

FAITH IN ACTION

WEST MIDLANDS MUSLIM
ORGANISATIONS COVID-19 RESPONSE



2020/21



West Midlands
Combined Authority

Mayor of the
West Midlands





**‘THE BEST OF PEOPLE ARE THOSE WHO
BRING THE MOST BENEFIT TO MANKIND.’**

SAID BY THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

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INTRODUCTION, MESSAGES & ENDORSEMENTS



‘WHOEVER SAVES A LIFE, IT WILL BE AS
IF THEY SAVED ALL OF HUMANITY.’ Quran 5:32

Green Lane Masjid Vaccination Centre

INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been put together in collaboration with a large contingent of Birmingham Mosques, Islamic organisations and businesses. It serves to document and celebrate some of the great work carried out by the Muslim Community in the West Midlands over the pandemic. It also acts as a source of sharing best practice and provides case studies for how faith communities can contribute to their communities and build trust.

"Oh mankind, indeed We have created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware." [Quran 49:13]



MESSAGE FROM MAYOR OF THE WEST MIDLANDS



ANDY STREET
MAYOR OF THE WEST MIDLANDS

The last 18 months have been truly unprecedented, and an incredibly difficult time for us all. Across the West Midlands many people lost their lives to Covid-19, and the grief suffered by friends, family, and communities remains very raw. My heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to all those who have lost loved ones.

But through all the pain and suffering brought on by the pandemic, communities across the West Midlands have rallied round like never before to help those most in need. In the Muslim community, for example, we've seen volunteers coming together to help deliver supplies, businesses realigning their work to support the NHS's needs, and mosques turning into vaccination sites and working with their communities to get as many people as possible jabbed and protected. Without these selfless actions, which have been replicated across all different communities in the region, we would most likely still be in the deepest depths of the pandemic.

This booklet, sponsored by the West Midlands Combined Authority, is a testimony to some of the inspirational work by the Mosques, organisations, and community groups led by your community. I hope it will serve as a means to help understand the social value and impact faith institutes can have, and how we can leverage the work of the West Midlands Muslim community as we move forward together in the road to recovery.

MESSAGE FROM ISLAMIC RELIEF UK DIRECTOR



TUFAIL HUSSAIN
UK DIRECTOR
ISLAMIC RELIEF UK

THE ROLE OF MOSQUES AND ISLAMIC ORGANISATIONS IN TACKLING COVID 19

Islamic Relief UK are honoured and blessed to be working with mosques, organisations, volunteers and the community in the West Midlands to help those affected by Covid-19.

Due to the pandemic, people have found themselves in vulnerable situations financially and emotionally, sometimes suffering from the virus itself and lacking essential support. Many have come together in the West Midlands to deliver food packs to the homeless, asylum seekers, low income

families, domestic abuse survivors and many others. They have also supported burials for bereaved families, helped those with mental health issues and financially supported people during this crisis.

The work in the West Midlands is an inspiration to all of us. This community continues to be a lifeline during the pandemic. We have also seen their huge generosity to raise phenomenal amounts of money in helping the most vulnerable in the UK and across the world.

They have come together in the most desperate time and I am truly moved and inspired by the huge outpouring of support for those in need.

We will continue to support the tireless and amazing work of local people, mosques and organisations in the West Midlands as they continue to save lives.

Thank you.

MESSAGE FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN COTTON

Over the last year, the pandemic has shone a very stark light on our society. It has reminded us of the fragility of life and extent to which our society remains a deeply unjust and unequal place. Yet, in the response to the pandemic, as we sought to protect the vulnerable and reach out to those in need, we also saw the very best of Birmingham.

I've always been struck by the fact that wherever you go in Birmingham, you can be sure of one thing: at the heart of every project to improve lives, strengthen communities or correct an injustice, you will always find people of faith taking a lead. Birmingham's Muslim communities and citizens have always been at the forefront of this vital work.

You are the volunteers running foodbanks and the business leaders helping to drive the city's economic recovery. You are the faith leaders providing comfort and support to those in distress and the key workers who keep our vital community services running. Your dedication, commitment and compassion has seen our city through these darkest of times. I know that your energy, vision and determination will lead Birmingham's recovery and help us to build a better future too.

Our Muslim brothers and sisters are deeply valued members of our Birmingham family. The enormous contribution of Muslim citizens to the city's civic, cultural, commercial and religious life has enriched every community. It will also be one of the essential foundations of the city's recovery and regeneration in the years ahead.

So, on behalf of everyone in Birmingham, I say thank you. Thank you for the work that you do to bring comfort, help and hope. Thank you for being our allies and friends in the important work that lies ahead of building a stronger and fairer city. I know that together, we can and we will, succeed.



JOHN COTTON
CABINET MEMBER – SOCIAL
INCLUSION, COMMUNITY
SAFETY & EQUALITIES AT
BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CASE STUDIES

‘THE BEST OF PEOPLE ARE THOSE WHO
BRING THE MOST BENEFIT TO MANKIND.’
SAYING OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

Green Lane Masjid Vaccination Centre

LOFT 25

PPE campaign with Green Lane Masjid and Community Centre (GLMCC)

As the virus continued to spread, frontline NHS workers were running out of basic PPE. Loft 25 with GLMCC volunteers, project managed an entire campaign

to produce **free PPE items**. This was distributed to NHS hospitals, medicals practices, care homes and funeral services. Distribution began in the Midlands, but as demand grew, deliveries were extended to London, Manchester, and other major cities to supply hospitals and care-homes across the country.



By the end of the campaign,
**£250,000 worth of
PPE was distributed
FREE**

Over **900 volunteers**
helped to sew garments,
deliver PPE, quality check,
pack and project manage



Million Masks Campaign

Following the PPE campaign, Loft 25 wanted to ensure that all remaining material was put to good use. They set out to create packs of material for people to sew their own masks. Material for **one million masks** was packed and distributed to several mosques around Birmingham, with GLMCC taking the lead once again. Mosques then distributed these masks to wider Muslim and non-Muslim communities.



GREEN LANE MASJID AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

COVID- 19 FUNERAL SERVICE

- Green Lane Masjid and Community Centre (GLMCC) joined forces with Central Funeral services at the height of the pandemic to jointly manage the huge funeral demand.
- During 2020 they saw a **370% increase in the number of funerals** taking place at GLMCC and by the end of the year had facilitated a total of 113 funerals.
- A cold storage unit was placed in the mosque car park that could hold an additional 30 bodies to cater for the drastic increase in Covid deaths.



MOSQUE CLOSURE AND REOPENING

- At the start of the pandemic in early March 2020, GLMCC convened a meeting with Birmingham mosques with Dr. Varney of BCC Public Health to gain a consensus on the closure of the mosques.
- GLMCC were one of the first mosques to close back in March 2020, helping to set an example to others. A joint mosques statement was issued with over 30 organisational signatories.
- Upon reopening, strict Covid precautions were put in place, including socially distanced prayers, extra prayer stewarding, mandatory face-masks, one-way systems, deep cleansing, sanitisers, multiple Jumua prayer sittings etc.

NEW ONLINE SERVICES

- Many services had to stop over lockdown. Some services were immediately moved online, including the madrasah with 400 children, 40 weekly educational college classes, free counselling and other services.
- Additional talks and conferences were delivered online with hundreds of thousands of views.

YOUTH CLUB

- Launched a new youth club aimed at those deemed at risk.
- GLMCC were one of the only youth clubs open in the West Midlands during lockdown.

WELFARE SERVICES

With hundreds of volunteers coming forward to help, new Covid services were launched to support the community:

COVID SERVICE 1 - HEAR4U LISTENING SERVICE

Teamed up with a local GP and counsellors to offer free CBT talk therapy for those in our community who were struggling with the stress of lockdown.



COVID SERVICE 2 - COVID-19 DELIVERY SERVICE

Emergency 7-day delivery service was launched to deliver food and medicine to the elderly and vulnerable who were unable to leave their homes.

COVID SERVICE 3 - EXTENDED FOOD BANK

Due to the high demand, the food-bank was forced to open daily with demand quadrupling. The mosque also arranged delivery of daily food parcels to those in dire need. Over 65% of recipients were non-Muslims.



COVID SERVICE 4 - COVID HARDSHIP FUND

We managed to secure grants and **distribute emergency funds to those facing financial difficulty** due to Covid.

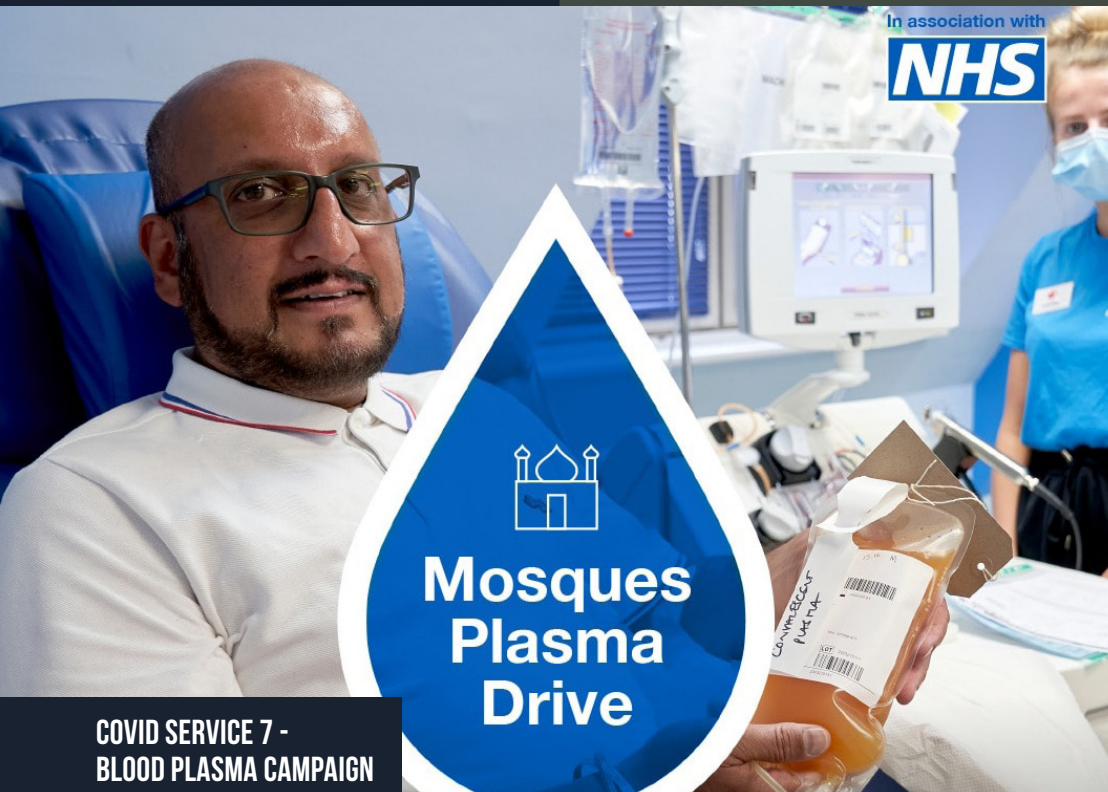
COVID SERVICE 5 - PPE CAMPAIGN WITH LOFT25

Hundreds of GLMCC volunteers supported and project managed an entire campaign with Loft25 to produce **free PPE for the NHS**. Deliveries were extended to London, Manchester, and other major cities.

The project distributed **£250,000** worth of **FREE PPE** to hospitals, medical practices, care homes and funeral services.

COVID SERVICE 6 - MILLION MASKS CAMPAIGN WITH LOFT 25

Following the PPE campaign, the first project with Loft 25, all remaining material was put to good use by creating packs of material for people to sew their own masks. Material for **one million masks** was distributed to mosques around Birmingham who then distributed these to wider communities.



COVID SERVICE 7 - BLOOD PLASMA CAMPAIGN

The NHS were in urgent need of plasma from the Asian community, so they approached GLMCC to **lead a Blood Plasma Campaign**. Through this campaign the NHS were using donated blood plasma for clinical trials to help treat Covid-19 patients.

VACCINATION CENTRE

GLMCC opened a Covid-19 Vaccination Centre in partnership with NHS England and Masters Pharmacy group in March 2021.

The busiest day at the vaccination administered 700 vaccines!

GLMCC produced videos and guidance surrounding the vaccines to dispel any myths and collaborated with British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA), front line doctors and Imams to provide fact-based information.



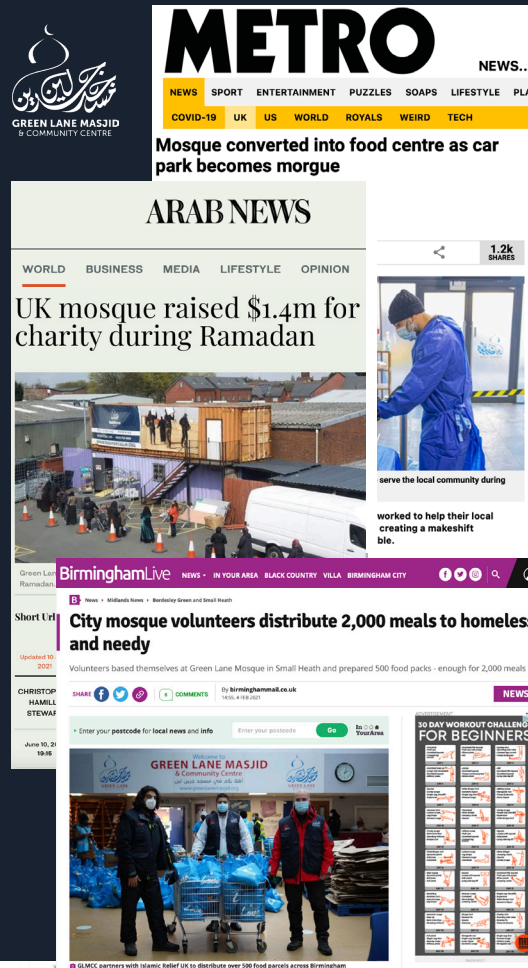
MEDIA AND LEADERSHIP

GLMCC aimed to be a voice of leadership, support and guidance for the community by:

- Leading on joint statements and forums
- Providing support and guidance for the Muslim community by delivering webinars
- Creating best practice templates and posters that were shared with mosques across the UK

Their media engagement helped to reflect a true account of the Muslim contribution over the pandemic. They appeared in dozens of media articles and TV/radio appearances, presenting moral and ethical guidance on topics such as:

- Preserving human life
- Patience through trials
- Accepting medical treatment
- Listening to experts
- Allah/God is the One who cures



- Early on in March 2020, a meeting was coordinated by Nassar Mahmood, station manager for Unity FM radio station and Vice Chairman of Birmingham Central Mosque, at Birmingham Central Mosque. The meeting was attended by representatives from the city's major mosques and Dr. Justin Varney, Director of Public Health at Birmingham City Council.
- At the meeting, an unprecedented resolution was agreed to temporarily suspend Friday prayers, all congregational prayers and mosque evening schools (madrasahs). This took place before the government lockdown.
- In addition to this, Unity FM continuously broadcast throughout the pandemic, supporting the community with key messaging and interviews from the West Midlands Police, NHS, Public Health and Birmingham City Council.
- Discussion panels was also run on the radio with front line doctors, medical practitioners and Muslim scholars to dispel myths.
- The station also supported fundraising efforts for mosques charities and organisations running covid projects.





Specialising in Serving the
Arabic Speaking Community

YEMENI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION IN SANDWELL

- Elderly luncheon club delivered meals to at least 50 homes every 2 weeks.
- Started an advice service over the phone, which offered one to one appointments.
- People engaged in online ESOL classes.
- Online counselling training was provided.
- Produced videos to encourage people to take up the vaccine as we joint the council vaccine champions.



Masjid Esa Ibn Maryam based in Hall Green was one of the first Mosques in Birmingham to host a mobile vaccination van, back in March 2021. Other activities carried out by the mosque included:

- 1,500 pocket prayer mats and 9,000 masks freely distributed to mosque attendees.
- Moved all teaching services online and live-streaming talks and prayers via their YouTube channel and via Zoom.
- Stainless steel trough sinks were installed outside the entrances so people could wash their hands upon entering
- Regular deep cleans of the Mosque and all surfaces.



COMMUNITY COVID SERVICES

Over the pandemic, the Muath Trust Covid Community Hub delivered essential provisions, befriending sessions, and safer wellbeing checks across Birmingham.

Delivery included 350 food parcels, 150 befriending sessions, 90 safer well-being checks, 250 essential provisions and more.

As with other services, the Muath Trust covid services were made openly available to all members of the public.



GUIDANCE, SUPPORT AND ONLINE SERVICES

The Muath IAG Service were also active in providing guidance on Covid-19, health, housing, benefits, wellbeing, and finances over the pandemic.

Friends for Healthy Life offered a range of support to over 50's and carers, including bereavement and wellbeing support.

Educational and employment services moved online, such as Islamic education for children, ESOL classes, skills for life and work workshops, basic life support etc.



COVID MESSAGING AND PRECAUTIONS

The Muadh Trust also supported covid messaging and track and trace efforts.

All service users and the congregation had to strictly adhere to covid precautions, including hand washing face masks, prayer mats, closure of wash areas etc.

Additional stewarding, registration and risks assessments were also employed.



VACCINATION CLINIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF HYGIENE ITEMS

The Trust also coordinated with NHS Birmingham to host a mobile Vaccination clinic in April and June 2021.

The Muath Trust Amanah (the Masjid), the domiciliary Care Services and the Home Care services provided a variety of safety and hygiene items to ensure the safety of their clients, worshippers, rest home residents and users. It is estimated, that the Muath Trust provided over 250,000 masks, 50,000 mats, 200,000 shoe bags, 50 liters of carpet disinfectant spray, 400 liters of hand sanitisers, 250,000 pairs of gloves for staff, carers in Domiciliary care and Home care and 115,000 aprons!

AMANAH MASJID  مسجد الأمانة

YOUR SAFETY MEASURES WHEN GOING INTO THE MASJID

 <p>Wash hands or sanitise them before and after going to pray. غسل اليدين جيدا أو استعمال المطهرات قبل وبعد الحضور إلى المسجد</p>	 <p>No elderly or sick people. كبار السن وأصحاب الأمراض المزمنة يفضلون بقاء منازلهم</p>	 <p>Read Qur'an from your phone or bring your own Mushaf. القرآن من الهاتف الإلكتروني أو إحضار المصحف الخاص بالجماعة أو إحضار المصحف الخاص</p>
 <p>Bring your own prayer mat and take it back with you. إحضار سجادة ذات الغطاء وعدم تركها بعد الصلاة</p>	 <p>Stand 1 metre apart, & avoid shaking hands. إبقاء مسافة لا تقل عن متر بينك وبين كل من حولك وتجنب المصافحة</p>	 <p>Bring carrier bag for shoes. إحضار كيس لوضع الأحذية</p>
 <p>Wear a face mask. لبس كمامة الوجه</p>	 <p>Do Wudhu at home. الوضوء في المنزل</p>	 <p>Avoid crowding at the entrance. عدم التزاحم عند دخول المسجد أو الخروج منه</p>

HOMELESS AND VULNERABLE SUPPORT

Homeless Shelter - As part of a WMCA funded winter night shelter with other mosques/masjids, As Suffa Institute were still providing accommodation to rough sleepers at the start of pandemic.

National Homeless Awareness Week - An online expert panel discussion and a series of educational posts all helped to raise awareness of homelessness.

Food-bank - 5,000 food parcels were delivered at the peak of lockdown, in partnership with other faith institutions/mosques. This was a coordinated effort across the Midlands including mosques/masjids in Leicester, Solihull, Coventry, Walsall and Birmingham.

Hot Meals Delivery Service - With the closure of the regular weekly soup kitchen, a delivery service was established, delivering 3,500 hot meals!

Hardship Grants - £500 grants were delivered to families facing food/fuel poverty. Almost £10k of zakah (Islamic charity to the poor) was also distributed to those facing hardship.



CLINICS AND SUPPORT

Wellbeing Clinic - In February 2021, a wellbeing clinic providing counselling services was established.

HR Clinic - an online service for anyone seeking HR advice was established, which was particularly useful for those seeking advice during the furlough scheme.

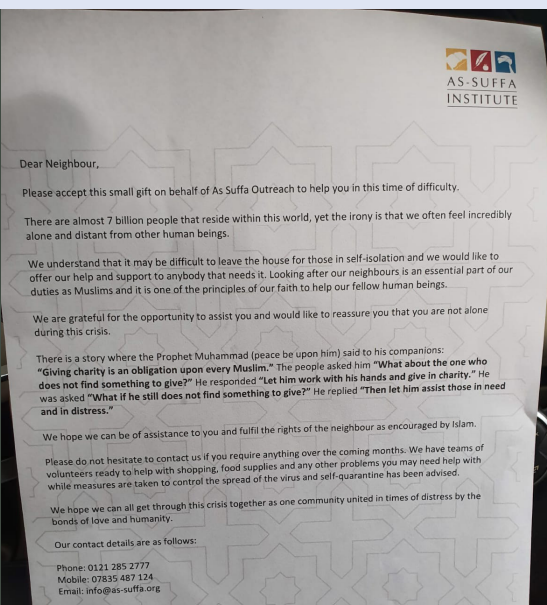
Online Legal Surgery - Online service for any legal matters.

OTHER SERVICES

New Roots prisoners support - During lockdown, unable to visit prisoners inside so all our support was on the outside.

Online Quran recitation sessions were regularly held throughout the pandemic.

Other activities – Regular services moved online, including education courses and Islamic workshops.



SOLIHULL MUSLIM NETWORK

- Solihull Muslim Network (SMNet) is a collective of faith institutions, set up in light of the pandemic in March 2020.
- A diverse volunteer base from people of all faiths and none, delivered food to refugee communities, Domestic Abuse Shelters, NHS Staff, the elderly and others in isolation.
- Individual food and hygiene items were collected via the HUB in Solihull. Referrals were received by at a main central point (As Suffa hotline) and two HUBS were created in Aston Birmingham and at the HUB in Solihull (this continues to be in operation and is now based at The Olton Project).
- Many agencies were engaged in referring people via As-Suffa and many helped to coordinate the efforts through referrals, including British Red Cross (Bham), Age UK, BCC and Solihull Council.
- At the peak, there were 20 volunteer drivers supporting over 2000+ people.
- Heavily involved in the Million mask Challenge and became a key distribution point for Solihull.
- SMNet and As Suffa received £5k through the LA Emergency Assistance Grant for food and essential supplies, including a hot meals program with Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid.





AL ABBAS MOSQUE



First UK Mosque to host a Covid 19 Vaccination centre!

Vaccination Centre - In partnership with Masters Pharmacy, the Mosque was able to host a Covid-19 Vaccination Centre and played a key role in encouraging the community to take up the Vaccine. The Mosque Imam - Sheikh Nuru Mohammed - engaged with the media, politicians and others in helping to increase the uptake of the vaccine, particularly amongst the BAME population.



Taskforces set up!

Al Wafaa Taskforce was a group of nearly 50 volunteers supporting the elderly and vulnerable via a Covid Hotline. This ranged from supplying Pulse Oximeters and Thermometers and shopping for those isolating. The team also provided meals to those in need and conducted a drive through food distribution.

Information on economic considerations for Businesses and Employees was also provided.

The Al Tabeeb Taskforce was a team of 12 doctors from within the congregation who provided regular updates in different languages to the Community about the evolving pandemic situation.

The Taskforce also trained the Covid phone operators in Mental Health and provided weekly online updates to the Community during the peak of the pandemic - in various languages

Other Al-Abbas Mosque Covid services

Covid Funeral Service – The mosque recruited younger volunteers to co-ordinate the burial process to allow older volunteers to shield. The mosque rented a freezer for the storage of bodies when death rates were rising.

Large amounts of PPE were acquired for the Burial Committee and shared with other communities who were unable to source them.

#we_are_with_you Campaign was launched with the Muhammadi Madrasah (under Clifton Road Mosque) to provide guidance for the well-being of families and children during the Winter Lockdown.



JAMI MOSQUE



COVID AND OTHER SERVICES

- Staff members shopped for households in isolation
- Delivered food to the needy and to homeless shelters through a food distribution programme.
- Hosted a mobile vaccination van on two occasions.
- Covid test kits were issued freely to the congregation
- Assisted in the NHS Plasma campaign by making announcements at Jummah (Friday prayer) and through social media.
- One to one online surgeries for counselling and well-being.
- Education services and courses were moved online from the start of lockdown.
- A separate provision was set up for the care and washing/ghusl of Covid deceased bodies and ensured appropriate PPE for all funeral staff.

MOSQUE SERVICES

- Regularly sanitised the mosque/masjid to protect the community and congregation.
- Utilised fogging machines to deep clean all areas, including the funeral area, classrooms, and offices. These machines were also offered to other mosques.
- Clear covid precautions were implemented in the mosque – face masks, shoe bags, one way access, socially distanced prayers etc.
- Daily calls to prayer were made online to keep people aware of prayer timings.





MASJID AL FALAAH

KOKNI MUSLIM ASSOCIATION BIRMINGHAM



- Distributed nearly **10,000 food parcels** to families. At its peak more than 100 parcels a day were delivered.
- Nearly **50 daily volunteers** to help procure, pack and distribute the food.
- Partnered with local stakeholders and partners like Birmingham City Council, The Active Well Being Society, Fareshare, Tesco, Asda and others
- Opened a food bank for anyone in need
- Every Friday and Saturday, provided **hot food to over 200 people**. Teams would go into Birmingham city centre to provide food to rough sleepers.
- Working with NHSBT and other mosques, we called upon on members of our congregation to support a **Covid Plasma Campaign** by the NHS. We supported a joint statement with 24 other Birmingham mosques to support the campaign.

- Mosque content and **classes** were moved online to spiritually help the congregation during the tough isolation periods.
- Created hundreds of hours content, which benefitted viewers around the world. This also helped to **convey Covid safety messages**, including podcasts, mail-shots, WhatsApp messages with video content etc.
- Created numerous media material for Covid awareness to help with NHS messaging against the pandemic. **Produced videos, posters, media bites** to help the council and hospitals by engaging the community to understand the importance of adhering to guidelines set by government. This ultimately helped our local community to reduce the number of infections and deaths.





MASJID AL FALAAH
KOKNI MUSLIM ASSOCIATION BIRMINGHAM



- **Listening and Help Service** - As Covid hit the social and mental well-being of the local community, a neighbourhood call service was set up, knocking on doors of those who were lonely, vulnerable or self-isolating during the pandemic.
- Organised **vaccination vans** to encourage the uptake of vaccinations in our area.
- Worked closely with the Council, other local Burial councils and funeral directors to meet the surge in demand for funeral facilities.
- **Supported more than 20 families** that needed financial support, allocate a sizeable budget for our local distribution.
- **Million Mask Campaign** – Helped in the campaign to distribute free kits for masks which were then distributed within the community. The idea was to encourage people to wear masks but also to make them.

- **Funeral services team** was upskilled and bolstered with a team of volunteers, working closely with the Council, other local Burial councils and funeral directors to meet the surge in demand. Demand trebled at its peak.
- The Mosque carried out **risk assessments** and implemented new measures including decreased prayer capacity, social distancing, registration, hand sanitation stations and free masks and prayer sheets for all worshippers.
- There was a dire need for the vaccination uptake to be increased within the area as there was a very low uptake. The mosque produced material, encouraged scholars to give both **religious and moral guidance** and worked with local partners to encourage the uptake.



PAIGHAM-E-ISLAM

BIRMINGHAM

PAIGHAM-E-ISLAM TRUST MASJID (UKIM)

Imam, Muhammad Sajjad Sahib delivered valuable advice and wellbeing support to the congregation throughout the pandemic.

He created targeted guidance videos on Eid and rules for reopening of the Masjid as well as encouraging everyone to be vaccinated and regularly tested.

Head of Volunteers Taj Mubarik helped to ensure the safety of the congregation through compliance with Covid-19 safety restrictions throughout the pandemic.



In March 2020 Kebire Trust initiated an emergency project which supported 400 families and over 250 NHS staff in three health institutions in Birmingham.

They also provided food parcels and essentials to vulnerable groups from ethnic minorities. During this challenging time, they also issued clear advice and guidance to the community.



- Distributed essential supplies to the most vulnerable during the initial lockdown and continued to support those having to self-isolate or who are facing financial crisis.
- Supported Interfaith briefing meetings with Birmingham City Council, working with other faiths groups to maintain the safety of our respective congregations.
- Worked closely with Birmingham City Council at the beginning of the pandemic to organise Birmingham wide Mosque briefings.
- Trained 20 Mosques on conducting covid risk assessments and carried out visits and assessments to review all necessary actions taken.
- Supported emergency services with 200 hot meals, including the WMP and NHS.
- Worked with partners to reach out to the homeless, providing food provisions to meet the needs of circa 200 users.



Public Health teams visiting the Balsall Heath / Sparkbrook area, distributing free LFD test kits.

30min Rapid Lateral Flow tests helped to find cases in people who may have had no symptoms but were still infectious.

- Provided the community with a sense of normality over Ramadan by providing hot iftar meals to anyone upon request and live streaming Taraweeh prayers (Ramadan evening prayers) and other programmes.
- Encouraged people to stay home over Ramadan, with live streaming of prayers and other programmes, including a women's show to stay in touch with our local community.
- Organised numerous myth buster Q&A sessions on COVID and getting vaccinated, bringing together leaders and medics from within the Muslim Community.
- Unique interfaith project supporting people through the grief of loss.
- Continued to support people with funeral arrangements and had a team of trained volunteers to support anyone in need. Their Kindness Project was a unique interfaith project supporting people of all faiths and served over 500 people.
- Organised online health and fitness sessions upon request of the local community, some feeling depressed and struggling with mental health.

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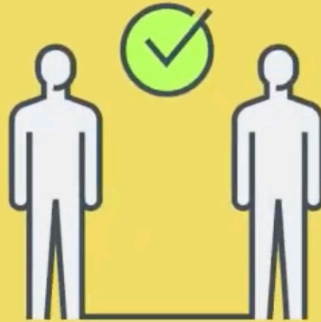
عمل کرتے رہیں



MEDICAL MASK



HAND WASHING



DISTANCE



SANITIZER

- Commissioned by Public Health (Birmingham City Council), our creative team were involved in creating a series of powerful animated video messages in different languages to reach out to the minority communities hit hardest by the pandemic. This reached approximately 35,000 online viewers.
- Employing a Community Guidance Officer to increase the range of accessible information for hard to reach and vulnerable groups, including engaging with health partners to get the most up to date guidance around COVID out to communities.
- Organised an online interfaith memorial service for all the NHS staff and local people who had passed away during the covid pandemic with over 500 attending online.
- Part of the interfaith forum set up by WMP to inform and advise on the challenges faced by faith groups during the covid pandemic.



Islamwise adjusted and moved their monthly talks online, and taught thousands of hours of one-to-one Quran lessons online to reverters free of charge.

They provided social support via WhatsApp groups, over the phone and email to new reverters struggling with their mental health during lockdown.

Many people required guidance and support with wanting to become Muslim so they distributed hundreds of copies of Quran translations and their "Tell Me" series of books across the UK.



HALESOWEN/DUDLEY YEMENI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



- Held Covid community awareness sessions on Facebook on how to protect yourselves and others, especially during Ramadhan.
- Put out a video on Facebook about exercising and staying fit and healthy during Covid.
- Put out a campaign video to support the NHS.
- Eid lecture on how to protect yourself from Covid.
- Guidelines and information were sent out to remind the community to stay at home.
- Walk in vaccination programme established for the community.
- Thousands of people have now benefited from their services.



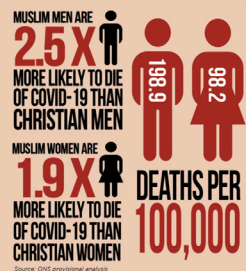
- Funded urgent ICU equipment at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. This allowed care for over 1,000 covid-19 patients across the site with a £30k grant.
- Islamic Relief provided £100k worth of critical food support to vulnerable people.
- Funded local partners Green Lane Masjid for the urgent burial services for Covid-19 deaths in the Muslim community in the West Midlands.
- £20k worth of donations funded food packs for BAMER (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee) asylum-seekers and destitute populations.
- Provided grants to families living in crisis so they had enough funds to meet their basic needs.

- Partnered with the British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA) to dispel misinformation and provide clear guidance to Mosques and Islamic organisations.
- Set up several individual Covid Response Groups to tackle the focus areas of Mosques, burials, and health.
- Published a Covid Report- "Together in Tribulation: British Muslims and the COVID-19 Pandemic."

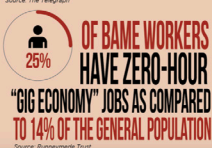
- Played a key role in marrying medical views with the practicalities of running multiple mosques throughout a large metropolitan area.
- Several dozen webinars were run to canvas input and educate the community on the sweeping changes taking place.

Together in Tribulation: British Muslims and the COVID-19 Pandemic

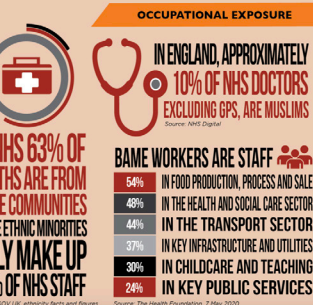
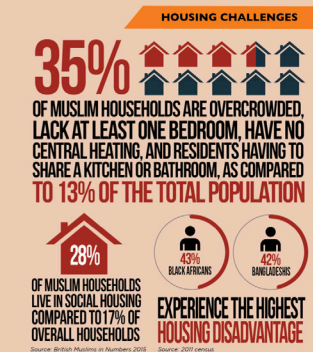
Trends in BAME and Muslim Deaths



Economic Impact



Possible Factors Leading to Higher Risks in Muslims and Ethnic Minority Communities



8 Steps

mosques to safely come out of lockdown

ctions are removed due to increased vaccination rates, it is important Muslim community adapt the generic government guidance for our nities, our increased risk as predominantly ethnic minorities and lower vaccination.

Review risk assessment

- * Speak to local public health
- * Local vaccination rates
- * bit.ly/mcb8stepsriskassessment

Volunteers

- * Keep Covid safety officer
- * Keep volunteers for crowded events (e.g. Friday prayers)

Entry Requirements

- * Avoid if Covid symptoms
- * No temperature checks
- * No age restrictions

Building adjustments

- * Open wudhu, toilets, racks
- * Own prayer mats optional
- * bit.ly/mcb8stepswudhura

5

Ventilation

- * Ensure good ventilation
- * Wall/ ceiling fans are ok
- * No AC if recirculating internal air

6

Face masks

- * Not mandatory, but we would highly encourage as mosques are indoor crowded locations.

7

No Social Distancing

- * Removed for congregational prayers. Consider encouraging during Nafl prayers.

8

Education & vaccination

- * Encourage congregation to consider vaccination
- * Educate - pandemic not over



**MUSLIM STUDENTS HOUSE (MSH)
IN COLLABORATION WITH MUSLIM
ASSOCIATION OF BRITAIN (MAB)**



MSH prepared risk assessments and set up a Covid team of staff, doctors, and lawyers.

Communication with the MSH community took place via WhatsApp and Facebook.

During Ramadan, MSH moved services online. Quran Study classes were streamed over Zoom and daily content was put out over Facebook.

Masks, social distancing, and hand sanitisers were maintained in line with risk assessment when the MSH reopened.

Volunteer stewards were present at every prayer to ensure people adhered to the rules.

Two vaccination days were held in 2021 at the MSH, in coordination with the Birmingham & Solihull CCG NHS team and GPs local to the MSH.



**GET YOUR COVID
JAB AT THE
MUSLIM
STUDENTS HOUSE**

Open to all over 50s, 18-60 with an underlying health condition and healthcare workers/carers!

Sunday 21st March
2-6pm

Drop in on the day or register via link
<https://tinyurl.com/msh-covid-jab>

517 Moseley Rd
Balsall Heath
Birmingham
B12 9BX



- Opened up additional spaces to allow for social distancing. In Ramadan, the masjid/mosque accommodated up to 1000 worshippers per night.
- Attendees were provided with free masks and prayer mats. Social distancing was enforced with a one-way system and marked prayer areas.
- The madrasah was moved online to enable students to continue learning.
- Liaised with Public Health Birmingham, in conjunction with other mosques, to ensure a co-ordinated response to rapidly changing situations.
- Regular talks and briefings given to the congregation on Covid-19 safety precautions and vaccination.
- The masjid utilised medical practitioners from the local community along with doctors from the British Islamic Medical Association [BIMA] to communicate safety messages to the community, whilst also coordinating with the Muslim Council of Britain.

mend

- During lockdown there was a serious concern about spikes in domestic violence. MEND's Birmingham working group worked tirelessly in collaboration with Birmingham Central Mosque to conduct a weekly webinar series to support women in need of self-development and empowerment.
- This project was complimented by the development of the Phone Listening Service to ensure that no one suffered in silence.
- MEND donated to the Coventry based grassroots organization, Funeral Services UK. The organisation also used MEND's burial strategy document to aid their burials process.
- There was a need for Muslim communities to access information on how to carry out burials, perform ritual washing of the dead (ghusl), obtain PPE, and a range of other related issues. In conjunction with the National Burial Council, MEND produced a website (www.burial.mend.org.uk) that brought together information on these issues. This was accessed over 11,000 times and has been an invaluable resource for bereaved families.



- Distributed food parcels to the NHS staff during lockdown.
- Distributed Qur'an Cubes to Covid Patients in Hospitals.
- Provided an 'Ask the Imam' service over on phone.
- Iftar packs (Ramadan food packs) were distributed for to the community and NHS staff.
- Lead Imam supported NHS staff with food hampers and thank you gifts during the lockdown.
- Visited patients at end-of-life stage in hospitals.
- PPE was provided to all key workers at the mosque.
- Disposable prayer mats/mussallahs, facemasks, carrier bags & sanitizers were provided for all musallies (worshippers).
- Food-bank support to some 120 to 150 individuals and families - Muslims, non-Muslims, single parents, hostel residents etc. Introduced food pack delivery services to some of the most vulnerable who were shielding, lacked transport etc.
- Regular sanitizing of the mosque.
- Provided covid funeral prayer services for the community.





CENTRAL JAMIA MOSQUE GHAMKOL SHARIF

- The Trustees of Ghamkol Sharif Mosque, in preparation of the predicated deaths by Public Health England and the Government, placed its focus on the supporting families and their loved ones during one of the most challenging experiences. The loss of a loved one due to the virus.
- Ghamkol Sharif utilized its car park space by **established a temporary mortuary** with cold storage facilities that could cater for approximately 150 deceased at any one time.
- Within this temporary facility there was additional space for carrying out the religious obligation of performing Ghushl (full-body purification) and an outdoor **Covid-19 safe funeral prayer area** for family members.
- The purpose of this was to alleviate the pressures on Birmingham City mortuaries and allow the dignity of Muslim families to have their loved ones on the grounds of the Masjid.
- These efforts allowed the mosque and families to fulfill the religious obligations of Ghushl and Salat al-Janazah obligations on the grounds of the Mosque/Masjid with greater ease than attempting to perform this at the local cemetery.
- This simple service **helped families and friends during the bereavement process** and eased their distress at an exceedingly difficult time.
- In addition to this Ghamkol Sharif facilitated **training for volunteers** with qualified practitioners on the proper use of PPE.





BRITISH ISLAMIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Promoting #RamadanAtHome campaign

- Produced a series of videos on mental health, Healthy Ramadan and a longer 19-episode series for self-care.
- Developed guidelines along with the NHS Muslim Network to aid staff who were fasting. Working with the BBC Asian Network, made several videos highlighting guidance on how to safely observe Ramadan in seven languages.
- Ran a social media campaign encouraging people to pray at home.

Promoting #EidUnderLockdown campaign

- In association with the Preston COVID Response Group, videos in seven different languages were produced on social distancing and restrictions during Eid.

Community Engagements

- Worked with the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) on weekly briefings and to produce guidance on the reopening of mosques (translated into several languages).
- BIMA produced a short video to help deal with the fake news circulating at the time.

Burial Community Response Group (CRG)

- Played an active role in the Burial Community Response Group (CRG). Summarised H&S guidance around the ritual washing (ghusl) of deceased covid victims, producing a short animation.

3 Hadith/Aya to protect against

CORONAVIRUS

(COVID-19)

1

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

Cleanliness is half of faith. [Muslim]

- The virus is spread by saliva from infected people sneezing, coughing, and it landing on your eyes, nose or mouth
- Wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds frequently



2

NIGHT MO

Be Part of the

Learn how M
Community M
60 beds that v

Delivered by

MENTAL HEALTH DURING THE PANDEMIC. WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

UNITING TOGETHER IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORONAVIRUS

Inspired Minds - For confidential, non-judgemental support
inspiredminds.org.uk/

MCAPN - Providing support for Muslim mental health practitioners and a Muslim Counselling Directory
www.mcapn.co.uk

MYH - Free, confidential and non-judgemental support for anyone who needs it. Call, email or chat on our website
myh.org.uk

Sakoon - Individual, couple, family counselling and Accredited Training
www.sakoon.co.uk / 07943 561 561

BIMA - to get medical information on mental health
info@britishima.org

MWNUK - run a helpline offering faith and culturally sensitive information, advice and support
www.mwnhelpline.co.uk / 0800 999 5786

MindworksUK - provides Psychological support to individuals, couples, family & groups
www.mindworksuk.co.uk

Approachable Parenting - provide parenting training and support
approachableparenting.org.uk / 0121-7738643

TUESDAY 7th APRIL @ 8pm
ONLINE
OPEN TO ALL. REGISTER NOW
<http://bit.ly/BoltonCMS>

Addressing Community Covid Concerns

- BIMA made a series of 6 videos on End of Life (also translated into Arabic). These were taken up by various hospices.
- With issues around hospital visitation rights and funeral prayers for families of loved ones with Covid. BIMA created infographics to help the community.
- A simple advice sheet was produced for mosques and worshippers, in collaboration with the MCB regarding facemasks.
- BIMA worked with the MCB to produce infographics on latest government guidance.
- Long before Covid-19, the BIMA Health Promotion team was involved in community drives to educate the community on cancer screening and organ donation. Through liaising with various experts and Islamic scholars, as well as NHS Blood and Transplant.

Mental Health Community Response Group (CRG)

- Brought together Muslim mental health charities to discuss, share resources and ideas.
- Organised a monthly online panel seminar, as well as producing posters and infographics.
- Produced a series of videos on Domestic Violence translated into different languages by the Muslim Womens Network.
- Regular Radio Ramadan show on Positive Minds with MCAPN.
- Inspired minds 'Look after yourself' PDF covid edition produced



BRITISH ISLAMIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION



COVID-19

Can Muslims take Lateral flow/ PCR tests in Ramadan?

It is likely that Muslims will need to take Covid PCR tests or lateral flow tests during Ramadan. BIMA has reviewed fiqh opinions from different schools of thoughts.



Taking the Covid-19 PCR or lateral flow tests **does not invalidate the fast during Ramadan** as per the opinion of the majority of Islamic scholars.

- Avoid iftaar in mosque
- Avoid shared food platters
- Keep windows open
- Consider elderly/at risk praying at home, especially if not had 2nd vaccine dose >2 weeks ago
- Imams & Congregation should be wearing masks
- Consideration of length of Taraweh
- Bring own water bottle (ideally not plastic)

<https://britishima.org/operation-vaccination/hub/statements/#VAX>

FASTING & COVID VACCINATIONS

1 Can I take the Covid-19 vaccine whilst fasting?

streamyard.com is sharing your screen. [Stop sharing](#) [Hide](#) **ed in the UK does not invalidate the fast**, as per the opinion of Islamic scholars. Individuals should not delay their Covid vaccinations on the account of Ramadan.

Safeguarding BAME communities on the healthcare frontline

- Following publication of the PHE report, BIMA coordinated a letter with over 30 BAME medical and nursing organisations to outline concerns and demand urgent action to safeguard the lives of BAME staff and communities. This was sent to Matt Hancock and Kemi Badenoch and is part of their ongoing work with BAME colleagues in racial and faith justice in healthcare. They also contributed to the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority's response to Covid in BAME communities.

British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA) guidance on the performance of ghusl for deceased persons with suspected or confirmed COVID-19

There is significant confusion around the issue of ghusl for deceased COVID patients. While it is understood that ghusl is the normative obligation for any deceased Muslim according to an overwhelming body of scholarly opinion, a range of theological views have come out both advocating for and against ghusl during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of this information leaflet is to highlight the medical considerations that should help inform decision making for those responsible for administering religious burials for deceased Muslims.

Q1. Why is this a concern when Public Health England (PHE) states that washing and handling a deceased COVID-19 body is low risk?

A. With a lot of misinformation and public anxiety prevalent, and a range of practice across different countries¹⁻⁶, we consider it is necessary to elaborate on the practical considerations and specifics of ghusl practice to ensure it can safely be carried out during this pandemic. This guidance is drawn up in consultation with relevant specialists.

Q2. If the risk of contracting COVID-19 from a deceased body is low, then what is the problem?

A. While there is currently no evidence to suggest that the risk is significant, please bear in mind that low risk is not the same as no risk and so it is important to take adequate precautions when carrying out a ghusl.⁷

British Islamic Medical Association INSPIRE

We support Muslim healthcare professionals to achieve excellence. Our members benefit from our national events, webinars, career support and more.

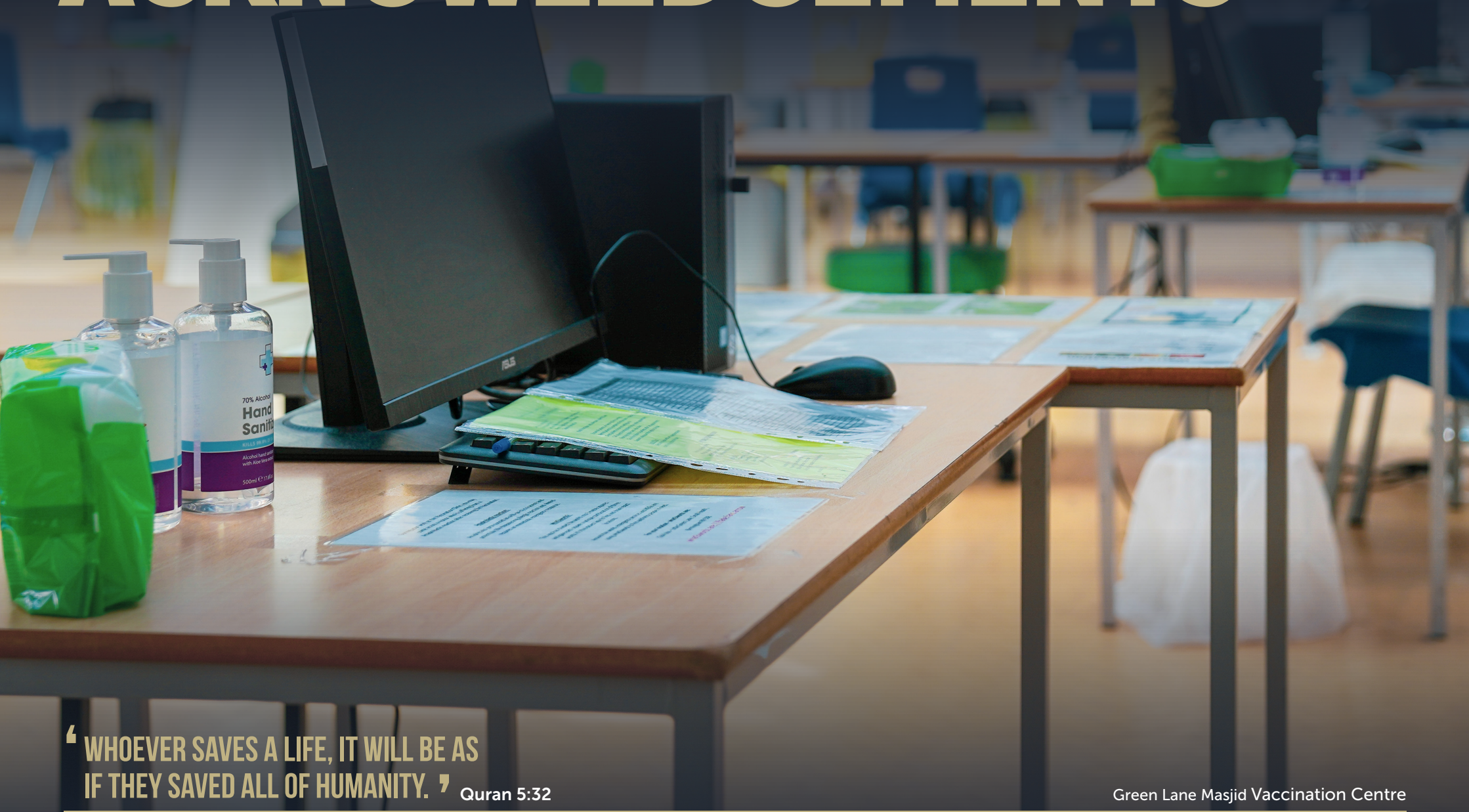
Operation Vaccination

- BIMA members undertook several webinars, Q&A sessions, and radio/TV interviews, reaching thousands, as well as producing infographics and up to date information dealing with common questions regarding vaccination, to help people make informed decisions.

Profile of a BIMA West Midlands Key worker:

- Dr Adeel Riaz is a GP who worked in the West Midlands as a COVID home-visiting physician, whilst working at the 'COVID Red-site' in Aston. Over the last 6 months he delivered over 40 webinars and radio/TV interviews for BIMA, encouraging an improved vaccine uptake among Muslim and ethnic communities. The activities were delivered in English, Urdu, and Mirpuri. His work benefited thousands of people.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



“WHOEVER SAVES A LIFE, IT WILL BE AS
IF THEY SAVED ALL OF HUMANITY.” Quran 5:32

Green Lane Masjid Vaccination Centre

MESSAGE FROM POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Last year, the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic provided many different challenges for all of us. They included the tragic loss of life, serious physical and mental ill health, disruption to the education of children and young people, the loss of employment and financial security and much else besides.

In the face of this adversity and challenge, Mosques, Islamic organisations and faith communities demonstrated the courage, determination and resilience to step forward, face adversity and meet those challenges. In doing so, the Muslim community has embodied its values through positive and constructive community work.

Whether that be by way of providing meals to the homeless, food bank users, asylum seekers, refugees and those suffering domestic abuse, offering facilities to the NHS for use as a vaccination hub in the heart of the community or all of the many other ways detailed in the Faith in Action Booklet. You have been at the forefront of this selfless work and are all to be commended for that.

I know you will continue your valuable contributions to communities across the West Midlands in many different ways, because you are the best of people who bring the most benefit to man and woman kind.



SIMON FOSTER
POLICE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR
WEST MIDLANDS

IN CLOSING...

This booklet is in no way an attempt to be an exhaustive reflection of the response from the dedicated and selfless West Midlands Mosques and Islamic organisations, but to serve as a snapshot of some of the Islamic civil society organisations that make up the rich tapestry of West Midlands communities.

We are reminded by the beautiful verse in the Quran – ‘whoever saved a life, as if we have saved the life of all of mankind.....’ The WM Mosques and Islamic organisations have all been driven by the essence of this verse and we recognise that we must continue to serve our communities in the best way possible as illustrated by the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). Please join us in the road to recovery post Covid as we rebuild back fairer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This booklet was produced and designed by Green Lane Masjid and Community Centre (GLMCC).

GLMCC is a leading UK mosque situated in the heart of Birmingham, serving the community since 1979. Operating from its award-winning grade II listed Victorian building, GLMCC fulfills its mission of inspiring, educating and serving through its youth services, educational college, outreach work, welfare services, international humanitarian wing, as well as its fully functional mosque.

For more information about their work and services visit www.greenlanemasjid.org



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Charity Number : 1125833

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

LOFT 25

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BIRMINGHAM
CENTRAL MOSQUE



BRITISH ISLAMIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION



CENTRAL JAMIA MOSQUE
GHAMKOL SHARIF



mend



MCB
The Muslim Council of Britain

SOLIHULL MUSLIM
NETWORK

AS-SUFFA





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