

# Revealed: Extremist Islamic preacher hosted foster care workshop

From the [over a Christian child placed in the care of devout Muslims](#).

The imam hosted a workshop for would-be foster carers just months after the High Court ruled him an “extremist Islamic speaker ” who had “promoted and encouraged religious violence”. His mosque, the Lewisham Islamic Centre, was attended by the killers of Fusilier Lee Rigby. . .

The event was organised on behalf of the London borough of Lewisham as part of a drive to find more Muslims willing to foster children.

The disclosure comes amid a growing furore over the decision by crisis-ridden Tower Hamlets, another London council, [to place a five-year-old girl in the care of two Muslim households](#). A council source said the borough had a shortage of non-Muslim carers with whom to place Christian children. In contrast, most councils have a shortage of Muslim families to provide foster care for children of Islamic heritage.

Michael Nazir-Ali, former bishop of Rochester, said: “It is quite clear that birth parents retain the right to a child’s religious beliefs and, in any case, guidance to foster parents requires that they give attention to a child’s cultural and religious identity. “At the very least there’s been a violation of that requirement.”

Lewisham Islamic Centre was chosen as the venue for a workshop “on the importance and need of foster carers in the Muslim community” in March this year. A photograph from the event posted on the mosque’s website shows the gathering being

addressed by Shakeel Begg, the imam.

Mr Begg had just a few months earlier lost a High Court libel case against the BBC which accused him of promoting extremism. Mr Justice Haddon-Cave, ruling in the BBC's favour, described Mr Begg as a "Jekyll and Hyde character" and "an extremist Islamic speaker who espouses extremist Islamic positions".