence.

- A house warming celebration may be held during which a mezuzah is attached.
Rastafarianism

“Rastafarianism reflects a search for identity by black people who have been uprooted from their African past, and experienced a further assault on their cultural traditions in a move from the Caribbean to Britain. This latter move has led to a divergence in Rastafarian custom and practice between Britain and the Caribbean. What is written here reflects the stricter Caribbean tradition, from which many Rastafarians in Britain will have to some extent departed.”

(Collins, Tank & Basith, 1993 : 58)

• Rastafarianism describes a way of life, which is linked with Jewish and Christian beliefs

• The philosophy originated in Jamaica in the 1920s but took Haile Selassie I’s family name, Ras Tafari as its own, following his coronation as Emperor of Ethiopia in 1930

• Rastafarianism was popular in Jamaica particularly between 1930-1960 and is still followed in countries across the world

• Bob Marley was a Rastafarian and raised the religion’s profile world-wide through his music. He became a political activist and is revered by many Rastafarians throughout the world

• Historically, British authorities have treated Rastafarians with disapproval because the practice of smoking marijuana is viewed as sacrosanct

• The holy text is The Bible, especially the Old Testament and the Book of Revelation in the New Testament
Rastafarianism

- **Significant festivals are:**
  - Bob Marley's Birthday 6th February
  - Haile Selassie's Birthday 23rd July
  - Marcus Garvey's Birthday 17th August
  - Ethiopian New Year 11th September
  - Christmas may be celebrated on the 7th December

**Language**

- Amharic, the ancient language of Ethiopia, plays an important part in Rastafarian Liturgy
- Patois – the language of the African Diaspora
- The reasoning language of Rastafari is the I’n’I, which eliminates all negative sounds replacing them with positive. The term ‘I’ represents God and therefore your people, your family and your beliefs

**Dress**

- Festivals and celebrations usually require women to cover their heads and to wear long dresses in earthy Rasta colours. Trousers are not acceptable and makeup is not encouraged
- The uncombed, uncut locks are the symbol of the devout Rasta and are seen as a sacrament, which many always have covered with a ‘tam’ (a large hat) or ‘wrap’ (a cloth wrapped into a turban)
- African attire is encouraged especially in the red, gold and green colours of the Ethiopian flag. Mudcloth and Kente designs from Africa are popular

**Children**

- Babies born to Rastafarians are offered up to Jah (God) at birth. The child will be encouraged to follow the ‘livity’ (way of life) of Rasta

**Diet**

- Visitors may be asked to remove their shoes when entering a Rastafarian household
- The term used as a model for idealised lifestyles of Rastafarians is ‘Ital’ meaning a saltless, vegetarian diet. ‘Ital’ also means natural food
- Rastafarians shun eating the ‘flesh of scavengers’ like pork or shellfish (a regulation stipulated in the Old Testament) yet fish and fowl (chicken) are acceptable with many
- Alcohol is discouraged
- Those attending Nyabinghi (reasoning – discussion, drumming and dancing) ceremonies are expected to observe a strict ital diet for the duration, which can last up to a week
- Some may follow Jewish dietary directions and some may not eat grapes, currants or raisins
Rastafarianism

Naming System

- A child is usually given an African or Biblical name at birth. This takes place at a naming ceremony when the child is a few months old. According to your Rasta tribe a child may be given a name according to the month of birth. This can be adopted later for the converted. The list starts with April, as this is the month Reuben – the first son of Jacob, father of Israel - was born.

Greetings and Gifts

- Traditionally Rastafarians greet each other with respect even if strangers. Globally Rasta will ‘hail’ each other by saying ‘Greetings’, ‘Hail Ras’ as a mark of respect.

- Afro-centric gifts are appreciated by Rastafarians. Crafted wood, Rasta imagery and colours which symbolise Rastafarian roots; red for the colour of the blood of man, gold for the sun and the wealth and green for nature and the land of Africa, are welcomed, as are the traditional fruit and flowers.

Health

- Some orthodox Rastafarians may refuse medical treatment or blood transfusions although more liberal Rastas may take all forms of treatment.

- Rastas tend to be herbalists using natural methods of self-healing.

- Homeopathy and African traditional cures are widely used.

Death

- ‘Dead’ and ‘Death’ are words considered negative and are rarely used by Rastafarians who follow the more widely believed positive concept of ‘ever-living’. ‘Passed’ or ‘passing’ is used instead reinforcing the Rasta belief that life is eternal through the spirit. Rastafarians spend this life preparing for continuation into the next stating “I’n’l live on itinually” meaning life is eternal.
Sikhism

Key works

**Sikh**
Describes a follower of Sikhism and translates as “disciple” in Punjabi

**Khalsa**
Sikh community

**Khanda**
Symbol synonymous with Sikhism

**Guru**
One of ten teachers of the Sikh religion

**Sri Guru Granth Sahib**
Holy text

**Gurdwara**
Place of Worship

**Guru Nanak**
First Guru

**Five Ks**
Features which distinguish Sikhs

**Sat sangat**
Sikh congregation

**Anand Sahib**
Important prayer

**Karah Prashad**
Sweet offering eaten at the Gurdwara

- Sikhism originated in the Punjab area of Northern India in the 15th century and was founded by the first Guru, Guru Nanak
- Guru Nanak was a Hindu who wanted to bring the positive aspects of the Hindu and Islamic religions together but without the restrictions he felt the two faiths imposed
Sikhism

- He gradually established a following of Hindus and Muslims who were attracted to his doctrine of love, peace and compassion

- As Guru Nanak’s following increased, he selected one person to replace him which began a succession of ten Gurus

- Sikhism is a monotheistic faith

- It believes in equality of humanity

- It upholds the importance of hard and honest work

- It encourages charity

- It requires service to God and others without reward

- Anyone can become a Sikh and the religion offers freedom from:
  - previous religious obligation
  - karma
  - caste
  - ritual
  - superstition

- Sikhism rejects any form of fasting because it is thought that it encourages pride, which is considered to be a sin

- The religion also rejects any form of caste distinction; it believes equality is fundamental

- The five Ks are characteristics designed to distinguish a Sikh. These are:
  - Kesh: uncut hair is considered a divine gift
  - Kangha: a small comb to keep the hair in place and display tidiness and cleanliness
  - Kara: a steel bangle worn on the right hand as a constant reminder of the Sikh faith
  - Kirpan: ceremonial sword to represent protection of weaker sections of the community
  - Kachera: shorts which remind Sikhs of chastity outside marriage

- There are four transgressions against Sikh code of practice:
  - smoking
  - eating halal or kosher meat
  - cutting of hair
  - committing adultery

- The Sikh holy book is called Sri Guru Granth Sahib

- It is a lengthy text which is six times as long as the Bible and is treated with the utmost respect. It is treated as a living Guru continually providing guidance to Sikh people

- The Sri Guru Granth Sahib may be stored in a separate room in the house as is the case in the Gurdwara. This area is viewed as sacred

- The full text is 1432 pages long. As a result, many families may not own a full version. Particularly significant parts of the text are produced in separate volumes. Sikhs may have portable versions which they keep with them
Sikhism

- Both the Holy Scripture and prayer books are treated with respect and are kept covered in cloth
- Pilgrimage is not required by faith. The Gurus regarded it as a waste of effort, which they felt was best reserved for daily obligations
- However, there are places which some Sikhs may wish to visit, for example the Golden Temple at Amritsar in India

Visiting a Gurdwara

- The Gurdwara is the Sikh house of worship
- “Gurdwara” translates as “home of the Guru” and is open to everyone
- It is the focal points of the Sikh community
- Attendance at the Gurdwara is regarded as important and an indication of the level of Sikhism to the individual
- A saffron or orange coloured flag displaying the Sikh symbol of the Khanda will be visible outside a Gurdwara
- The Gurdwara will normally be open from dawn to sunset
- The Granthi is extremely knowledgeable of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib text. They also admit people to the Gurdwara and keep it tidy
- The Granthi has an important role but does not occupy a position of leadership
- Anyone can be considered for the Granthi role, either male or female
- A management committee usually runs the Gurdwara
- There is no allotted holy day. However the congregational service is generally held on a Sunday because it is the public holiday
- The three activities based at the Gurdwara are:
  - Singing hymns from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Kirtan)
  - Readings from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Katha)
  - Communal meal (Langar)
- The Sri Guru Granth Sahib is kept in a separate room protected by elaborate and embroidered silk cloths
- The Gurdwara also provides educational facilities to teach children about their religion. The Gurdwara is a welcoming atmosphere for children and their presence is positively encouraged. Although children will learn about Sikhism in greater depth in class, they are instructed on how to enter the Gurdwara by their parents and are encouraged to spend time in the main hall with their family
- The (Guru da) Langar is the dining area where there are kitchen facilities and an area for people to sit together and share a meal after worship. The meal is an expression of solidarity and those preparing it are performing their duty to assist others
Sikhism

Points to remember

- Remove your shoes and cover your head
- Hands and feet are washed
- Men and women may be segregated within the hall
- Attendees sit on the floor in the main hall, although prayers are made standing
- On entering the Gurdwara go forward to the Sri Guru Granth Sahib and bow
- Karah Prashad is a sweet food which is given to everyone to symbolise the equality espoused by the religion
- Eat in the Langar canteen with everyone else but do not offer to pay, instead offer a donation towards the Gurdwara, which is supported by charity

Dress

- A distinctive feature of male traditional dress is the turban which traditionally keeps uncut hair tidy and fixed back. It is approximately six yards long
- Although it is an important Sikh symbol and is associated with the Sikh faith it is an example of Indian dress which has been adopted by Sikhs
- The turban is such an intrinsic symbol of their religion that Sikhs do not have to remove them to wear crash helmets on motor-cycles. They have been exempted through the Motor-cycle Crash Helmets (Religious exemptions) Act 1976
- The turban is an adult form of dress. Younger boys would wear their hair tied in a knot by a jura and covered with fabric called a ramal
- Traditionally women also keep their hair long

Festivals

- Diwali and Baisakhi are both celebrated. Diwali is held in October or November and demonstrates the close relationship still remaining with the Hindu faith
- Baisakhi is celebrated in mid April. It commemorates the Sikh New Year and the founding of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699
- Hola Mohalla is celebrated at the end of the Hindu Holi celebration

- Gurpurbs honour either birth or death anniversaries of the ten Gurus

- There are certain colours which are significant for certain occasions:
  - Pink or red Weddings
  - White Mourning
  - Yellow Start of spring
- Otherwise the turban colour is insignificant
Sikhism

- Although Sikhism requires both men and women to adhere to standards of modesty, girls experience greater pressure. This is also true in relation to maintaining other aspects of traditional culture.

- Women dress modestly often in a shalwar kameez. The shalwar are a pair of, strictly, baggy trousers and the kameez is a long loose tunic, which is worn over the shalwar. A long matching scarf called a dupatta or chuni is worn with this to keep the head covered.

Diet

- Many Sikhs are vegetarian, although this is not universal. The Hindu and Islamic religions have a lasting influence so some will not eat certain meats such as beef and pork.

- However, Sikhs will not eat halal meat. When organising a conference where people of mixed faiths will be attending it may be most practical to serve vegetarian food.

- Neither alcohol nor tobacco are permitted.

- Food is eaten with the right hand.

Women

- The Sikh faith is proud of its progressive attitude towards women and upholds the equality of all Sikhs.

- Women are admitted to the Gurdwara on the same terms as men and are entitled to lead a service in the Gurdwara as a Granthi or sit on its management committee.

- There were no female Gurus but there were Sikh women who fought in the Khalsa armies and were upheld as saints.

- Women are traditionally thought to be responsible for childcare. However, this does not mean Sikh women may not work.

Marriage

- Arranged marriages are still common among Sikh families. Both sets of parents are involved. The objective is to find a partner who is suitable in terms of family background and education in order to create as stable a basis as possible for a future family.

- The wedding ceremony can take place at the bride's family home although increasingly in the UK it takes place at the Gurdwara and is called the Anand Karaj.

- The most significant part of the proceedings is the reading of the four verses of the Levan from the Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

- While these four verses are being said, the bride and groom circle the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Once these verses have been both said and sung, the couple is married.

- Anyone may perform the ceremony. A religious leader as such is not required.

- Divorce is permitted although it is strictly against religious principles.

- Divorcees can be remarried in the Gurdwara.
**Sikhism**

**Children**
- When a baby is born the Japji Saheb or Mool Mantar is whispered into its ear. This passage opens the Sri Guru Granth Sahib and contains the main tenants of the Sikh faith.
- A naming ceremony takes place at the Gurdwara during the child’s first visit.
- The family prepares Amrit (a sanctified liquid of sugar crystals and water) and Karah Prashad which is shared with the congregation.
- Opening the Sri Guru Granth Sahib at random determines the baby’s name. The first letter of the hymn on the left-hand side page will be the first letter of the baby’s personal name.
- This ceremony acts as a thanksgiving. The parents may give a gift to the Gurdwara, for example new material with which to cover the Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
- A thanksgiving prayer is said for the new baby and Karah Prashad is shared which closes the ceremony.
- The Amirt Sankar describes the initiation and baptism ceremony admitting Sikhs of either gender and of any age into the Khalsa. This is a demanding role which requires intense preparation.

**Family Relationship**
- The family is of prime importance in Sikh society.
- Older people are treated with great respect. They may be greeted by the touching of feet.
- Argument and disagreement among family members is discouraged.
- The mother has a pivotal role although the father is considered to be the head of the family.
- The eldest son succeeds his father to this position. Once the mourning period has concluded the next family head is presented with a new turban to confirm his role.
- The principle of Dharam, which is also part of Hindu tradition, refers to social duty prescribing careful and decent behaviour throughout life.
- A complex kinship system operates within Sikh families. Names of respect exist for all family relations. These immediately indicate the relationship to the subject and whether they originate from the maternal or paternal side.

**Health**
- No objections to blood transfusions, organ transplants or post-mortem examinations exist.
Sikhism

Death

- Sikhs, like Hindus, are cremated
- Sikhs believe in reincarnation and view death as a beginning as well as a conclusion. Consequently, overt grief is not considered appropriate behaviour
- Sikhs do not believe in an afterlife
- Family members of the same sex prepare the body for the funeral. The body is washed and dressed ensuring the five Ks are in place. The body is then dressed in a shroud
- There may be a period where the body is laid out for people to pay their respects
- The ceremony should be simple and held as soon as possible after death
- The ashes are either buried or scattered in running water
- A reading of the entire Sri Guru Granth Sahib may be undertaken and arranged to finish ten days later
- The mourning period should last no longer than two weeks
- All luxuries in the house are put away during the mourning period

Visiting a Sikh Home

Points to remember

- Rooms may be decorated with images of the Gurus or other religious symbols, such as the khanda
- Accept refreshment if it is offered
- One room may be allocated within the house for the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. If invited into this room, cover your head and remove your shoes
- Prayer times are likely to be at dawn, sunset and late evening. Avoid these times for visiting or organising meetings
- Women may want to have family members with them when inviting officers to the house

Naming System

- Traditionally, Sikh names consist of three parts
- These include a personal, middle or complementary, and family name
- The personal name is chosen via the Sri Guru Granth Sahib
- The middle name is automatically Singh (Lion) given to men, or Kaur (Princess) given to women. These are religious designations and should not necessarily be treated as surnames unless you are told otherwise. However if the family have no uniform family name their surname becomes their religious distinction (either Kaur or Singh)
Sikhism

- Personal names do not indicate gender, although the middle name will (Singh or Kaur)

- Increasingly Sikh families use a hereditary family name. If this is the case, the middle or complementary name may not be used which means the person’s gender will not be clear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal name</th>
<th>Personal name</th>
<th>Surname</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Harjinder</td>
<td>Kaur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Ranjit</td>
<td>Singh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Nicknames may operate among close family members and friends
The two main religions in China are Buddhism and Taoism

The word Tao means “path” or “way”

The original teachings of Taoism are found in China’s most influential book, the Tao Te Ching. This book comprises stand alone chapters of wise sayings attributed to Tao Tzu (Tao Tzu means “Old Master”). This makes identifying the original author very difficult as the chapters are probably written by different “Old Masters” throughout the centuries

The main principles of Taoism are humility and unassertiveness and to follow the way of nature, the “watercourse way” – water flows effortlessly to many places but can also be very powerful

Yin and Yang is the ancient principle of activity and passivity – the Yang denotes the masculine, active energy and the Yin denotes the passive, female one (good is often identified with the Yang and bad with Yin)

Its moral principles are based on the 5 Prohibitions and the 10 Instructions
Useful contacts

Adult mental health services community development workers for black and minority ethnic communities
Friendship Centre, Elm Grove, Southsea, PO5 1JT
Tel: 023 9275 5485
Fax: 023 9282 5483
Email: cdw@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Community Development Workers work with BME community members to raise awareness of mental health well being.

African Caribbean Cultural Association
c/o 80 Elm Grove, Southsea, PO5 1LN

African Cultural Organisation for Integration
Jean Tchamgue
Tel: 07886 309238
Email: tchamg@hotmail.com
Mail to them via PRENO office (see PRENO entry below)

Africa Trust Chambers
PO Box 551, Portsmouth, PO5 1ZN
Tel: David Denison or Simon Martin 023 9273 0987
Email: africatrust@yahoo.com
Website: www.africatrust.org.uk

Africa Trust provides work experience opportunities in North Africa and also in West Africa.

African Women’s Forum
Marie Costa, 51 Stanley Street, Southsea, Hants, PO5 2DS
Tel/Fax: 07758805316
Email: Mariecosta@hotmail.com

A support group for people of African
Useful contacts

All Saints asylum seeker drop in
Michael Woolley, All Saints Church, Commercial Road, Portsmouth
Tel: 023 9283 9222
Email: coordinator@haslarvisitors.org.uk
Mondays and Thursdays 10am – 1pm.

Anglo-Arab Society
Mr Jamal Nazar, 10 Atlantis Avenue, Crookhorn, Waterlooville, Hants, PO7 8AH.
Tel: 023 9226 5929
The Anglo-Arab Society is a voluntary self-help group.

Anglo-Hellenic Society
Mr Demetris Papanicolaou, 11 Apsley Road, Milton, Portsmouth, PO4 8RH.
Tel: 023 9286 3566
The Anglo-Hellenic Society aims to meet the needs of the Greek community in the city and to promote awareness of their language and culture.

Asylum Seeker Activity Project (ASAP)
Sally Jones, Friendship Centre, Elm Grove, Southsea, PO5 1JT
Tel: 023 9229 7177
Email: asapr@hotmail.com or sallojo@hotmail.com

Baha’i Community Of Portsmouth
Neville Hill, 109 High Street, Portsmouth, PO1 2HJ.
Tel: 023 9281 4516
Fax: 023 9281 4516
Email: neville.hill@btinternet.com
Website: www.bahai.org.uk
The Baha’i faith is a religion followed by several million people in the world, from all countries and all backgrounds.

Bangladeshi Welfare Association
Portsmouth Jam-E-Mosque Building, Unit 1 – 3, 75 Bradford Road, Portsmouth.
Tel: 023 9229 5448
Fax: 023 9229 5448
Mobile: 07947 498 356
Email: bwaportsmouth@hotmail.com
Social Welfare needs, community development.

Health Improvement and Development – Bangladeshi Community
Runi Ahmed, Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices Floor 1 Core 6, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth.
Tel: 023 9268 8390
Fax: 023 9268 8393
Email: runi.ahmed@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
Useful contacts

**Bangla School**  
Priory School, Fawcett Road, Southsea  
Poppy Mahmud  
Tel: 07742 933222 or 9282 6450

**Betterlife Community Outreach**  
Rev. Nathaniel Odin, 50 Frensham Road, Southsea, Portsmouth PO4 8AF  
Tel: 023 9273 8959 Mobile: 07944 854574  
Fax: 023 9273 8959  
Email: champions_assembly@yahoo.co.uk  
Website: championsassembly.com

*Activities:* Women’s Group, Youth Group, Music Group, Service Group, Dad’s Unit.

**British Red Cross**  
All Saints Centre, Commercial Road, Portsmouth, PO1 4BT  
Tel: 023 9229 6463  
Fax: 023 9281 7306  
email: georgebrown@redcross.org.uk  
Website: www.redcross.org.uk

The International Tracing and Message Service can help to restore family links between people who have been separated by war and disaster. We also offer support and practical help to asylum seekers and refugees through the Orientation Project for Asylum Seekers and Refugees.

**Camfoot Uk (Cameroon Football Association Portsmouth)**  
Adonis Ntiefong (Chair)  
Tel: 07904 437034  
email: camfootuk@yahoo.co.uk  
Website: www.camfootuk.com

Camfoot Uk is a Cameroonian community and cultural association in Portsmouth founded with the purpose of reinforcing our cultural identity.

**Caribbean Islands Association**  
c/o The Wesley Centre, 128 Fratton Road, Fratton, Portsmouth  
Tel: 023 9282 2745

The Caribbean Islands Association is a voluntary organisation that meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 6.30pm. All are welcome.

**Cheburashka**  
Russian Support Group “Cheburashka”, PO Box 824, Portsmouth PO1 9FJ  
Tel: 07983 851 664  
Email: cheburashka@russiansupportgroup.org  
Website: www.russiansupportgroup.org

For Russian speaking parents with young children – the group meets in the Children’s Activity Room at the Central Library every Thursday 4 – 5pm.

**Chinese Christian Fellowship**  
St Luke’s Vicarage, Greetham Street, Southsea, PO5 4LH
Useful contacts

**Chinese School**
c/o Mayfield School, Mayfield Road, North End, Portsmouth
c/o Portsmouth Chinese Association, Kam Ip Tel: 07899918930

**Chinese Women And Youth Group**
Catherine Cheng, Chairwoman
c/o John Pounds Community Centre, 23 Queen Street, Portsea,
Portsmouth PO1 3HN
Tel: 07789 196 098

Linda Lee – Vice Chairwoman and public relations. Tel: 07851 789 646
Email: cwaycontact@hotmail.com
Mondays 10 – 12. Exercise class, English class, Chinese library, Health seminars, Youth activities and leisure outings.

** Community Languages in Portsmouth**
Community language classes are held in the following languages: Albanian; Arabic x 2; Bengali x 3; Chinese; Farsi; Gujarati; Greek; Polish; and Turkish.
Dr Sarwar Jamil, c/o Mount Pleasant Junior School, Mount Pleasant Road, Southampton SO14 0WZ
Tel: 023 8048 0021
Email: Sarwar.Jamil@mountpleasant.southampton.sch.uk

**Communities United**
Kam Ip – Tel: 07899 918930, Syed Aminul Haque Tel: 023 9275 1151 or 07947 498356, and Jamal Nazar Tel: 9226 5929

**Congolese church service**
Pastor Baye, Jubilee Church.
Tel: 07950 607872

Service in French, Sundays 2pm

Czesc – Surestart – Polish parent & toddler group
SureStart Buckland, Turner Road Children’s Centre.

An opportunity for Polish families to meet each other, every Friday 10am – 11.45am. Refreshments and children’s activities available. Up to 5 years of age. Free.
For more information contact Rachael Tel: 023 9273 3440

**Duisberg And Portsmouth Friendship Committee**
Teresa Deasy, Democratic and Community Engagement, Civic Offices - Floor 3, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth PO1 2AL
Tel: 023 9283 4056
Email: teresa.deasy@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

**Equalities And Diversity Team**
Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, PO1 2AL.
Tel: 023 9283 4204/4069
Fax: 023 9283 4886
Email: equalities@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

**ESOL – Portsmouth College (English for Speakers of Other Languages)**
Tangier Road, Copnor, Portsmouth, PO3 6PZ
Supta DasGupta Tel: 023 9234 4340
Email: supta.dasgupta@tpc.ac.uk

**ESOL – Essential Skills - Highbury College**
Judith Snaith, ESOL Co-ordinator, Highbury City of Portsmouth Centre, Winston Churchill Avenue, Portsmouth.
Tel: 023 9272 8200
Email: Judith.snaith@highbury.ac.uk
Website: www.highbury.ac.uk
Useful contacts

Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA)
Craneswater Junior School Site, St. Ronans Road, Southsea, PO4 0PX.
Tel: 023 9273 3130
Fax: 023 9229 6487
Email: Karen.Thomas.emas@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
Website: www.blss.portsmouth.sch.uk

EMA works in partnership with Portsmouth schools, early years settings and parents.

ETHNIX
Girls and young women’s youth project. (11 – 19 years). Meet at the Brook Club on Sunday 10.30am – 1.30pm
Contact: 07958 352231 or leave a message with Jodie on 023 9282 4618

Eu Welcome
Dave Adcock, Project Manager
Tel: 07786 392886
Email: euwelcome@yahoo.co.uk
Website: www.euwelcome.org

EU Welcome helps arrivals in Southampton (and beyond) from the new A8 countries of the EU.

French African Association
Mr Gilbert Kabasele, French African Association, Suite 37, Royal Mail House, The Terminus, Queens Terrace Road, Southampton SO14 3FD
Tel: 023 8022 3071 Mob: 07813 442 875
Email: gilb_kaba@yahoo.co.uk

The Association covers all of Hampshire including Portsmouth and has a solicitor and can deal with asylum and other legal queries.

Grace Association
Alexis Mukwa, GRACE Association, 9 Inhurst Road, Portsmouth, PO2 0QJ
Tel: 07958 110164
Email: degracealexis@yahoo.fr

The GRACE Association is affiliated to the Grace Pentecostal Church and its pastor is Pastor Alexis Mukwa. Members are from a variety of African countries including the Congo.

Greater Sylhet District Association
South East Region
c/o Mr Syed Aminul Haque, Portsmouth Jam-E-Mosque Building,
Unit 1 – 3, 75 Bradford Road, Portsmouth.
Tel: 023 9229 5448
Fax: 023 9229 5448
Mobile: 07947 498 356

Gypsy And Traveller Liaison
Floor 3 Core 2 Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth
Tel: 023 9283 4070
Email: peter.nail@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Hampshire African Association (HAFRIA)
Pastor Baye Bobala, 125a Winter Road, Milton, Portsmouth PO4 8DS
Tel: 07950 607872
Useful contacts

Health improvement development service – BME Project
Uta Schmidtblaicher
Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices Floor 1 Core 6, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth.
Tel: 023 9268 8383
Fax: 023 9268 8393
Email: uta.schmidtblaicher@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Health is wealth project
Swimming for all, Swimming for women, Male badminton, Learn to Swim Course, Information Days and Health Seminars.

Hindu Youth Group
Friendship Centre, Elm Grove, Southsea PO5 1JT
Dhansukh Mistry Tel: 023 9257 1303

International Recruitment Office (University Of Portsmouth)
Mahbuba Abdullah, University of Portsmouth, Nuffield Centre, St Michael’s Road, Portsmouth PO1 2ED
Tel: 023 9284 3465
Fax: 023 9284 3538
Email: mahbuba.abdullah@port.ac.uk

Irish Club
77 Elm Grove, Southsea
Tel: 023 9282 5152

Jagoran Group (to rise)
Ranu Islam, Somerstown Children’s Centre, Omega Street, Southsea, PO5 4LP
Tel: 07985 126440 (Ranu)
Email: ranu.islam@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
Weekly support group for Bangladeshi women and children run by Ranu enabling families to access services for under 5’s provided by Sure Start Heart of Portsmouth and other local organizations. The Group is activity based and covers a range of needs from education to health and well-being. Every Tuesday (term-time only), from 9.30am – 11.30am, crèche provided for all sessions.

Jami Mosque
Victoria Road North, Southsea, PO5 1PS
Tel: 023 9283 2541

Laticap (Latin-American Cultural Association From Portsmouth And Hampshire)
Francisco De Luca Tel: 07908 911429 Email: javierdeluca@yahoo.com
Nancy Morriss Tel: 07703 037386

Mod Civilian Diversity And Equality
Annette Osborne
MP3-1, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Whale Island, Portsmouth, PO2 8BY
Tel: 023 9262 5832
Email: Annette.Osborne864@mod.uk
Useful contacts

**Multicultural Group For Women And Young Children**
Sue Collis / Linda Walford, The Brambles Nursery School and Children’s Centre, Bramble Road, Southsea PO4 0DT
Tel: 023 9282 8606
Fax: 023 9282 8606
Email: suecollis@brambles.portsmouth.sch.uk
www.brambles.portsmouth.sch.uk

The group meets every Thursday in term time 1.00 – 3.00pm.

**Multicultural Librarian**
Linda Collins, Central Library, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth PO1 2DX
Tel: 023 9268 8259
Email: linda.collins@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

**Multicultural Link Group**
The Navigators Resource Centre, Isambard Brunel Road, Portsmouth PO1 2DP
Chairperson : Annette Osborne
MP3-1, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Whale Island, Portsmouth, PO2 8BY
Tel: 023 9262 5832
Email: Annette.Osborne864@mod.uk

The Multicultural Link Group is for people who work with Ethnic Minorities and provides mutual support, allows for information sharing and networking.

**Multicultural Youth Group**
Meets at John Pounds Community Centre, 23 Queen Street, Portsea, on Saturdays and during school holidays. For 5 – 13 year olds.
Contact: Liluma Tel: 07970 070364
Or Tel: 023 9286 2224

**Muslim Youth Project Limited**
Mashud Choudhury
Mobile: 07957975632
Email: info@muslimyouthproject.net
Website: www.muslimyouthproject.net

MYP aims to work developing and promoting greater tolerance and understanding and to encourage co-operation and co-existence in a multi-faith and diverse society in Portsmouth. A primary aim of the MYP is to present Islam to those who are unaware of its true teachings. In particular it strives to correct popular misconceptions about Islam.

**Ogroshor (Bangladeshi Women’s Project)**
Cerina Ball, Employment Outreach Worker, Portsmouth Housing Association, Peninsular House, Wharf Road, Portsmouth PO2 8HJ
Tel: 07983 450870
Email: cerinaball@ntlworld.com or cerina.ball@phagroup.org.uk

We currently run two ‘Drop In’ Centres - Monday and Thursday 9.30am – 3pm at the Wesley Centre, 128 Fratton Road, Fratton, Portsmouth.
Outreach Worker – Ashraf Sultana Tel: 07961841391

**Pasco (Portsmouth Asian Social And Cultural Organisation)**
PO Box 114, Portsmouth PO3 5AZ
Smita Patel Tel: 07747 107466
Email: spatel118@hotmail.com
Useful contacts

**Play – community link workers**
Chinese – Lisa Wong Tel: 07958 389229, and Wenwa Luo Tel: 07903 237050
Bengali – Amirun Nessa Tel: 07958 352201
Polish – Eva Walter Tel: 07961 845750
Email: playlinkworkers@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Bilingual workers are employed by Portsmouth City Council Play Service to encourage children and families from the minority communities in Portsmouth to make use of the free, open access adventure playgrounds.

**POLISH COMMUNITY GROUP**
Contact: Alicja Tel: 023 9279 8164

Polish Community Group meet every 4th Sunday of the month at 19.00 hours at Saint Swithun RC Church, Waverley Road, Southsea. After mass the Group meet at the church hall.

**Portsmouth African Union (PAU)**
Mary Kiwanuka – chairperson
Rev. Nathaniel Odin - secretary

If you are an agency and wish to attend a meeting please contact:
Email: champions_assembly@yahoo.co.uk

PAU meets the last Sunday of each month at 5.30pm for a 6pm prompt start, at Austin House, 122 Milton Road, Portsmouth PO3 6AS
PAU contact details:
Email: poafricanunion@yahoo.co.uk
Tel Nos: 07773600019, 07828273278, or 07984410945

**Portsmouth Cameroonian Association**
Flat 2, Gerard House, Conan Road, Hilsea, Portsmouth PO2 9NB
Tel: 07984 285 616
Email: pca@pcaport.co.uk
Website: www.pcaport.co.uk
Or contact Serge Fankam Tel: 07525024613
Email: fankaserge@yahoo.fr

**Portsmouth Central Mosque**
90 Somers Road North, Portsmouth PO1 1PL
Tel: 9286 5030

**Portsmouth Chinese Association**
Mr Kam Ip (Chairperson), Friendship House, Elm Grove, Southsea, PO5 1JT
Mobile: 07899 918 930
Fax: 023 9229 7179
Email: kamfredip@yahoo.co.uk
Mr Shee Hung Lee (General Secretary) 023 9229 7179 or 07877433844

Portsmouth Chinese Association aims to provide advice and assistance to the Chinese community as well as local people and agencies.

**Health Improvement and Development Service - BME communities**
Uta Schmidtblaicher, Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices Floor 1 Core 6, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth.
Tel: 023 9268 8383
Email: uta.schmidtblaicher@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

BME activities (Health is Wealth), Chinese Newsletter produced, Chinese Lunch Club/Day Care, Chinese Shopping Club, Enquiry Service.
Useful contacts

**Portsmouth Filipino Association**
Mr Conrado Sabadera (President), 56 Allaway Avenue, Paulsgrove.
Tel: 023 9232 6336
Mobile: 07525 670 853
Email: randyrn68@yahoo.com
Association email: pfapinoy@hotmail.com
Association website: www(pfapinoy.org.uk

**Portsmouth Francophone Space**
Fontaine Muyembe
Tel: 07859 747622
Email: fmuyembe@yahoo.co.uk

**Portsmouth Friendship Centre**
Clair Dolan, Centre Manager, Portsmouth Friendship Centre,
Friendship House, Elm Grove, Southsea, PO5 1JT.
Tel: 023 9229 7177
Mobile: 07816 482239
Fax: 023 9229 7188
Email: cdolan@hermitage-housing.co.uk or enquiries@friendshipcentre.co.uk
Website: www.friendshipcentre.co.uk

Multicultural Centre in Southsea. Various facilities for hire to community groups including meeting rooms, office space, function hall, commercial kitchen, fully equipped ICT suite. Also various projects running ie. BME volunteer training programme, hot/cold buffet service, arts programme for asylum seekers and refugees, tai chi, yoga, slimming group etc.

**Portsmouth Friends**
Ruth Collins, Support Worker for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children, Young Persons Support Team, Chaucer House, Isambard Brunel Road, PO1 2EP.
Tel: 023 9284 1309 or 07948 221091
Email: ruth.collins@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Befriending and orientation project run by Portsmouth young people for Portsmouth young refugees. Open to all young refugees from 13 – 18 years. Meets every Wednesday 6-8pm at The Friendship Centre, Elm Grove, Southsea. Activities include football, cooking, arts and games as well as budgeting and exploring similarities and differences. A great place to make new friends and have fun.

**Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust (Equal Voice Group)**
Florise Elliott, Diversity Advisor, Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust, Fort Southwick, Fareham PO17 6AR
Tel: 023 9228 8511
Mobile: 07943 836732
Email: florise.elliott@porthosp.nhs.uk

**Portsmouth Interfaith Forum**
Taki Jaffer, Interfaith Co-ordinator, c/o PRENO, Unit 2, Victory Business Centre, Somers Road North, Portsmouth.
Tel: 023 9287 7189
Email: interfaith@freenet.co.uk

**Portsmouth Kurdish Association**
Dana Ibrahim Tel: 07849 417007 Email: hadjitan@yahoo.co.uk
Brian Futcher Tel: 023 9275 2557 or mobile 07947 458861
Email: kurds@smora.co.uk
Useful contacts

Portsmouth Kurdish Community Association
Beriar Ghada
Tel: 07743 965 300

Portsmouth Multicultural Group
c/o PRENO, Unit 2, Victory Business Centre, Somers Road North,
Portsmouth PO2 8HL

Portsmouth Muslim Academy
Old Commercial Road (Mile End Chapel)
Portsmouth PO1 4QL

Portsmouth Race Equality Network Organisation (PRENO)
Tunde Bright-Davies, Unit 2, Victory Business Centre, Somers Road North, Portsmouth PO2 8HL.
Tel: 023 9287 7189
Email: info@preno.org.uk
Website: www.preno.org.uk

Mission: ‘To promote race equality in Portsmouth and S/E Hants by empowering ethnic minorities to have an effective voice and promoting good practice amongst service providers’
PRENO provides developmental support to BME organisations.
PRENO offers a variety of consultancy and training packages to service providers.

Portsmouth Racial Harassment Forum
Teresa Deasy, Democratic and Community Engagement, Floor 3, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth. PO1 2AL
Tel: 023 9283 4056
Fax: 023 9283 4076
Email: teresa.deasy@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
Website: www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Portsmouth Sikh Bhatra Culture Group
Jaswant Singh-Digpal, 3-5 Margate Road, Southsea, PO1 5EY
Tel: 023 9275 1942
Fax: 023 9282 4961
Mobile: 07789 287165

Portsmouth Synagogue
The Rabbi, Synagogue House, The Thicket, Southsea, PO5 2AA
Tel: 01243 587 943
Mobile: 07818 063 876
Email: tony@tonybev.freeserve.co.uk
Website: www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Portsmouth Vietnamese Association
Chairperson: Mrs Hang Swords
Vice Chairman: Mr Bob Doan Tel: 023 9237 7374 Mobile 07789 570874
Friendship Centre, Elm Grove, Southsea PO5 1JT
Tel: 023 9275 5727

Portsmouth Vietnamese Association is a registered charity that provides advice and activities for people of all ages from the Vietnamese Community.

Health Improvement and Development Service – Vietnamese Community
Uta Schmidtblaicher, Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices Floor 1 Core 6, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth.
Tel: 023 9268 8383
Email: uta.schmidtblaicher@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
Useful contacts

Race Equality Prison Liaison
Vera Sinha, Race Equality Prison Liaison, Unit 2, Victory Business Centre, Somers Road North, Portsmouth PO1 1PJ.
Tel: 023 9287 7189, Mobile: 07746094178
Email: prenolaisonhmp@googlemail.com

PRENO in partnership with HM Prison Service is promoting Race Equality and BME engagement in HMP Kingston (Portsmouth), Haslar Immigration Removal Centre (Gosport), Camp Hill, Parkhurst and Albany (Isle of Wight) over the coming years.

Racial Awareness Service
Portsmouth City Council, Navigators Resource Centre, Isambard Brunel Road, Portsmouth, PO1 2DP.
Tel: 023 9283 4227
Fax: 023 9284 1695
Email: racial.harassment@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
Website: www.portsmouth.gov.uk

The service offers advice, support and practical measures to assist anyone experiencing incidents of racial harassment at their privately rented/owner occupied home or place of business.

Roshni Group
Asian Elders Lunch Club (women) meets weekly on a Thursday at Royal Albert Centre, Brunel Court, Nutfield Place. 11am – 3pm.
Contact: Nadira

School Of Polish Language
Alicja Powell, Polish Community School, c/o St Edmunds Catholic School, Arundel Street, Portsmouth.
Tel: 07824447307
Email: alicja1@ntlworld.com
Website: www.polishschoolportsmouth.org.uk

For children from 4 – 16, Saturdays term time 10am – 1pm.
We will start Polish language classes for adults upon demand.

Shunali (golden)
Ranu Islam, Charles Dickens Children’s Centre, Turner Road, Buckland, Portsmouth.
Tel: 07985 126440
Email: ranu.islam@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Weekly support group for Bangladeshi women and children run by Ranu enabling families to access services for under 5’s provided by Sure Start Heart of Portsmouth and other local organizations. The Group is activity based and covers a range of needs from education to health and well-being.
Every Thursday (term-time only), from 12.30pm – 2.30pm, crèche provided for most sessions.

Soka Gakkai
Penny Hand, ‘Haldor’ Beach Road, Southsea, PO5 2JH
Tel: 023 9229 4847
www.sgi-uk.org
Lay Buddhist organization practicing Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism.
Useful contacts

**Sylhet District Association (SDA)**
General Secretary – AKMF Hoque 07789 503834, President - Babul Miah 07775 755786, Vice President – Delware Hussain Beig 07789 212490, Asst Treasurer – Abdul Haque 07733 447282

Sylhet District Association (SDA) 60 Osbourne Road Southsea Portsmouth PO5 3LU
Email: tahmim@yahoo.com
Website: www.sylhetda.org

SDA aims:
- To gain an effective voice for the Sylhet community in any decision making process by service providers. To be achieved by taking part in consultation and being represented on partnerships in Portsmouth
- To improve the quality of life for the Sylhet community in Portsmouth
- To develop trust between people of different communities and build confidence in our own abilities

**South Hampshire Reform Jewish Community**
Suite 153, 151 High Street, Southampton SO14 2BT
Mobile: M Pell 07867 797143
Email: shrjc2000@yahoo.co.uk

**Thai Association Solent Uk**
Somporn Mayne, c/o Bangkok Thai Restaurant, Albert Road, Southsea
Tel: 023 9242 9922

**The Portsmouth Diocesan Council For Social Responsibility**
The Revd Nick Ralph, Mission and Society, 1st Floor, Peninsular House, Wharf Road, Portsmouth PO2 8HB
Tel: 023 9289 9672
Fax: 023 9289 9651
Email: nick.Ralph@portsmouth.anglican.org
Website: www.portsmouth.anglican.org

**True Jesus Church**
True Jesus Church, 114 North End Avenue, Portsmouth PO2 8HN
Contact: Christine Fan
Tel: 023 9266 7039 mobile: 07925369323
Fax: 023 9266 7039
Email: tjcportuk@yahoo.com
Website: www.tjc.org

An independent Christian denomination open to all.

**Vietnamese Elders Group**
Meet at Age Concern Portsmouth, The Bradbury Centre, 16 – 18 Kingston Road, Portsmouth, PO1 5RZ every Tuesday fortnight from 11am – 3pm.
Tel: 023 9268 8383
Email: uta.schmidtblaicher@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

**Wessex Jamaat**
Al Mahdi, Wickham Road, Fareham, Hants, PO17 5BU
Tel: 01329 513 651
Mobile: 07915 069 192
Email: info@almahdi.org.uk
Website: www.almahdi.org.uk

A Muslim community organisation particularly interested in social welfare of its members.
Useful contacts

Women’s Drop-In-BME (Black Minority Ethnic)
For further information call Shipa or Sadhia on 023 9275 5485 or email: cdw@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Join in health related workshops. Relax and have a drink. Meet other women. Take part in arts, crafts and beauty sessions.
Every Tuesday 12 noon until 2.30pm at the Wesley Centre, 128 Fratton Road.

Zanzibar Organisation
Mr Mohammed Darweish, 60 Tipton House, Warwick Crescent, 
Southsea, PO5 4P4.
Tel: 023 9234 6562
Mobile: 07742 957 924

The Zanzibar Organisation provides support to Zanzibaris in the UK and overseas. It provides welfare support to families and the elderly living in the Portsmouth and surrounding area.
You can get this Portsmouth City Council information in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by calling 9283 4069.