4 EASTERN EYE October 14, 2011 www.easterneye.eu

## EDL duo get prison time

TWO members of the English Defence League (EDL) are be-ginning year-long sentences after attacking a mosque and two Asian-run businesses. Steven James Vasey, 32 of

Darlington and Anthony Don-ald Smith, 24, of County Dur-ham, attacked the Nasir ham, attacked the Nasir mosque in Hartlepool, spray-ing the letters EDL and NEI (North East Infidels) along with the slogan "no surrender" and images of poppies and the St George flag on the eve of the Muslim festival of Eid.

They also sprayed similar graffiti on a shop, which had a brick thrown through a window, and a guest house, which are both owned by an Asian businessman. Taxi driver Smith

was arrested the next day.
Messages on his mobile
showed him planning with
then-girlfriend Charlotte
Christina Davies, 19, of Aylesbury and Vasey. Smith, Vasey,
and Davies all admitted conspiracy to commit racially aggravated criminal damage at Durham Crown Court.

Davies was given a 12-week sentence, suspended for a year, and 200 hours' unpaid work.

## 'Fake' robbers

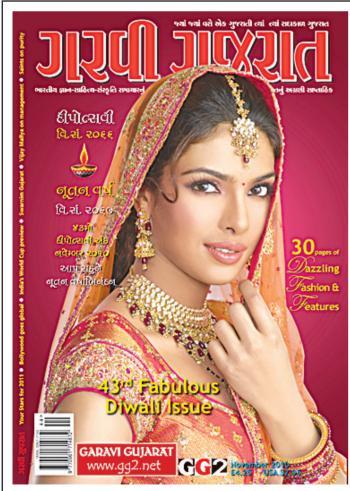
target family
ROBBERS posed as UK Border
Agency (UKBA) officers to steal
gold from a family.
The burglary happened last
Thursday (6) when six or seven
white men in their early twenties arrived at the property in ties arrived at the property in Chesham, Buckinghamshire.

The men told the owners they were from the UKBA and had to search the property. Af-ter the men left, the owners discovered credit cards, cash,

passports and gold stolen. Anyone with information should call 0845 8 505 505 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



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## JEWS AND MUSLIMS COME TOGET

Khan admits there

is a general antipa-thy between the two

groups often exacer-bated by events in the

"The antipathy is usually ignorance, and as soon as you come

Middle East.

by IMRAN CHOUDHURY

A GROUNDBREAKING group is aiming to bring British Muslims and Jews together and break the barriers created by conflict in the Middle East.

By focusing on issues of shared interest such as business, they hope to overcome mutual suspicion. The Muslim Jewish Forum of Greater Manchester holds in-

terfaith events every month to help the two communities to come together.

They will be holding a Business Networking Group on November 20 at the Manchester Conference Centre in a bid to get Muslim and Jewish businessmen working together to form new ventures.

They also have a Lawyers &

Accountants Group and regularly hold women's events.
Councillor Mohammed Afzal

Khan and Jonny Wineberg both from Greater Manchester, are the co-chairs of the forum.

Khan (right) established the forum in 2004 along with the late Henry Gutterman. He told EE: "We keep hearing about all the heatility taking along in the Middle hostility taking place in the Middle East and political problems there, but we thought if you want to solve some of these issues, we

have to talk.
"So the best way to do this is to have a venue or an organisation where we can talk together.

closer to each other, you realise that we are all human beings and the common humanity joins us together."

Khan said the forum generally tries to

focus on issues where the groups can come together in a common cause, and there is much locally they can agree to work together on.

"We have agreed to disagree on the is-

sue of Israel and Palestine. We live here, we need to focus here, we need to see how we need to work together here, how we can help one another and help society at large," he said.

Wineberg (*left*), who joined as the co-chair in 2007, said it's ironic that the Is-

lam and Judaism are so closely linked, yet Muslims and Jews are so far apart.

He told EE: "There is no faith closer to Judaism than Islam. We stem from the two sons of Abraham. We have similar beliefs across a range of matters, from birth to death, and we need to know each other better to improve the way we view each other.

"The media has, for many years, portrayed Jews and Muslims as opponents and I wanted to do something to change this. The fear that has been created has meant that far too little education of each

others faiths has happened in school and even less for adults.

Wineberg added: "The communities have also not associated together, which, again, has meant too little opportunity to learn about each other."

learn about each other."

He added that there are many circumstances where individuals from the two communities do meet, partic-

ularly in business but also through

sports like cricket.

"These give us the opportunities that we are looking to build on to try and improve relations,"

said Wineberg.

For more infomation, go to www.muslimjewish.org.uk