

## The Shap working party on World Religions in Education



### Alison Seaman

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In the early 1990s I decided to leave my teaching post in SE London and came to work with Alan Brown and Julia Jones at the National Society's RE Centre in London. I knew of the Centre's involvement with The Shap Working Party (I'm not sure I realised quite *how* involved it was) but soon it became clear that The Centre played a significant role in the life of Shap, and vice versa, and the rest, as they say, is history.

At this time, the RE Centre was in Kensington Square, West London, and my strongest memory of my first summer there was of piles of Shap calendars and journals stacked up in the Centre's meeting room waiting to be packaged and posted.

The RE Centre later moved to Westminster and as well as continuing to provide administrative support for the work of Shap, the Working Party would often hold its meetings there. It was during this period I was invited to join the Working Party, initially as editor of the Journal and later working with David Rose to establish Shap's new venture, a pictorial calendar.

I have so many memories of Shap; I used to joke I could write a book about the people, the funny stories, the extraordinary situations in which we found ourselves. One phone call to a faith community to check their festival dates brought the response, "I don't know...we just use the Shap Calendar". Primarily, it was a privilege to meet and work with people who had contributed so much in the world of religious education and on a personal level, had inspired and sustained my interest in world religions.

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