

The History of Exeter Mosque Teachers Notes

This powerpoint presentation was produced by Mona Hassan and Nazima Khan. It is aimed at all key stages and ages, and is especially relevant for RE and local History.

Notes on the slides:

Number	Picture	
1.	Picture of new mosque on York Road	Introduction
2.	Exeter university	Exeter university welcomed Muslim students to hire a hall for Friday prayers during the 1970s. People from all around the world came to pray, including the Middle East, Africa, Egypt, Malaysia, Sudan and Nigeria.
3.	Qur'an	Local Muslim businessmen also prayed at the university, and celebrated Eid with the students in their restaurants. In 1976 both Muslim students and local businessmen got together and formed a committee of 17 people. They decided to fundraise locally and internationally. The group was led by Brother Hassan (still active in the mosque) who owned the Maharaja restaurant in St Thomas and Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu. He was at that time a Chemistry research student, and is now Secretary-General of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation.
4.	15 York Road	The committee was successful in raising the funds and bought this house by auction for £17,500. It was officially opened on 11 th September 1977 under the name of The Islamic Centre of South West. The council put a restriction on the amount of people in the building -at that time there were about 80 people worshipping there.
5.	Sister Fatma being interviewed by Nazima Khan	The third Imam was Muhammad Saeed, from Sudan. His wife Fatma created a Muslim women's group, and took the lead in organising conferences and talks for women. This was a kind of <i>halaqa</i> – Muslims sitting in a circle to discuss Islamic issues. She and the women's group also visited other local towns like Torquay and Plymouth to raise awareness of Islam among non-Muslims.
6.	14 York Road	Because of the restriction on numbers, they bought no 14 (next door) in 1995 for more space. They could now accommodate 120.
7.	Three Huts	In 2000, St Sidwell's school was rebuilt. They had an old swimming pool, dining hall and library that they didn't need. The County Council offered to sell it to the Islamic Centre, which they happily accepted, after more fundraising. Some of the previous University students were involved in the fundraising, including Sultan bin Mohamed Al-Qasimi, the ruler of Sharjah. The school library was (on the left) divided in half- for the women's prayer room and the Mosque library. The dining hall (on the right) was divided and used as a kitchen and men's prayer room. The swimming pool (at the back) was used as an overflow prayer room and for Eid and other celebrations.

8.	Mosque opening	Although these new buildings were useful, the community still wanted a purpose-built mosque. So they consulted the Muslim community on design and the type of facilities. An architect, Abdul Salaam was hired, and made a design. Permission from the Council was obtained, but there weren't enough funds to complete the building. Before the permission ran out, they needed to have some building work completed, so a gate was built in 2000, which started the process. More funds were raised and the building work continued. The building was formally opened in October 2011. The picture shows (from l to r) Muhammad Saeed (3 rd Imam), a representative of the Sultan of Sharjah, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu and Brother Hassan.
9.	Main prayer room for men	The inside of the mosque is very beautiful, reflecting traditional Islamic design - very simple and clean. The white lines on the carpet show where the men should stand. In the picture the Imam is showing how Muslims pray
10.	Women's prayer area	Muslim women usually pray at home. However on Fridays (which is the special day for Muslims) women come to the mosque, meet their friends and pray in the special room upstairs. They can see the Imam and hear the Friday <i>Khutbah</i> (sermon) through the <i>mashrabiyya</i> screen. Usually there will be 15-20 women here for Friday noon prayers. There's also a special room for the children.
11.	Cover of Pitts book	Islam is not new in Exeter. The links go back hundreds of years. See the link below on the Devon County Council exhibition "Discovering Islam in Devon". In 1680s, local man Joseph Pitts experienced the Islamic world and returned to Exeter to write a book about it. Find out more elsewhere on the Telling our Stories website.
12.	Thank you	

Further resources on Islam

Exeter mosque website

<http://www.exetermosque.org.uk/>

All kinds of resources on this site

<http://www.exhibitionislam.com/>

Animated video on the 5 Pillars of Islam

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikVGwzVg48c>

In 2001, Devon County Council put together an exhibition called "Discovering Islam in Devon". The materials can be found online here:

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/print/index/cultureheritage/libraries/localstudies/lstatabase.htm?url=etched/etched/100311/1.html>

If you would like Mona or Nazima to come to your school to share more information about Islam and the Exeter Muslim community, please contact the Global Centre at 17 St David's Hill Exeter EX4 3RG, tel: 01392 438811 e: info@ourstoriesexeter.co.uk