

# Place for Hope: Creating Possibilities

within conflict, change and challenge



Annual Review 2016-2017

Loving God  
you are our inspiration,  
our compass,  
as we navigate  
conflict, change and challenge.

Through times of transition,  
open our eyes to visions of your kingdom  
of justice and peace;  
open our minds to new ideas  
that may take us out of our comfort zone;  
open our hearts to possibilities of hope  
in the midst of despair.

God of new life,  
create through us  
places of hope  
and of possibility  
today and always.

Amen.

Annual Review

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# Creating Possibilities

...a letter from Ruth



In Place for Hope we know that conflict is part of life, and that it can be both creative or destructive. Our experience tells us that the way we approach conflict or change can make a real difference to lives, to relationships, to communities. We remain committed both to accompanying faith communities through times of change and challenge, and to equipping and training leaders in our faith communities with the skills to navigate conflict and difference better.

We know that recognising and naming conflict is a key life skill which many of us have not been taught; hosting open and honest conversations is a skill to be learned. We also know that in times of difficulty, it can be easy to swing between anger and avoidance. It helps to have the skills and confidence to engage well with difference and conflict, especially if we are entering a season of change. Testimonials tell us that our work supports leaders, congregations and faith communities to work through tension and conflict and look for the creative possibility conflict brings.

As we approach our 10th anniversary year in 2019, we continue to build on our experience supporting faith communities through times of change, conflict and transition. While exciting opportunities lie ahead as we develop our partnership working, this Annual Review looks back over our achievements in 2016 - 2017.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support for our work.

**Ruth Harvey, Director**



# Creating Possibilities

...an overview of our year (2016-2017)

## Our work

Our second year as an independent charity, from April 2016 – March 2017, saw an increase in demand for our services, with Practitioners working on a total of 64 support cases and delivering 33 training workshops throughout Scotland and Northern England.

We delivered:

- Support for groups in facilitating important or potentially difficult conversations
- Awareness raising talks, workshops and lectures at events and conferences
- Coaching for church and faith community leaders
- Tailored training for groups
- Set training for church and faith community leaders

You can read more detail about our support cases and training programmes on pages 8-11.

## Our community

Having expanded our Practitioner team from 18 to 23 to include a wider representation of denominations and faiths, 2016-2017 saw Place for Hope able to offer a fully ecumenical team, skilled in navigating difference and accompanying groups through times of change across a range of Christian denominations and other faiths.

Our Practitioner team is supported by a skilled staff team of 5, professional Supervisors, a Board of Trustees and two Patrons who bring wisdom and strategic leadership to the charity.

More details about the Place for Hope community can be found on page 20-21.

## Our partners

Partnership working is a core value in Place for Hope: we know we are not alone in the area of peacebuilding. We are grateful to have built up strong working relationships with a number of Christian denominations, the Church of Scotland being our key partner. Beyond the churches, we also work closely with church agencies, faith networks, and peacebuilding communities in Scotland and further afield, focussing on shared tasks and projects. In all of this partnership working we value the trusting relationships that have emerged, and the quality of work and depth of thinking that then unfolds.

More detail of our partnerships can be found on pages 12-19.

## Our future

Looking ahead to 2019, we are delighted to be planning an international conference on peace, reconciliation and the transformation of conflict. The conference will focus on bringing practitioners, theologians, teachers, and those experiencing and living with conflict in faith contexts together in one place. Through lectures, workshops, training, worship and time for reflection we hope to connect people interested in the art of peacebuilding, and those who have experienced reconciliation, while strengthening partnerships between peacebuilding networks, and church and faith communities. By then it will be 10 years since the launch of Place for Hope at the 2009 Aviemore Conference as a response to the 'Report on Congregational Conflict'. We look forward to celebrating a decade of creating possibilities in response to conflict and change.



# Creating Possibilities

...for people experiencing and preparing for change, challenge and conflict

Our churches and faith groups face change, encounter difference and experience conflict. In times of change or challenge, we know that practical support can help.

When people contact Place for Hope looking for support, we take the time to listen to them tell us about the challenges they face before deciding with them on the appropriate service. We offer:

- Support in facilitating important or potentially difficult conversations
- Awareness raising talks, workshops and lectures at events and conferences
- One-on-one coaching for church and faith community leaders

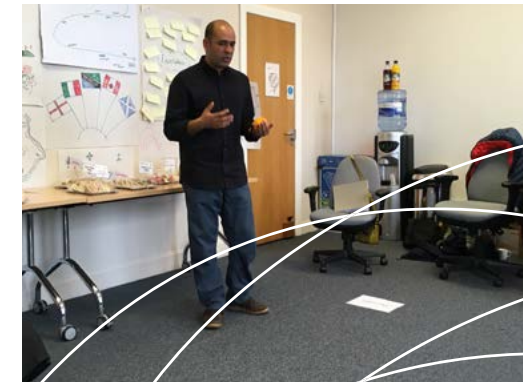
Our training programmes are designed to empower and equip people within faith communities to be peacemakers.

This strand of our work helps people to be better equipped to navigate conflict, and to use those skills and tools to support others. Our training programmes offer:

- Set Training for individuals
- Tailored Training for groups

## Set training delivered 2016-2017

- Growing through Conflict Foundation
- Growing through Conflict Further Skills



## New programmes 2017-2018

- Bullying and Harassment
- Scripture, Spirituality and Conflict



For more information, please visit: [www.placeforhope.org.uk/training/set-programmes](http://www.placeforhope.org.uk/training/set-programmes)

# Creating Possibilities

...through statistics and feedback

From 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017, our Practitioners worked on 64 cases (17 of these cases were carried over from the previous year) and delivered 33 training workshops – a total of 97 activities.

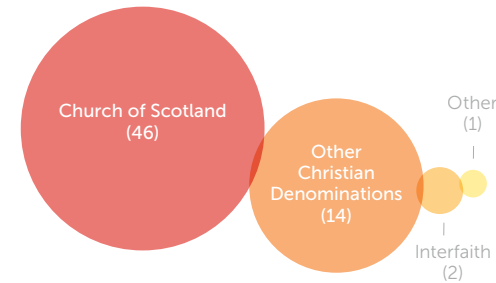
79 people attended our set training programmes.

Key themes consistently emerge in our work. Sometimes what is presented as the primary theme reveals, in the course of conversation, a secondary theme. These themes are:

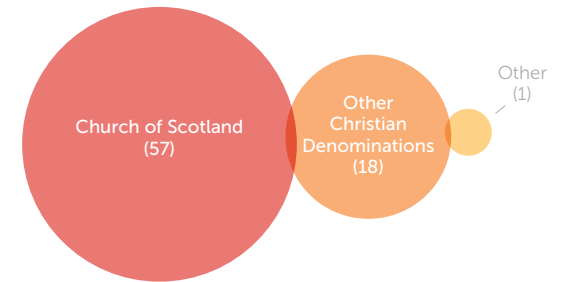
- Managing change in vacancies/transitions
- Patterns of ineffective or bad behaviour
- Personnel, staffing or teamwork issues
- Managing change in linkages and unions
- Bullying and harassment
- Mis-match of expectations
- Need for upskilling or training of leaders
- Theological issues

Other themes include organisational change; facilitated conversation after a community trauma; community dialogue; buildings closure.

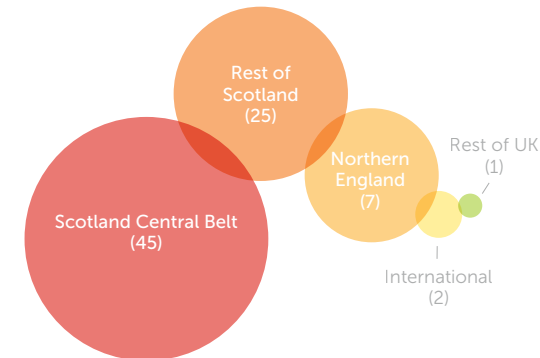
Denomination/faith of casework and tailored training



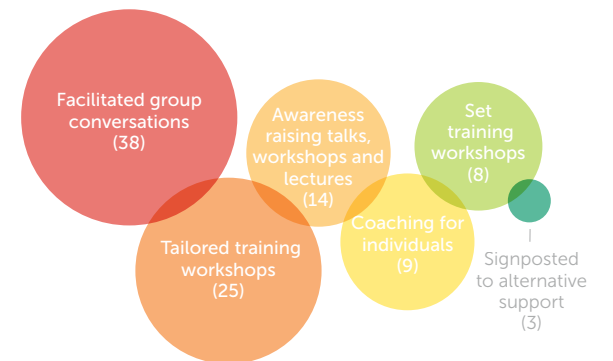
Denomination/faith of individuals in set training



Location of case work and tailored training



Types of service



# Creating Possibilities

...working in partnerships

## Church of Scotland

Our relationship with the Ministries Council of the Church of Scotland remains strong and collaborative. As our longest-standing partner, we are grateful to the Church of Scotland for their vision and support in setting up this work, and their continued investment in the work which enables us to offer our core service without charge (at the point of delivery) to Church of Scotland ministers, congregations and presbyteries. This includes training, coaching and helping groups navigate change or conflict. In the year 2016-2017 we were able to work with 46 Church of Scotland groups, and develop new training specifically for Supervisors, Probationary Ministers and Staff teams.

Our Growing through Conflict programme continues to attract a large number of lay and ordained leaders, who then take skills for conflict transformation into their church and wider communities.



The Church of Scotland

*"I find the work with Place for Hope engaging, interesting and rewarding. While conflict is to be expected, I believe we need to find ways to promote and encourage understanding of differing views and experiences, and to work towards reconciliation and transformation wherever possible. Place for Hope offers this to people who find themselves in these challenging circumstances."*

**Brec Seaton, Practitioner for Place for Hope**

*"You got us on the right trajectory, helped us have civilised, humane and safe conversations and taught and demonstrated to us truly Christian methods and attitudes for handling conflict situations."*

Participant in group facilitated conversation

## Creating Possibilities

...working in partnerships

### Positive Working Together - Methodist Church UK

Positive Working Together outlines the commitment the Methodist Church is making to respond to bullying, harassment and conflict. We are delighted that Place for Hope has been commissioned to provide a series of training programmes to meet this need, including a new 6-day Conflict Transformation programme which will be piloted in 2017-2018.

The first phase of our work equipped skilled leaders in core aspects of conflict through delivery of the Growing through Conflict programme. We offered a series of 'train the trainer' sessions in a number of regions in the UK to Methodist Church staff and leaders who will subsequently disseminate this day throughout the Methodist Church.

Phase two focusses on the dynamics of bullying and harassment within the church, and is in development for delivery in early 2018. Two further sets of 'train the trainer' sessions will be available for Methodist Church staff in a new 1-day course, Bullying and Harassment: moving towards dignity and respect. 2018 will see a third phase of delivery for District Reconciliation Groups in the advanced Growing through Conflict programme.

The Methodist Church





# Creating Possibilities

...working in partnerships

## In Wi' the Mix

We have been delighted to work closely with the Conforti Institute and Faith in Community Scotland over this last year as we deepened our work in community dialogue in response to sectarianism and division, building on our work on the impact of Marches and Parades, and developing a Community Dialogue resource.

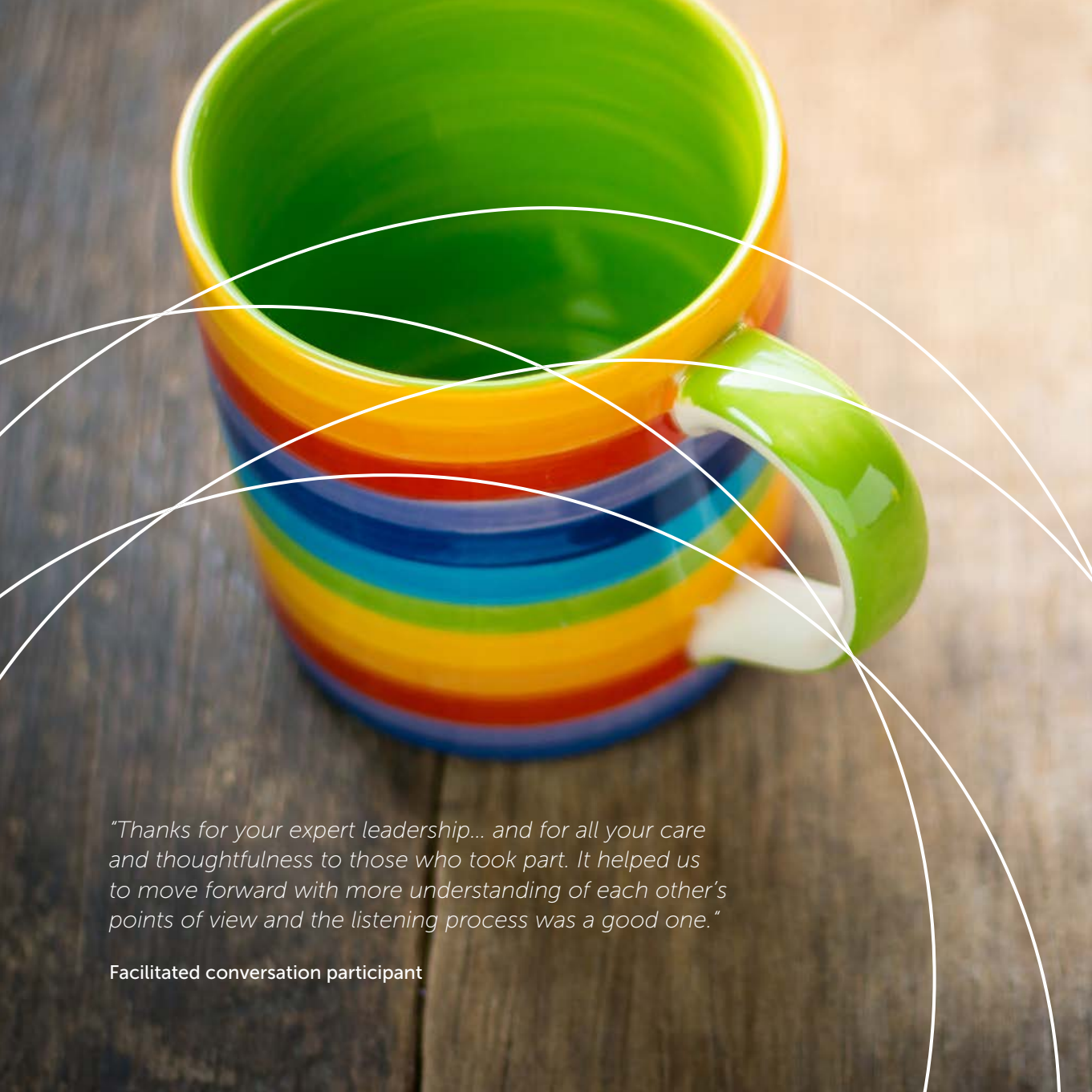
We now have a network of Community Dialogue practitioners, able to host conversations about division in a gracious and robust way. The 'In Wi' the Mix' Inspiring Unity programme, developed with the Craighead Institute and the Ignatian Spirituality Centre ([www.faithincommunityscotland.org/in-wi-the-mix-resources/](http://www.faithincommunityscotland.org/in-wi-the-mix-resources/)) is designed to support local church and community groups. Our partnership work concluded with a church leaders gathering in the spring of over 30 national and local church leaders.

We are grateful to the Scottish Government for their funding of this project. While this phase is now complete, we remain "a partnership of three faith inspired organisations committed to working together to nurture dialogue between people living and working on the margins as a tool for personal and social transformation."



*I felt that your contribution was immense – deeply sensitive to the people there and crucial to the way we moved forward.*

**Facilitated conversation participant**



*"Thanks for your expert leadership... and for all your care and thoughtfulness to those who took part. It helped us to move forward with more understanding of each other's points of view and the listening process was a good one."*

Facilitated conversation participant

# Creating Possibilities

...working in partnerships

## Just Peace Partnership

This network of 7 faith-inspired organisations hosts the Peace Tent at the annual Solas Festival ([www.solasfestival.co.uk](http://www.solasfestival.co.uk)). In 2017 we ran workshops on dialogue, scripture and conflict, and embracing difference for small and large groups.



## Spirituality of Conflict ([www.spiritualityofconflict.com](http://www.spiritualityofconflict.com))

A network of 5 peace-focussed agencies from across the UK and Ireland, this partnership, inspired by the Corrymeela Community, is building a website dedicated to reading the gospel texts through the lens of conflict and reading conflict through the lens of the gospel texts. Two of our Practitioner Team are actively involved in generating new material for this resource.



# Creating Possibilities

...within our team

As a community of people committed to the art of peacebuilding, we value the contribution of everyone involved with Place for Hope, and seek to enrich these gifts.

Our community is dispersed throughout Scotland and northern England. Staff and volunteers work from home, coming together within the central belt of Scotland for regular staff meetings and bi-annual CPD. Staff use cloud based technology and video conferencing to communicate well and work collaboratively.

## Practitioner team

To deliver our services, we are privileged to have a highly trained, multi-denominational and multi-faith team of 23 volunteer Practitioners who have expertise in mediation, training and facilitation, and work in pairs. Drawn from diverse backgrounds, each member has a personal faith and is dedicated to the art of 'navigating conflict and hosting group dialogues.' We deeply value and affirm the great skill and time commitment our volunteer Practitioners offer to make the work of Place for Hope possible. Training, Continuing Professional Development, and supervision ensure that our Practitioners offer a consistent and high-quality of service.

## Staff team

Practitioners are supported by our staff team:

**Natalie Barrett**, Communications and Client Care Manager

**Ruth Harvey**, Director

**Abdul Rahim**, Lead Trainer, Positive Working Together Programme

**Neil Wykes**, Administration and Finance Manager

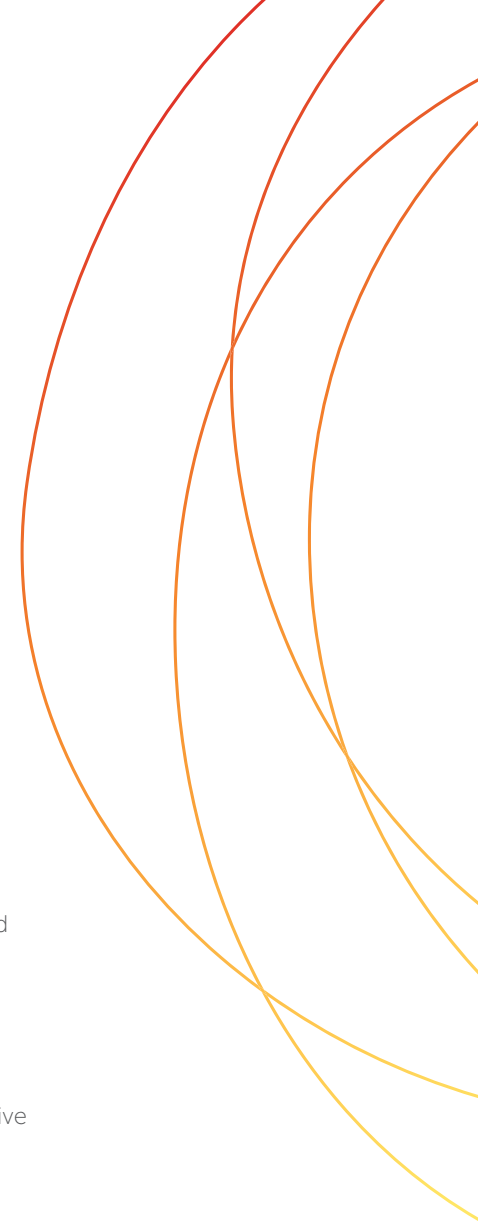
**Helen Boothroyd**, Business Development Manager  
(commencing January 2018)

## Trustees and Patrons

We are grateful to our Trustees, who develop strategy, provide governance and oversee staff support, and our Patrons who offer wisdom, companionship and connections to help shape, endorse and promote the work.

## Consultants and Service Providers

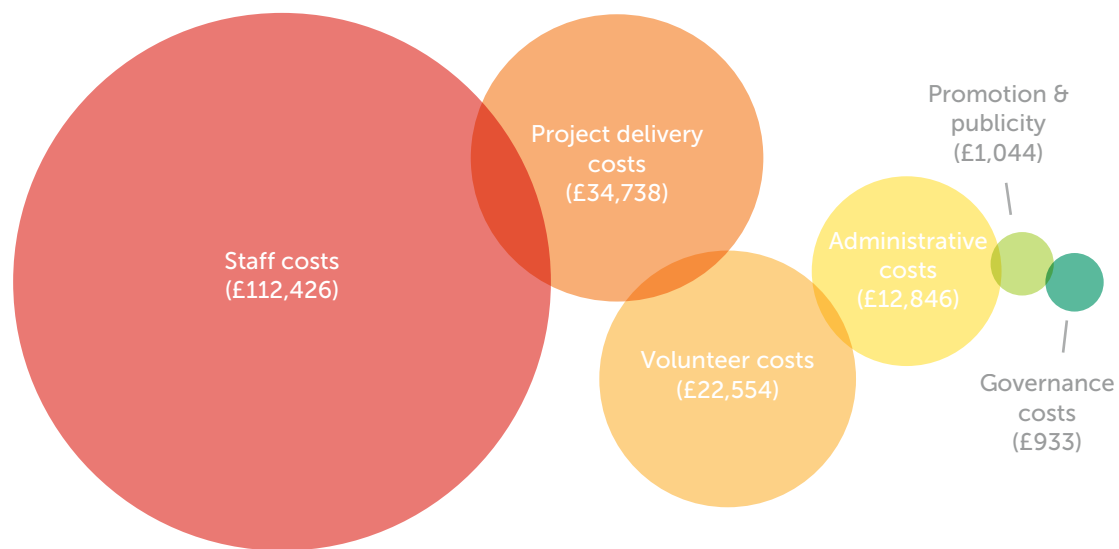
As a small charity we rely on consultants in the areas of Human Resources, Accounting, Communications and some core administrative tasks. We remain grateful to all who support us in this way.





# Creating Possibilities

...with our resources



Our full annual accounts can be found at: [www.placeforhope.org.uk/about/key-documents](http://www.placeforhope.org.uk/about/key-documents)

*We all came away enriched, better informed and challenged by what we heard, with much valuable information to use and pass on.*

Training Programme participant

# Creating Possibilities

...with you

## Help your community in crisis

If you are aware of conflict or difficulty within your faith community, and would appreciate some support, please get in touch and see if we can help.

## Nurture your community

Encourage your church or faith group to host a community dialogue. Invite us to deliver a workshop or training session.

## Develop your skills

Join one of our learning programmes to help you understand and navigate conflict.

## Stay Connected

Join our Place for Hope Peacemakers Network, visit our website and follow our social media channels to receive news about upcoming events, training and helpful articles.

## Be a champion and enabler

Please help us promote peacebuilding and the work of Place for Hope by telling others about us.

## For more information or to join our mailing list:

[info@placeforhope.org.uk](mailto:info@placeforhope.org.uk) | 07884 580 359 | [www.placeforhope.org.uk](http://www.placeforhope.org.uk)

 @PlaceforHope  @PlaceforHopeUK

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Place for Hope receives funding from the Ministries Council of the Church of Scotland to provide specific training and support. Place for Hope is available to work with different denominations and faiths. Costs may be applicable.