

Findings from borough-wide conversation with faith groups (April '18 – June '18)



 @lb_southwark  facebook.com/southwarkcouncil

Who Took Part

We heard from 97 individuals from 90 faith groups (representing about 22% of the estimated 400 + faith groups we think exist in the borough).

86% of responses came from faith group leaders; 13% of the respondents came from faith group members

Broken down by type of faith group:

Bahai = 2

Buddhist = 1

Christian = 79

Muslim = 12
Sikh = 1

About 30% of faith groups came from Peckham and Nunhead; with a fairly even spread of responses of around 20% each from Bermondsey and Rotherhithe, Dulwich, Borough, Bankside and Walworth and Camberwell.

Composition of the Faith Groups

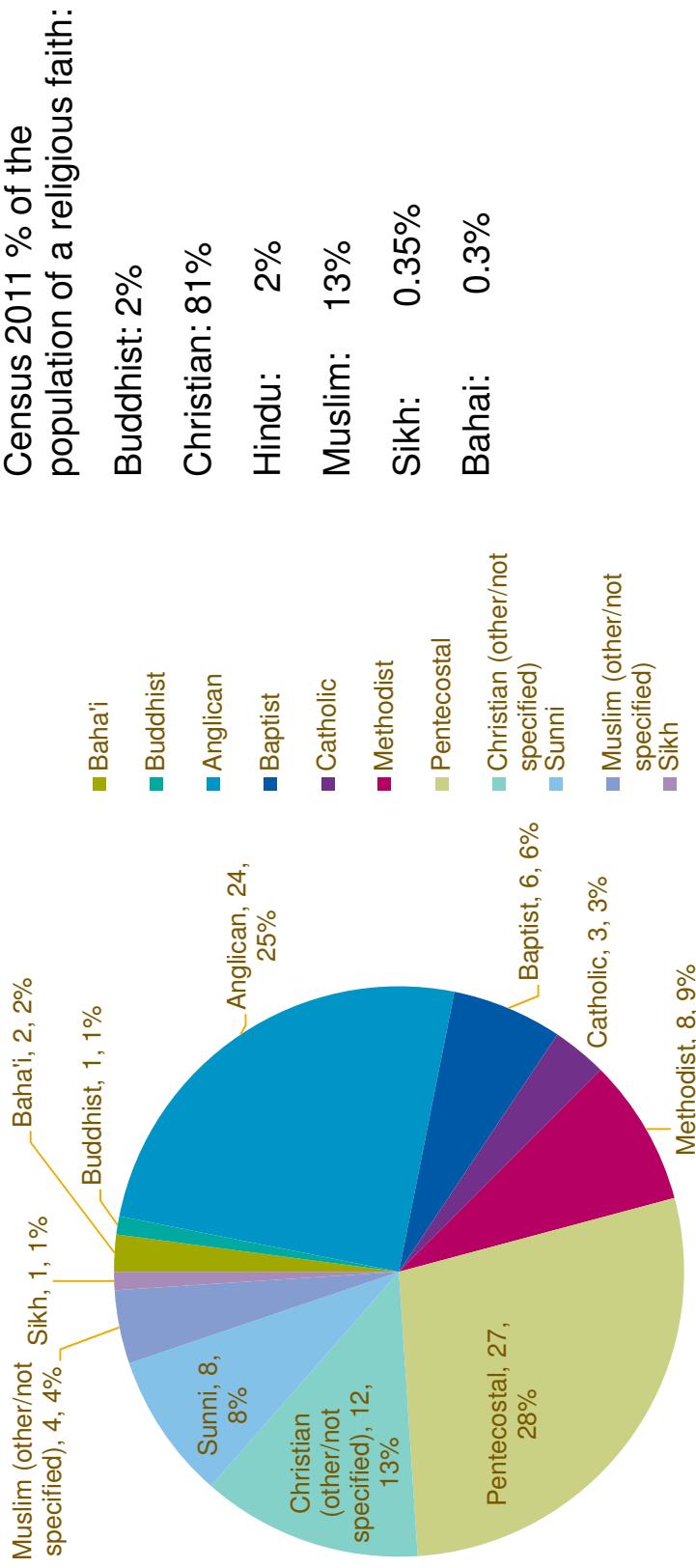
The biggest group of respondents came from faith groups active in the borough for over 50 years

Of the 90 faith groups that responded, 77% of their congregations live in the borough; 23% outside the borough

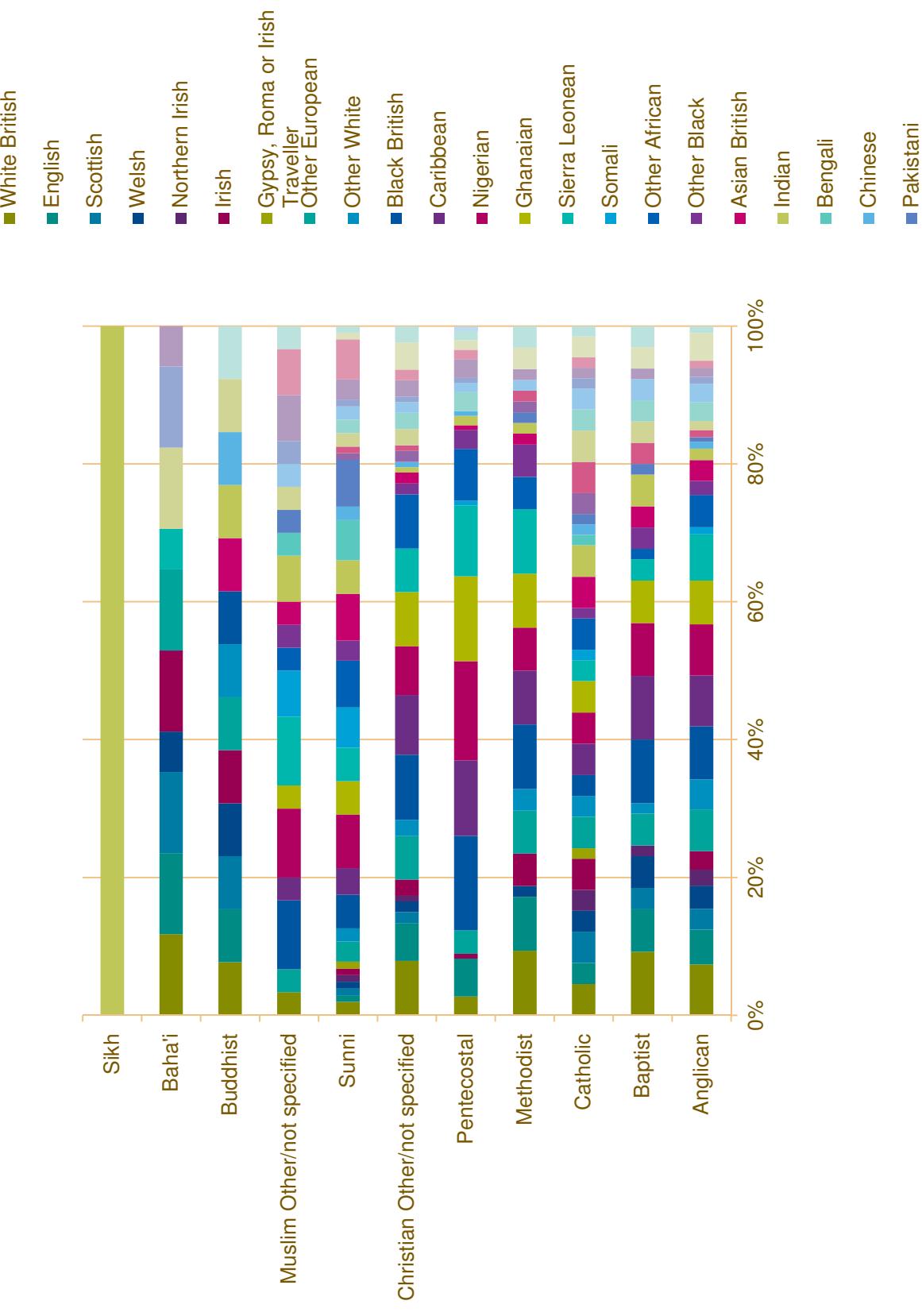
Migrant congregations had between 50 – 200 members
Pentecostal congregations had up to 100 and 200 + sized members

There was a diverse mix of ethnic groups across all faiths, including the newer established faith groups.

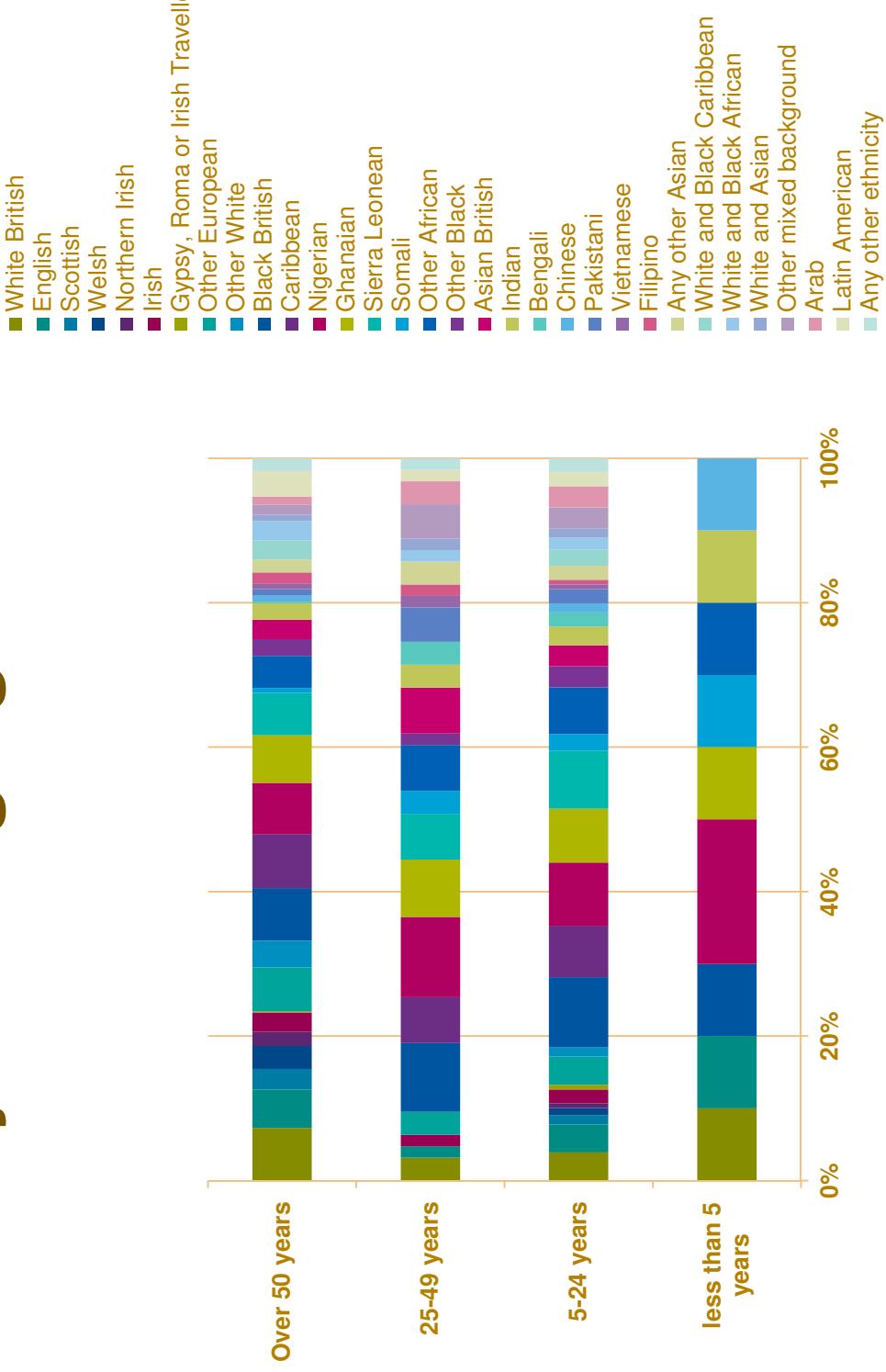
Branches of faith



Breakdown: branch of faith by ethnicity



Breakdown: time in the borough and ethnicity of congregation



Breakdown: ethnic diversity with location

Location	Ethnic group 1st biggest	Second biggest	Third biggest
Peckham and Nunhead	Black British	Caribbean, Ghanaian	Sierra Leone
Census 2011 indicates Black British/Caribbean as the biggest ethnic groups.			
Dulwich	White British Black British Caribbean	Nigerian	Ghanaian
Reflects White British as the biggest ethnic group.			
Camberwell	Black British, Nigerian	Sierra Leone	Other European and Other African
Reflects the fact that, based on the Census 2011, black African, Caribbean and British are the second biggest ethnic group.			
Borough Bankside and Walworth	White British	Black British	Caribbean, Nigeria, Ghanaian
Reflects White British population, based on the Census 2011, as the biggest ethnic group. Census suggest area has the highest proportion of Asian/Asian British, although this is not recorded.			
Bermondsey and Rotherhithe	Sierra Leone	Nigerian	W British, Other European, Black British Caribbean
Census 2011 indicates White British, 63% was biggest ethnic group. However, migration has changed the composition of the local population to become more ethnically diverse. Congregations travelling into the borough may also affect this data..			

Summary

The proportion of branches of faith groups we engaged are comparable to the % of the local population who are of a particular faith.

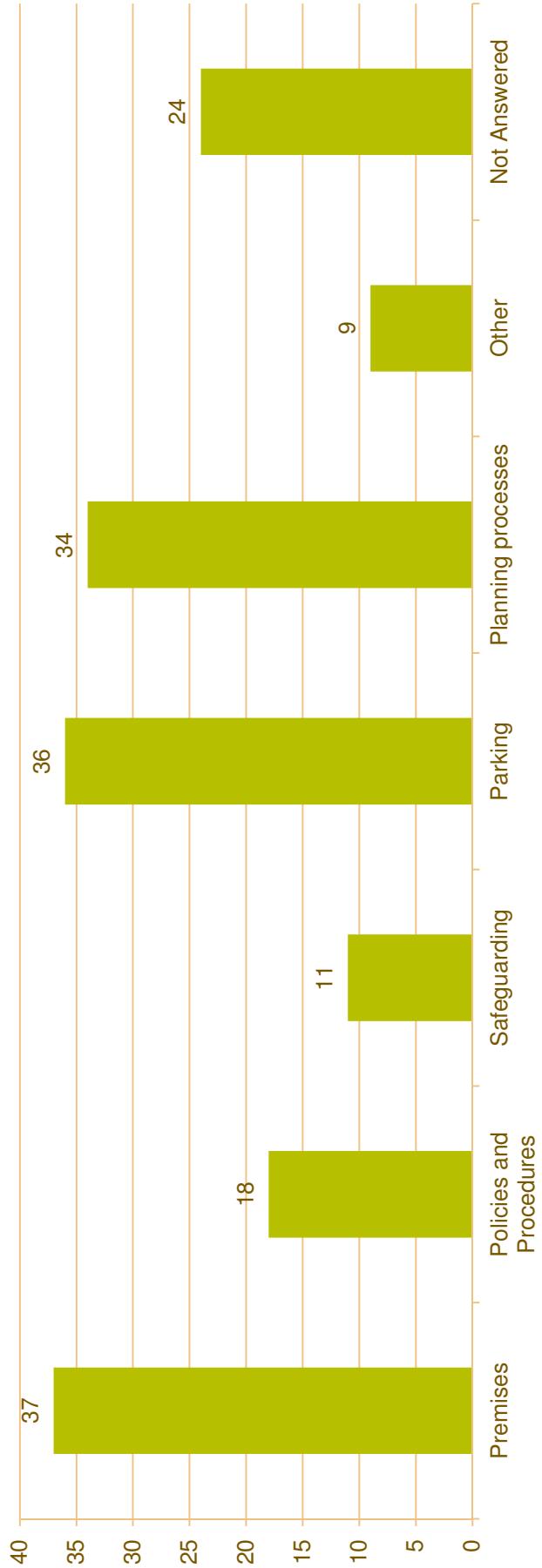
The more established faith groups tend to cater for a more diverse congregation

From what faith groups have told us, the majority of faith group congregations are ethnically diverse.

Newer churches tend to meet the needs of particular ethnic groups in the borough, reflecting recent migrant patterns.

In Borough, Bankside, and Walworth, Peckham and Nunhead and Dulwich the diversity of congregations reflects the local diversity. In Camberwell and Bermondsey and Rotherhithe the congregations are more likely to be BME than the local populations based on 2011 census data, which will not take into account more recent change in these areas..

Overall challenges faith groups face



Overview of challenges

Premises, parking and planning are the top 3 three of council processes affecting faith groups.

Time in borough by challenges:

- Less than 5 years: parking and planning
- 5-24 years: premises, parking and planning
- 25-49 years: parking and planning
- 50 years +: premises, policies, parking and planning

Type of Faith group and challenges

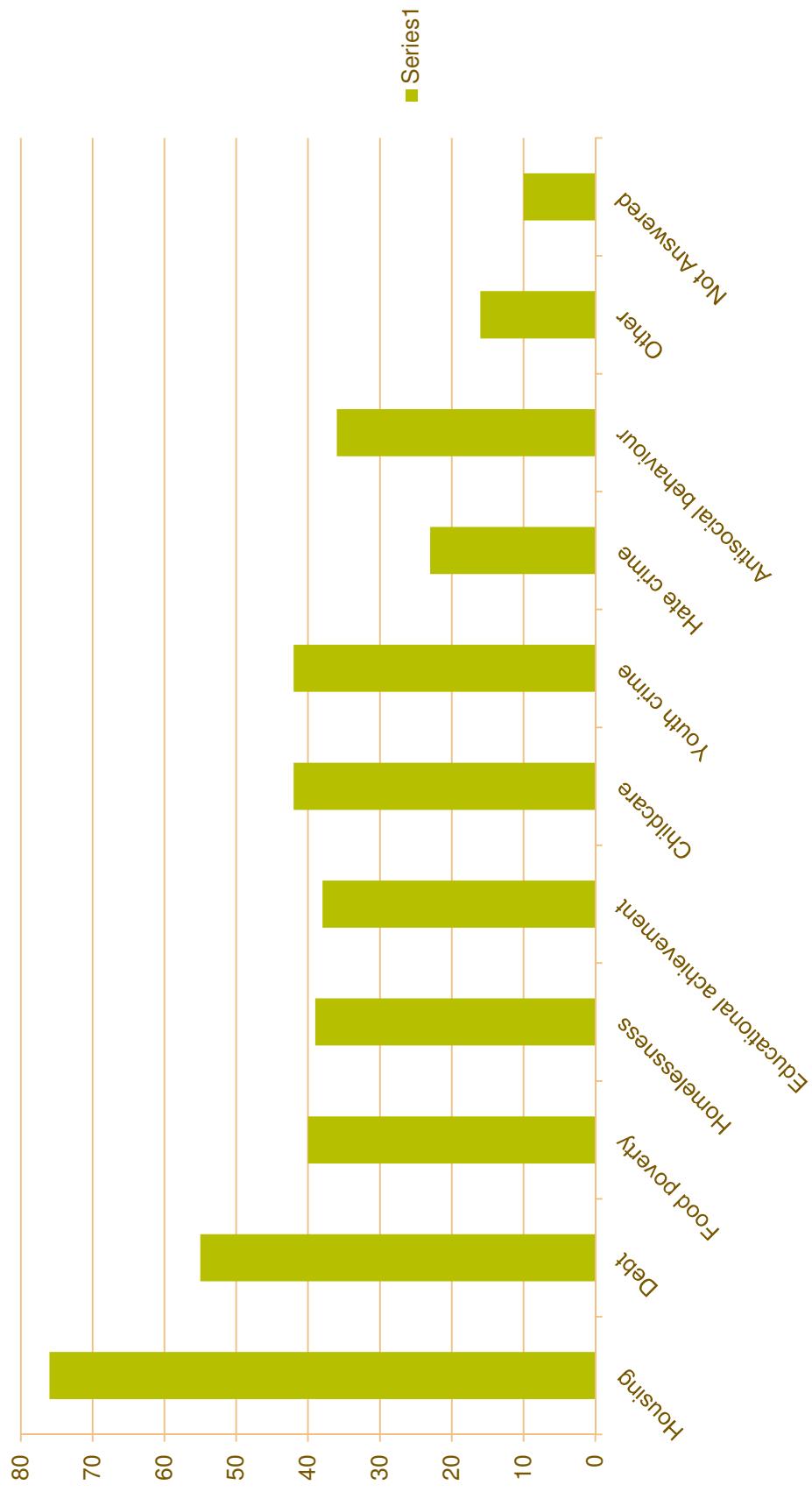
Premises is a challenge among nearly all branches of faith.

However, it's the biggest challenge among Pentecostal and Muslim groups,

Quotes re:overall policy

Theme	Quotes
Premises	Our premises have certain limits, such as listed status and limits on use of amplified noise
Policies and Procedures	Signage application for planning church signs was expensive and bureaucratic for small voluntary organisations. Parishes would like to hold outdoor services on Good Friday but have been prohibited from doing so although every other London borough of which we are aware allows them”.
Safeguarding	Safeguarding is a challenge’; training is needed for volunteer workforce
Parking	We have big issues with jammed streets making accessing the church very difficult due to bad and antisocial parking”.
Planning Processes	We would like to know what is council policy in relation to planning applications.
Other	No proper consultation before decision taken on issues

Challenges facing faith group congregations



Challenges faced by faith group members and those attending their services by area

Location	1st	2nd	3rd
Peckham and Nunhead	Housing	Debt	Food Poverty
Dulwich	Housing	Planning	Safeguarding
Camberwell	Housing	Educational achievement/Childcare	Debt
Borough Bankside and Walworth	Housing	Debt	Homelessness/Anti Social Behaviour
Bermondsey and Rotherhithe	Housing	Debt	Childcare

Top 3 challenges facing faith group members by branch of faith

Branch of faith	1 st place	2 nd place	3 rd place
Anglican	Housing	Debt	Childcare
Baptist	Housing	Debt	Food, homelessness, education achievement, childcare
Catholic	Housing/food poverty	Anti-social behaviour	Debt, homelessness, childcare
Methodist	Housing	Debt/homelessness	Food poverty/childcare
Muslim and Muslim other not stated	Housing	Educational achievement/anti-social behaviour	Food poverty/homelessness
Pentecostal	Housing	Debt	Childcare/Youth Crime

Summary

Housing and debt were among the biggest challenges across all faith groups.

Housing is biggest issue among all branches of faith except of the Catholic faith, debt is the next biggest issue.

NB: Sikh and Bahai faith were omitted from analysis as their respective responses of less than 3 each were too small for meaningful analysis.

In equal measure, housing and debt are the two biggest challenges by area, closely followed by food poverty, homelessness, educational achievement, childcare, youth crime and ASB.

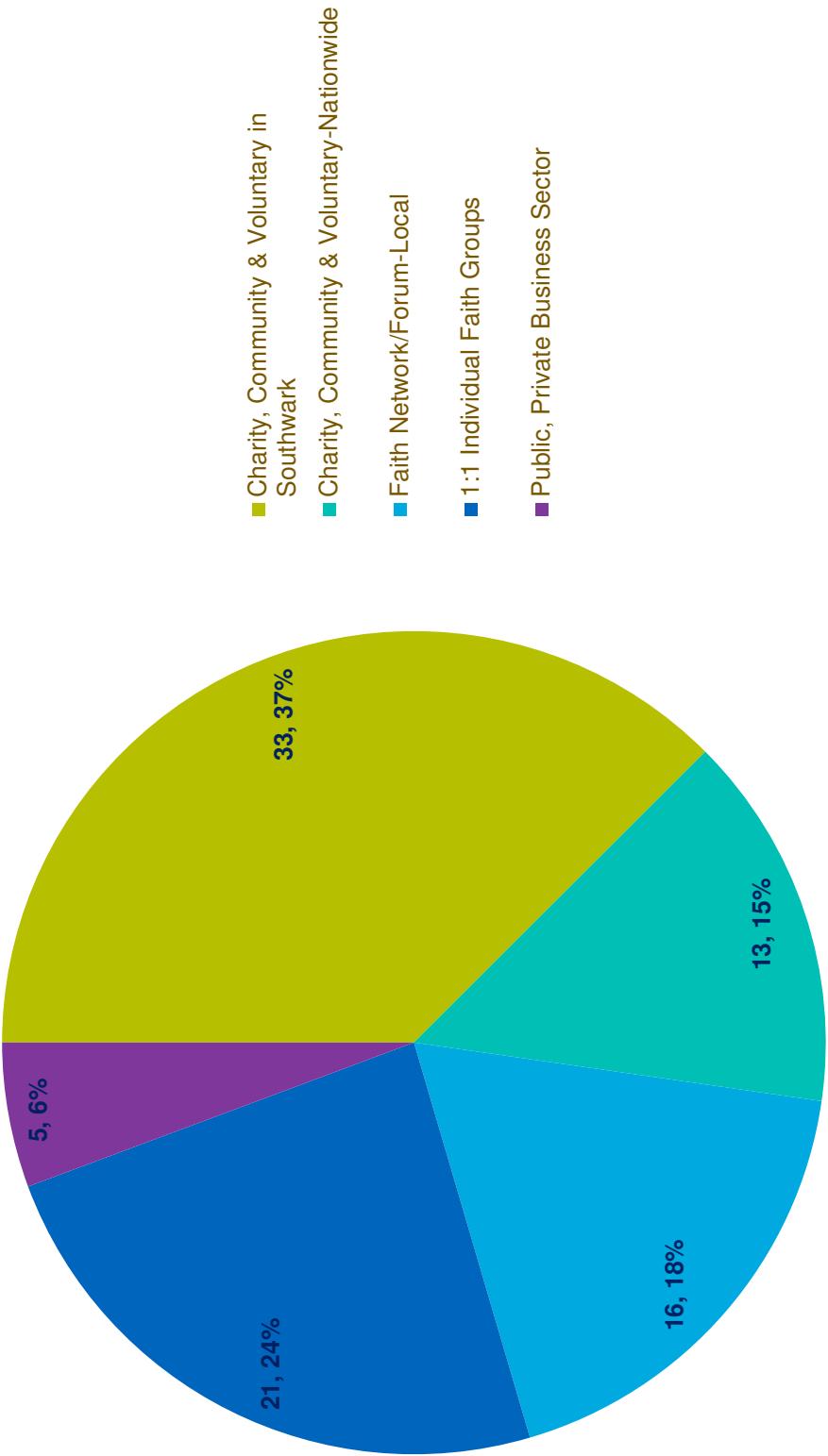
Contextual quotes:

Theme	Quotes
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether houses or flats to rent or buy, they [our members] just can't afford them. “..families of different ages and sexes living inappropriately live in same room”; affecting their children and young people to live close by; “Some young people are finding it difficult to leave their parental home, even after having married
Debt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regard to debt, there is concern about lack of access to affordable borrowing. Church members have signed up with the London Mutual Credit Union to address this
Childcare and Youth Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare is expensive and inflexible. • “Youth crime, is concerning on the part of parents about the danger of young people becoming involved with gangs and knife crime. “We’re setting up a parenting group as a forum for parents in the wider community to discuss the issues around this.” • Street violence and how they can young people stay safe. North Peckham and the Parish.. there is a great deal of suffering in this area of south London, and cuts have made huge impacts on youth provision - kelly park being an obvious one. One church member works directly in this area of youth crime with young people. Our congregation have experienced violent crime first hand.
Food Poverty & Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We collect food for those in need and financially assist those who are in poverty.

Benefits of being members of faith networks and forums:

Theme	Quotes
Cohesion, unity and Interfaith Activity	<p>“Learning to work together and respect each other through interfaith work is very important”</p> <p>“A sense of unity in diversity, genuine openness to people of all background, faiths, race or ethnicity”</p> <p>“It make life easy, build bridges among community members and bring cohesion in the community”.</p>
Networking	<p>“I meet lots of other good people and share ideas and food</p> <p>Coming together to positively influence the borough; They help to make links between neighbouring groups”.</p>
Access to Information and Communication	<p>“Dissemination of information. A forum to unburden yourself”.</p> <p>“They give us information on what's going on and give talks”.</p> <p>“Better information sharing and best practice” .</p> <p>“Better connections and information sharing”.</p>

Other faith groups or community organisations faith groups work with



Barriers faith groups have from working with:

other faith groups	
Of the 68 answers, it's hugely significant that 43 or 77 % of faith groups reported no difficulties working with other faith groups	
Information and Communication (5 or 8%) Top theme 1 of 3	“understanding how faith groups are constituted and operate”; being able to contact and brouch the subject of different faiths
Resources (4 or 7%) Principles and Ways of Working (4 or 7%) Top 2 theme of 3	“We’re very busy with our own activities, so do not always have spare time”; we’re a small religion but lack human resources; “information and time constraints”
Cohesion and Interfaith Activity (3 or 5%) Top theme 3 of 3	I’d like to set up links with Dulwich Muslim Centre”. “a mechanism for meeting other leaders from faith groups to promote interfaith work”

Barriers faith groups face working with:

the council
Of the 77 answers, it's hugely significant that 34 or 43 % of faith groups reported no difficulties working with the council
Information and Communication (16 or 20%) Top theme 1 of 3
Policy and Procedures (15 or 15%) Top theme 2 of 3
Premises and Resources (9 or 15%) Top theme 3 of 3

Barriers faith groups face working with:

the wider community and voluntary sector	
Of the 65 answers, it's hugely significant that 35 or 62% of faith groups reported no difficulties working with the wider CVS	
Ways of working (12 or 21%) Top theme 1 of 3	"It is a bit frustrating that some companies specifically exclude faith groups from being able to receive their corporate charitable donations"; ".time to establish relationships and finding opportunities to meet and connect"
Resources (5 or 9%) Top theme 2 of 3	"Lack of volunteers makes it difficult to expand our social action and social and economic development initiatives"
Access to Information and Comms (2 or 4%) Working with children and young people Top theme 3 of 3	Knowing who to speak to etc; "need for better connections"; "I think the voice of faith leaders could be heard more in how to prevent knife crime and youth violence and in the fight against terrorism and violence".

Key ideas working work with:

the council	
• 39% ways of working with the council	<p>“..faith communities can be one of the primary hubs for communicating with local community”.</p> <p>“faith communities have gained the trust of the people they service thus they can give a more accurate account of the problems and the causes that creates them”.</p> <p>“Southwark Citizens alliance is the most effective way of making long-term, effective changes and improvements within our borough”</p> <p>“Transform Southwark was set up 11 years ago to facilitate civic and social action networking...good to explore if it's time for a revamped version of these”.</p>
12 % children and young people	<p>“..Help young people make their ideas become a reality which would hopefully keep them off the streets and off trouble”</p> <p>“Would like to work with the council, to help support single mothers who are finding life challenging to cope with their children or teenage children – mentorship programs”</p> <p>“Assist with youth diversionary activities to combat gun and knife crime”.</p>
Access to information and Comms	<p>“More regular and consistent communication about what the council wants and offers”</p> <p>“Access to relevant information”; council to involve faith groups in more activities in the borough”</p>

Key ideas on working with:

other faith groups or networks	
51% ways of working with other faith groups	<p>“What we do like is to get to know other people really well, but find almost without exception that is best done through meeting and eating together, and working on joint projects. Networks without a purpose or meetings with an agenda don’t generally achieve the trust necessary”.</p> <p>“We would like to expand our network to work with new faith groups as well as continue to work with various faith groups to expand our seminars, sports days, and annual retreat”.</p>
21 % cohesion and inter-faith activity	<p>“A network of faith groups that could promote a coming together and foster and develop deep relationships ..”</p> <p>“An exchange program between these groups, to better understand these groups’ faith and customs/practices”.</p>
8 % access to information and comms	<p>“Opportunity, to learn more about other faith networks in area. Maybe Southwark has, if not facilitate multi-faith meetings on issues that affect us all which would both inform and provide opportunity for development of relationships”.</p> <p>“Regular support in providing information to faith groups about opportunities to support each other, work together and learn from one another”; “I need to understand how other religions operate and respect their traditions and beliefs”</p>

Key ideas on working with: the wider community & voluntary sector

57% ways of working with the council	“renewed partnerships”; assistance for people looking for employment; we would like to encourage more volunteers...”; “information about different organisation in which our members might be able to be volunteers and enrich their lives and experience”.
26 % Resources	“looking to set up holiday hunger, maybe a community Junk Food café”; “...need help with funding a coordinator to do the organising”.
17 % access to information and comms	“more advocacy support capacity”; “we’re a point of reference

Ideas for working together with other groups

Working with children and young people <p>"In the area of youth, there needs to be a more joined up approach to dealing with the challenges faced with this particular groups that cuts across all faith groups".</p>	Resources <p>"We have lots of ideas but need help with funding a coordinator to organise, publicise, admin support, getting permissions etc." .</p>
Ways of working <p>"Cultivate a culture of "satellite" venues, so where one organisation has a well-established and successful piece of work, it can be run in parallel in another organisation's premises to reach a wider target group"; "Spaces for inter-dialogues and sharing resources".</p>	Access to Information and Communication <p>"Having a view of events and activities including the need for life improving activities, safety and peace and facilities..."</p>

Information faith groups need to support what they do

Information about faith groups and other activities “..sharing information regarding activities and the issues each faith groups has to deal with can help faith groups to work together and become more effective. “useful to have a directory listing all the groups currently undertaking community work..serve[ing] as an inspiration to people who might like to replicate that or a similar service in their own context”.	Information about funding and community needs “How to access procurement and commissioning as we work hard with hard to reach groups with very little resources” “Create a platform [that] invites people to contribute financially or their unwanted [for example] jumble sale items” “Local funding opportunities” “Create a platform where everyone’s calendar of activities can not only be seen but can involve people to come together”.	Information about premises “New facilities” “Vacant premises information”
Information about policy and procedures “Regular briefing about changes to policies or procedures” “Planning, wellbeing changes that affect community; benefits, health” .		