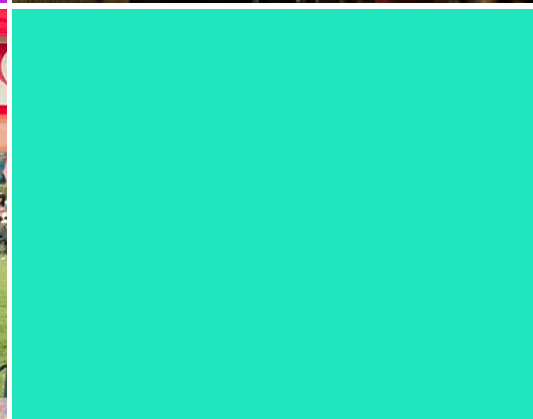




ANNUAL

MEMBERS MEETING

OCTOBER 2019



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CHAIR'S REPORT

Islamic Society of Britain began its journey in earnest at a time when the UK Muslim population, its demographic make up, political and social structures and religious institutions were disconnected and serving conflicting interests. Over the last twenty years there has been a seismic shifts in the Muslim communities focus and priorities. When ISB was set up, it was aimed at primarily serving the growing English speaking progeny of the first generation of Muslims who were immigrants in their status and attitudes. The community did not speak English as their main language of religious or cultural activities, their development focus was countries of their ethnic origin and they were not investing in their British Muslim identity and future.

A great deal has changed in the Muslim community across the UK. Majority of the Muslim population speak English and engage in cultural and religious expression in English, born and brought up here, feel a stronger cultural affinity with the British values, cultures and norms. Twenty years ago very few mosques offered any English programmes and their Imams hardly spoke any English. The Friday prayer sermon was often given in foreign language and congregations were left disconnected and exasperated. That has changed dramatically and more and more mosques are offering English leagues sermons and their Imams are mainly British born and English speaking. The journey is not complete but it is heading in the right direction.

ISB was at the cutting edge -and pioneers of bringing innovative and groundbreaking approach to offering knowledge, cultural experiences and youth work. It led the way in normalising Nasheed (Islamic songs) events, family camps, taking Islam to the indigenous people, Ramadan radio shows etc. ISB led the way in building people and bringing fresh thinking in the Muslim community.

We are in a very different place today. We have had a steady declining trend in membership over several years. While there have been at least two successful recruitment campaigns with Living Islam Festival, the decline has continued.

Our level of local activity has been low as our legacy membership feel tired and dis-empowered. I spent significant time talking to and meeting with former members, current members and non members to explore how to re-engage them to the work of ISB. It disappointed me greatly to find in the majority of cases, they were not interested. People had moved on, they had found better things to do with their precious time.

People have also been very open with their concerns. I was told the ISB name was too "tainted". Exploring this further within the branches, members felt embarrassed to introduce themselves as ISB members in public gatherings. As part of my work within the community I was told by independent organisations that I should not be introduced as the ISB chair as that would generate negative reactions from the community. We had disengaged with other Muslim organisations that had left a lot of bad feeling.

Our director resigned within a few months of my election as chair (Feb 2017). We did not manage to replace him until Oct. 2018. During that time we had several resignations from shura members that were elected by the membership to represent them. Each of these incidents consumed a great deal of energy from the leadership in shura and diverted their attention from what should have been our critical focus - the organisation itself.

If ever there was a time for renewing an organisation, it is now. Instead of getting focus on addressing these issues, I am disappointed to report much of my energy during my term been drained with internal conflicts and trying to rebuild the credibility of the organisation within the wider community.

Despite the very difficult climate and the lack of having a Director in post to drive our project work forward for significant time, we can still point to some real success delivered by the hard work and commitment of the people involved.

- *ISB Campus continues to deliver events and tarbiyah tailored for the 17-25 year old Muslims creating the safe space for them to learn and express themselves and their Islamic identity.*
- *Young Muslims has started to progress with their work plan, having held one successful camp and planning the next one (to happen very soon).*
- *Many issues with our organisation and systems have been addressed. As an organisation operating in the third sector we had very few of the policies and structures needed to ensure compliance. We also have approved a new set of byelaws including governance required for branches.*
- *We have had the beginnings of success and learning from our branches. Luton branch under their local leadership have gone from being a non-existent branch that needed to restart, to a committed group of local brothers and sisters delivering on family circles, a young sisters circle and a new scout group.*
- *A new Tarbiyah programme for ISB members that will become a foundation for our future growth and development.*
- *Re-engagement with our brothers, sisters and partners in this work in Britain. Notably with the MCB.*

Going forward, ISB needs to be transformed and refocused from top to bottom. Part of this effort include our new proposals for Shura and executive - repurposing and refocusing is part of the renewal agenda that needs to occupy ISB leadership in the coming term. Under these proposals, shura will take care of the governance and regulatory needs of the organisation while our talent and strength direct their effort and energy toward the streams of work. These are:

Strong foundations. A central office that delivers support and services for the whole organisation.

Branches and Membership. This is at our core. Arrest the decline in membership and start to grow the organisation again. Inspire others with our vision and actively engage our communities in delivering capacity within their communities through their branches.

Youth and Young People. ISB Campus has been our most active and consistent project. YM is now starting to get going. Both of these need to be supported further. Also a process for how these young people transition into the wider organisation needs to be addressed.

Islam Awareness. Our major flagship projects have been on hold due to not having people to take the ownership to deliver them. It needs some fresh thinking and energy to take our successful templates reimagine and relaunch them.

We need to discover our courage and confidence again. Despite all of the challenges we have to face, I firmly believe that nobody else in our space has the rounded view of Islam in Britain that we have across our country. Others are doing parts of it but not the whole. There is a place for us and it is there for us to take if we can only find the courage and commitment.

I pray that Allah forgives me and you have the heart to forgive me too. It's been an honour serving the ISB.

www.isbcampus.org.uk campus@isb.org.uk
19 10 2019
10:15 - 18:30
The Hub, 5-9 Hermitage Road
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Book now! Ticket price £10

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Engaging with the Prayer
Dr Rizwan Syed

Aspects of Ritual Purification
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Sheikh Munir Ahmed

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Rehanah Sadiq

ISB CAMPUS
Bursaries available at:
campus@isb.org.uk

CAMPUS

This year we have been incredibly blessed to see the development of a core, committed Campus committee which has met twice a year to produce a 6 month plan. Meetings have inevitably been followed by local Campus dinners and socials which have been very enjoyable. This committee is made up of young people who envisaged the following year plan:

- 2 Intense Day Courses a year
- 2 Residentials a year
- An active social media presence.
- A website geared towards a younger audience with reflections and reminders.
- An e-syllabus with online learning on a weekly basis during term time.

The Intense Day Courses were entitled:

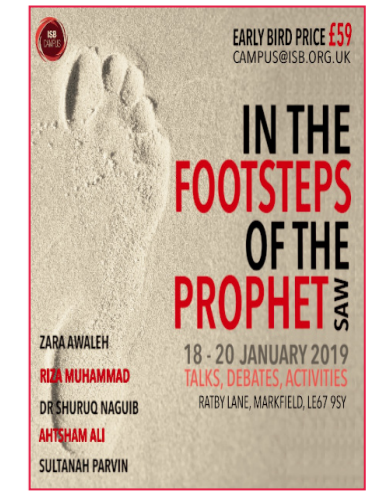
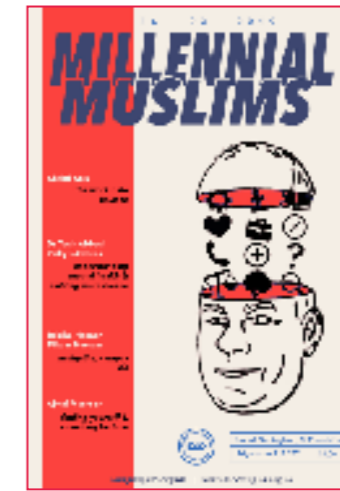
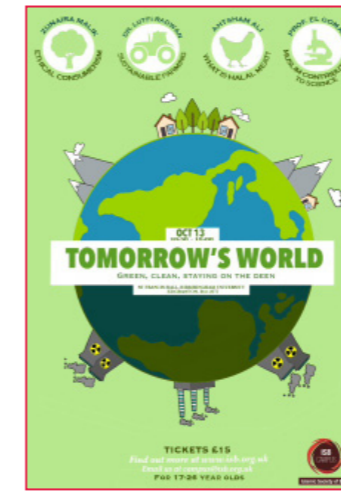
'Tomorrow's World - Green, Clean and Staying on the Deen'-
Looking at the concepts of Halal and Tayyab meat, Organic farming, ethical consumerism, Recycling, Fast fashion and the environment.

'Millennial Muslims' -
Looking at the work/life balance, Understanding mental health and building resilience, Navigating campus life and and searching for love!

The residentials were entitled:

'In the Footsteps of the Prophet'
- Looking at plurality in Madina
- Muhammed SAW as a father and husband and the role of the Prophet's wives as enablers and active promoters of the mission
- Racism and anti-black attitudes in the Muslim community today.

'The Tale of Two Civilisations'
- Looking at Islamic history and the height of the Islamic civilisation,
- The growth of Western civilisation,
- Muslim responses to Colonialism
- Loyalty and belonging.



ISB Campus is a space for 17-25 year olds to:

- Explore our faith in its current contemporary context.
- Develops new skills in order to be of service to all our communities.
- Hold discussions in a dynamic and respectful space.
- Make friendships based on faith, understanding and compassion.

Our social media presence exists on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. This will be strengthened and developed further next year Insha'Allah as it is in its early stages. Our website is aimed at a younger audience, promotes our events and covers reflections based on the e-circles. This will be developed next year Insha'Allah.

One of the highlights of this year has been the E-syllabus. This has seen young people from various cities logging on in the evenings on a weekly basis during term time, to present reminders and follow a syllabus developed by Dr Rizwan Syed. Reminders and reflections are then posted onto the website.

We remain in touch via:

- A Whatsapp group for all attendees to our programmes. This helps the quick dissemination of information.
- An open and closed Campus Facebook page
- A Mailchimp account by which we send emails regarding events.

We hope to continue with the same format next year, God willing. A book club is an idea it's infancy! Campus members in different localities have been getting together to support one another regularly.

I have been blessed by Allah to lead on a project that has so much potential and that puts me in contact with such wonderful young people on a regular basis. They are bright, diligent, respectful, curious and keen to develop their faith and friendships. May Allah continue to bless this project. Ameen

Sara Saigol
ISBB Campus Coordinator



YOUNG MUSLIM UK

The Young Muslim UK is a national project that offers young people a safe space to develop and grow both emotionally and spiritually. Through various engaging activities, young people 11-16 years of age develop friendships as well as build on social and spiritual knowledge.

We've had a great 2019! We have had 30+ circles, that run every week during term time in Birmingham. Some of the topics that we cover include Tahara (cleanliness), Intentions and Mindfulness.

Some of the highlights of this year have been:

A residential themed 'Choose Your Character' was a real hit. We had 100 young people take part, had 30 youth volunteers, with in-house catering done by the 304th Birmingham Muslim Scouts. The aim was for children to develop their love of Islam, as well as learn new skills, gain confidence and make new friends! Fun and engaging activities included bonfire, night games, entertainment, Qur'an and du'a memorisation, discussions and reminders.

A family Iftaar was organised for 100 attendees during Ramadhan this year, in which attendees were able to take a "Ramadhan Iftaar Box" kit for their Non-Muslim Neighbours.

A day trip to Woking Mosque on Thursday 29th August. The idea behind this was to find out about Muslim heritage and history in the UK. Young people and their families thoroughly enjoyed themselves and are looking forward to the next day trip.

A successful sponsored walk of Mount Snowdonia was also in August. Around 20 young people took part on a very enjoyable climb. We're hoping to have this as a regular event in our annual calendar. By the Grace of Allah swt, we have raised over £1000 so far.

In the next year we are planning to expand the work that we do with young people, which includes more skills-based learning that will be accredited, and more locally focused social action initiatives within our local communities. A new website is under development that will help young people to download learning resources and update them on events and activities. If you would like your child to take part in our activities, please send an email to: nadim@ymuk.net

Nadim Taher - YM National In-Charge

Manchester is one of ISB's more active branches though not without its issues of co-ordinating activities over such a wide geographical area. Also the many mosques and organisations around the city provide a great service for both Muslim and non-Muslim oriented activities. As examples we have Heritage Radio offering daily broadcasts, the Muslim Lifestyle Expo every October and centres like the Muslim Youth Foundation, British Muslim Heritage Centre and the nearby European Institute of Islamic Sciences.

Our main activities over the last year:

Family Circle

The Circle is very popular with branch members and is held every 3-6 months. Around 100 people attend.

Boys Circle

This is delivered every week for secondary school boys. Around 5-10 boys attend regularly.

Homeless Feed

Around 50 -100 people are fed for a Sunday lunch. The feed happens every few months.

Walks

Our walks are 1-2 times a year and associated with a charity or a reminder. They are usually somewhere in the local countryside.

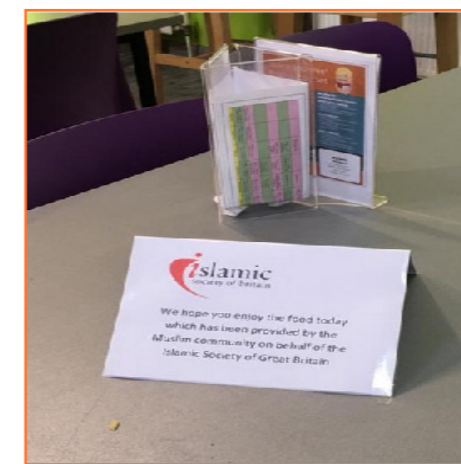
Youth Care Home Visits

Very popular activity with secondary school children visiting a care home for the elderly: around 10 children each time. The project is currently on hold pending new project in-charge.

Future Plans

These revolve around making better use of the family circle with respect to activities for the various participants and doing more work in Ramadan

Tawqeer Rashid
Branch Coordinator



LEICESTER



The Eat'n'Meet project was launched by ISB Leicester in November 2010 and has become well established. Guests who are homeless and destitute in Leicester receive a hot meal and support every Saturday at St James Church. There are a number of dedicated people from all faiths and none, of all ages from sixteen to pensioners who regularly volunteer for this project which is headed by Salma Ravat and Farhana Hajat.

Salma and Farhana went on to organise an annual Ramadan Food collection supported by ISB which is now in its 7th year. This year, 9 tonnes of food was collected by the community and donated to FareShare who distribute it to homeless hostels, refugee and asylum seeker groups, foodbanks and many other places.



The Christian Muslim Ladies Dialogue Group meets every 6 to 8 weeks during term times. We have talks and discussions on topics such as the role of women in the Church and Mosque, with Bishop Guli, the Bishop of Loughborough as a guest speaker. Raheema Caratella and Rev. Diane Johnson were invited to speak at Lambeth Palace on behalf of the dialogue group at a faith leaders event organised by the Christian Muslim Forum in March. A number of ladies from the group also attended and were delighted to a surprise visit by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

Moonwalkers Youth Group was established by ISB Leicester in 2007 for children aged 5-11. It is a children's after school club that meets every Friday during term time. Children at Moonwalkers enjoy a varied curriculum of arts and crafts, cookery, drama, trips, visitors and discussion making learning about Islam fun. The end of each year is celebrated with the annual End of Year Performance and prize giving where families, friends and relatives come to see the children perform, sing songs and give speeches about what they have learnt at Moonwalkers. Many of the volunteers are Moonwalker Alumni. We were also pleased to be able to offer places to two Duke of Edinburgh students from local schools this year.



A weekly ladies study circle is held at an ISB member's house during term time throughout the year. As well as covering a variety of topics from Qur'an tafseer and Seerah, we also look at current affairs and discuss topics that are of interest and relevant to our lives as Muslims living in Britain. The study circle has strengthened community ties and friendships and is a place where newcomers are always welcome. Over the next year, ISB Leicester plans to continue the activities that have been mentioned above.

Seema Ahmad
Leicester Branch In Charge



LUTON

I have been Branch Coordinator for Luton since April 2018, being selected at our last Members' Meeting after the election of our current executive (shura) committee. Our main focus has been to rebuild the Luton branch at the grass-roots, having a robust platform for future growth.

We hold an open meeting for families every four weeks, allowing men and women of all ages to get to know local Muslims, have topical discussions and be enlightened with a study circle, all in a relaxed and friendly environment.

These sessions are conducted by invited guest speakers such as Imam Ajmal Masroor. We have also varied the programme to include Islamic art classes and outdoor family walks in local countryside.

Community work

ISB Luton has taken part in a number of events working with the wider community. We invested in buying a stall, together with a selection of leaflets, setting it up at the Big Iftar and Inspire FM's Eid Festivals, attracting a lot of interest in our local and national work. We also helped Families Relief charity to raise £15,000 at their Luton charity dinner.

Wisdom and Tea

In June 2019, Sr Najda Khan began a circle primarily for young women aged 15+ to learn about faith, education and life in general – through the context of Islam. This growing project is currently held fortnightly.

One-off Events

In May 2018 we held a public lecture with Sh Tamim and Ajmal Masroor for Ramadan preparations, and in April 2019 we welcomed Sr Henrietta Szovati for this year's Ramadan.

The future?

Looking ahead, ISB Luton is sponsoring a Scouts group that launched in September 2019 with plans to expand the group since demand for this facility is high in Luton. We hope to begin structured activities for Young Muslims as well as better tarbiyyah sessions for our membership.

Soheb Siddiqi
Branch Coordinator



BRADFORD

The Bradford ISB Branch had a stall at the Ramadan Tent Project's 'Open Iftar'. The project is to help develop the knowledge, understanding and experience of Ramadan & fasting for all.

There were formal speeches, free food, exciting stalls, a time to have conversations, and the Maghrib prayer was held in Centenary Square, Bradford, following the breaking of fast. We had an information stall and 15 people expressed an interest to join.

ISB Scout Bradford runs fortnightly on a Saturday from 5:30 till 7pm and is open to girls and boys from 6 to 12 years old. We are currently operating the Scouts group from Islamic Relief Volunteers Hub in Bradford 7, who kindly lend us the space free of charge. We do charge a £1 nominal fee for each child which generally covers the cost of resources.

The session splits the younger children and the older children, so we have 2 groups, under 10's and 10 and over. With the younger group we focus on stories from the Qur'an and Sunnah, and so far we have covered the prophets from Adam (AS) to Ibrahim (AS). This is followed by an activity related to the story. With the older group we have been focusing on Allah's names and will continue to work on topics that we feel are more applicable to that age group e.g. character building, dealing with problems, behaviour, responsibilities as a Muslim; all using Qur'an and Seerah. We still want to keep this interactive and fun so we will always have an activity after the main reminder/topic.

For the last part of the session both groups come together to play games, we aim to include a quiz at the end of the session if we have time using Quran, Seerah and Prophets quiz cards. If we do not have time we let the children have free play.

Shannaz Zahoor
Bradford Branch Coordinator

Saima Ashfaq
Scouts Leader



SHEFFIELD

Assalamu Alaikum

By the grace of Almighty Allah, the Sheffield Branch have been able to do the Following:

Talks

- Organised a conference in Methodist Church on 'The Life of Prophet Muhammad PBUH' - around 150 peoples attend.
- A tour around UK in churches discussing Islam and the plight of refugees. We work with a number of Agencies to be a voice for Islam, including with Police.
- Organised a festival to celebrate multi cultures.

Community Outreach

- Organised a public meeting to condemn the atrocities in Manchester, the gun shooting In New Zealand and in America. I gave an interview on BBC Radio and Yorkshire Television on the atrocities.
- A meeting to discuss the rise in Hate Crime, which includes a regular school assembly on this.
- We also have monthly homeless dinners which attracts a regular number of homeless people. We work with a church with a food bank, and have launched a food bank with Sheffield Council of Mosques.
- I was invited to be member of a panel at a secondary school with over 300 children attending.

Ramadan

During Ramadan for a full 30 days (8.30 till 10 am) I hosted a Multifath Show . Many people came and we discussed many Issues. We also organised Ramadan Iftaar and 70 non Muslims attended. A Mosque Open Day where around 90 people attend.

There is a lot of work need to be done, unfortunately everyone is busy with family and work. By the Grace of Allah we managed to make our voice heard. Please volunteer your time and join me in our vast work in Sheffield.

May Allah reward you all, ameen.

Abdol Kadir

BIRMINGHAM

The Birmingham branch has the following areas of work:

- Young Muslims
- Family Circle
- ISB Members' Circle
- Interfaith and Intra-faith Activities
- Unity FM

Young Muslims

Our local YM coordinator is Arslan Rafiq who leads a team of 8 dedicated brothers and sisters who meet regularly to run the *i*Circle. We now have 80 girls and boys attending the *i*Circle every Friday 7-9pm during term time, and the majority are signed up as YM members. As part of their continuing development, the attendees have been split into two levels: Level 1 is the basic level while Level 2 is more intensive. We also have events taking place outside of the *i*Circle such as Qiyam-ul-Layl's and Laser Quest which have proved to be popular. The *i*Circle also provides experience in public speaking for all its attendees, and we are planning to allocate projects for the young people to get involved in and insha'Allah take a lead on.

Family Circle

This is coordinated by Saimah and Muhammad Qureshi. It takes place 6 monthly on a weekend and is well attended. We have external speakers and food is provided. Members are also encouraged to bring a dish to share. There is a separate programme for under 6 year olds and one for up to 10 year olds.

ISB Members' Circle

This takes place monthly and is taken by Dr Zahid Parwez. The circle has its own syllabus and will take 2 years to complete. Unfortunately, attendance has been hit and miss from our members, but we have now opened it up to the public and are advertising on UnityFM.

"There are different ways of learning Islam. One is to learn the whole of the Qur'an, Seerah, Hadith etc. Another is to study 20-30 key concepts in detail. I have found that the latter is the better method, with even ulema who've memorised vast amounts of knowledge being deficient in their understanding of the key concepts. Over the next 2 years we will cover these key concepts." Dr Zahid Parwez



Interfaith and intrafaith activities

These take place ad-hoc throughout the year. Mahmooda Qureshi is very well connected in the interfaith community and has also worked hard at developing contacts with many groups within the Muslim community, including Shias. What we have learned is that we have many things in common and share issues which we are all concerned about. As part of this our YM joined forces with The Feast, a Christian Youth Group, to pack and distribute emergency winter survival kits for the Homeless.

Unity FM

Birmingham ISB members have been actively involved with Unity FM, a 24/7/365 community radio station broadcasting to the Muslim community of Birmingham, since it was established in 2006. Unity FM is now Europe's largest community radio station.



Keep In Touch



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A: Islamic Society of Britain

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