STATEMENT FROM WORCESTERSHIRE INTERFAITH FORUM ON CURRENT OUTBREAK OF RACISM AND RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE.

We, the members of Worcestershire Interfaith Forum representing members of the Muslim, Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Christian faiths are united in condemning recent expressions of violent racist views and religious hatred which appear, in the minds of a minority, to have been legitimised by the results of the recent referendum. This is not a judgement on the result of that referendum but a deep concern for this particular consequence and the effects on the core values of our usually open, hospitable and tolerant nation. At a time when many are feeling anxious for the future we appeal to people not to let fear breed resentment and hatred. This is a time for us to be building bridges not walls. The welcome we have given people in the past is something of which we can be proud. It is heart breaking to see people, who have made Britain their home and brought up their children here now feeling unwelcome, unsure of the response of a stranger in the street. As members of different faiths we stand for love and compassion and condemn intolerance in all its forms. We all belong to one human family in which every human being deserves respect and dignity. We strongly resist anything that threatens this. Three weeks ago over 100 people of different race, faith and culture met together in Worcestershire on a sunny afternoon and shared in a picnic - a vision of what we seek to realise in everyday life.

Owain Bell, Malik Mohammed Fayaz, Mary Austin

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