



FINISH

TIMEWISE



Sangh Mail

HSS(UK)

Sewa Special

Supporting Local Charities

December 2023

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Editor's Note

"You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty."

– Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2, Verse 47

Sewa (selfless service)

is the ultimate service—being able to recognise other's problems as our own and supporting them in every way possible, without the expectation of anything in return. This is one of the key *Sanskars* (values) of HSS(UK).

HSS(UK) is dedicated to engaging in selfless service in our local communities, supporting local charities and organisations, creating a valuable impact in society. 2023 was a fantastic year packed with Sewa initiatives, covering a range of activities, including fundraising and dedicating time towards bringing a positive change. This special edition captures just some of the activities that have been completed across the country and we will continue to contribute to society in 2024.



Supporting Local Charities



HSS(UK) Sewa initiatives have been supporting many charities over the year. Here are a few charities that HSS(UK) shakhas have engaged with this year:

St. Lukes Hospice, Queensbury
Hounslow Action for Youth
Thames Valley Adventure Playground Association
Sport In Mind, Reading
Loose Ends, Newbury
Making Newbury Greener
Mind Wycombe, Growing Hope
Cheltenham Open Doors & Priors Park
Neighbourhood Project Tewkesbury
Lewis Foundation, Northampton
MNDA, Wellingborough
Rainbows Hospice, Leicester
Panahghar, Rugby
Little Miracles Charity, Peterborough
Acorns Children's Hospice, Birmingham
Blood Donation, Birmingham
Myton Hospice, Leamington
Leamington Mandir & Community Centre
Lineham Farm Children's Charity, Morley
Forget Me Not Children's Hospice, Halifax &
Huddersfield
East Renfrewshire Good Causes
Aberdeen Beech
Dimobi Children's Disability Trust, Manchester
Protecting Nature, Manchester
Care Home, Carmarthen

Walkathons



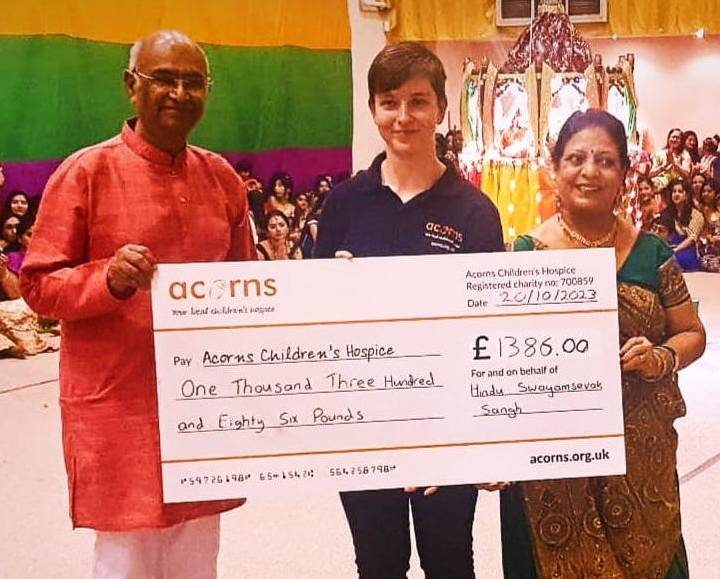


Vivekananda Pariwar Shakha, Morley

Walk for Lineham farm

Vivekananda Pariwar Shakha Morley, organised a charity walk, to raise funds for the Leeds Children's Charity at Lineham Farm, a remarkable organisation dedicated to brightening the lives of disadvantaged children. The walk, which started at 9:30 am, saw the participation of thirty individuals from various age groups. Members contributed by either participating in the walk or by making generous donations.

Leeds Children's Charity at Lineham Farm is committed to providing unforgettable breaks and valuable learning experiences for children facing challenging circumstances. The money raised will be utilised to provide them with much-needed respite breaks, where they can escape their challenging circumstances and create lasting memories.



Birmingham Nagar

Walk for Acorn's Children Hospice

On Sunday 1st October, around 100 enthusiasts participated in a 5km walk in aid of Birmingham Acorns Children's Hospice. £1386 was raised. With Navaratri just around the corner, cheque presentation was delayed to an evening at the Raas Garba, introducing Acorns to a Hindu Festival also.

**£1386
Raised**



Rugby Nagar

Walk for Panahghar

Rugby Nagar held their 19th Annual Charity event on Friday 9th June. A glorious hot sunny day brought together keen regular walkers, as well as families. Several groups went on walks between 1 - 5 miles depending on their ability. Over 80 walkers participated.

The Chosen charity for this year was Panahghar (safe house). Panahghar is a local charity that provides advice, advocacy, and access to safe refuge for victims and their families of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, or gendered abuse.

We were pleased to raise £748 for this worthy Charity. By the end of the walk, everyone had built up an appetite and was looking forward to the customary picnic!



~£700
Raised

Leamington Nagar

Walk for Myton Hospice

Leamington Shakha is thrilled to share its participation and successful contribution to Myton Walk for charity! 50 participants and 12 marshal volunteers came together, walked for Myton Hospice, a charity that support patients with life limiting illness and relatives to aid respite. With 5 years of continuous engagement, the relationship between HSS Leamington Shakha and Myton Hospice has grown stronger.





Leamington Nagar

Raceways Event Runs

Shree Krishna Mandir and Leamington Shakha, in collaboration with Local Charity Organisation **Raceways Events** and lots of dedicated volunteers, volunteered in a remarkable Half Marathon and Kids Fun Run event.

12 of our community runners participated in raising funds for a new Krishna Mandir and Community Centre construction in Leamington Spa. These volunteers played a pivotal role in setting up Water and Fruits station with the organising team from the Raceways Events. Raceways Events are charity partners of Myton Hospices and Isaacs Foodbanks but are primarily a community fundraising events enabler charity.



Shankaracharya Shakha, Halifax & Huddersfield

Trek for Forget-Me-Not Children's Hospice

Shankaracharya Shakha organised a Charity walk to take advantage of the Good spring weather and King's Coronation to bring the society together for a trek from Peace Hall in Halifax Town Centre to Shibden Hall.

From the youngest participants to the Karyakartas, all took on the physical challenge with great enthusiasm. The event gave a chance for children to enjoy the outdoor environment, and others to network with each other, and most importantly to fundraise for a worthy cause. We collected £301 for 'Forget-Me-Not Children's Hospice' which was handed over by our Kids in the presence of Cllr Tyler Hawkins.



Jijabai Shakha, Queensbury

Walk for St. Luke's Hospice

Sevikas from Jijabai Shakha, Queensbury, North London & Herts Vibhag participated in St Luke's Midnight Walk event. The 5-mile circuit commencing at 10 pm and finishing at 1 am raised £219. St. Luke's Hospice provides vital care to individuals and families facing life-limiting illnesses.

it was a enjoyable time, raising funds for a great cause, which getting to know each other better.



S Sewa Charity Walk



Distance
4.98 mi

Elevation Gain
567 ft

Moving Time
1:47:51

Steps
12,608



£265
Raised

Cheltenham Parivaar Shakha

Walks for 'Cheltenham Open Doors' & 'PPNP Tewkesbury'

Cheltenham Parivaar Shakha completed the annual Sewa event Walk-a-thon. This event is an 8km walk around the scenic Cotswold Cleeve Common, admiring the lush hilltop Golf green and also walking through human activity in this region from over 6000 years ago which coincided with the Bronze and Iron age!

Walk-a-thon event raised £265 for two local charities in Cheltenham and Tewkesbury, providing essential support and food for homeless and providing essential supplies for vulnerable families. The event had record participation of 50 people– including 20 children. While the primary objective of the event is doing Sewa, this event on a pleasant summer morning has not only been refreshing for our physical and mental well-being for all, but also socially engaging with the members passionately through their favourite songs!



Wellingborough

Waendel Walk for MNDA

When it is May, it is time for the Waendel walk in Wellingborough. This is the international walk organized every year in Wellingborough. This year HSS participation in the walk was in aid of MNDA.

Starting from the Castle Theatre, via the beautiful nature parks enjoying the typical town's afternoon atmosphere. Watching so many walkers was so inspiring. The walk and talk also gave us all a chance to catch up on plans for our shakha!

In the end, the satisfaction of doing something for a worthy cause is second to none.

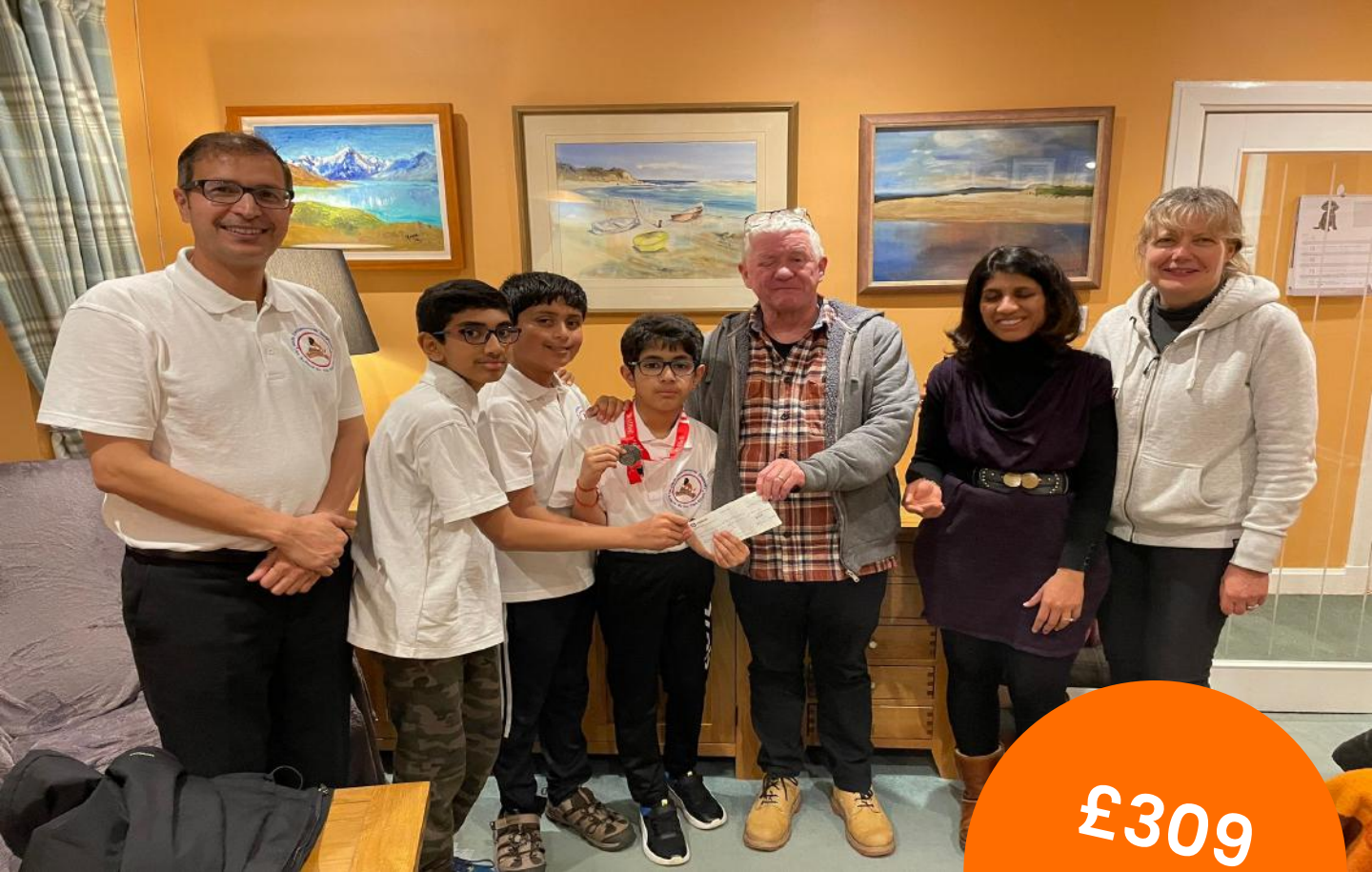


**£507
Raised**

Northampton Shakha

Walks for Lewis Foundation

Northampton Shakha's 20 enthusiasts embarked on a unique activity. We took part in the 8.4-mile-long Woburn circular walk, through Woburn Deer Park and around Woburn Safari Park. Seeing deers, horses, camels, rhinos, and more and passing through various farm fields and woodlands along the route, gave us a nature connect feel as an added value. £507 was raised for a local charity called the Lewis Foundation which supports adult cancer patients.



Adishakti Parivaar Shakha, Glasgow

Running for ER Good Causes

Members of HSS (UK) in Adishakti Parivaar Shakha, based in East Renfrewshire, Glasgow participated in the Scottish Run Event 2023 to support local charity 'East Renfrewshire Good Causes'. The charity has been helping people who are in need.

In 2023 alone they have spent circa £113k helping 624 people of disadvantaged backgrounds, who need any kind of support to make life a little bit easier. A total of £309 was raised by the shakha, to support the charity with it's noble causes.



**£641
Raised**

Hounslow Nagar

Walk-a-thon for Hounslow Action for Youth

A group of 31 participated in a 5km walk in Osterley Park, a Sewa event in aid of a local charity that is engaged in youth and community work in the heart of Hounslow borough. It was the first time participating in such an activity for many in the group, but the fun of the outdoor challenge in the park formed great bonding and understanding of what they were doing.

Other Forms of Sewa





**Abhimanyu Shakha, Slough and
Aumkaar Shakha, Maidenhead**

Fundraising for Thomas Valley Adventure Playground

Abhimanyu Shakha and Aumkaar Balagokulam organised a charity event at Thames Valley Adventure Playground (TVAP) to support children and adults with special needs. The event, attended by approximately 100 youngsters and adults from Maidenhead, Slough, and Windsor, showcased the extensive playground facilities offered by TVAP.

Mahendra Mistry, Secretary of HSS (Maidenhead), emphasized the importance of collective efforts in supporting organizations like TVAP, due to their exceptional dedication to enhancing the wellbeing of youngsters facing special needs. Mr Hanks, the Marketing and Fundraising Manager at TVAP, expressed gratitude for the support received from HSS and the wider community.



Reading

Cricket Match Fundraiser

16 teams came together in a cricket tournament, aimed to raise funds for a local charity 'Sport In Mind'. This charity helps to transform the lives and mental health of children and adults through sport and physical activity. HSS raised £1333 through this cricket match fundraiser. Cllr. Beth Rowland (Liberal Democrats, South Lake) the mayor of Wokingham Borough, was in attendance.

An article was also published in Reading Chronicle about the event:

<https://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/23665915.cricket-tournament-held-reading-sports-charity/>



Bharati Shakha Newbury

Supporting Loose Ends

Bharati Shakha Newbury organized a highly successful fundraising event at Newbury Town Council Hall. This marked our fourth consecutive fundraising event. The proceeds will be donated to the local charity **Loose Ends** and the **Council's Tree-Planting Project** in Newbury. This event featured a wide selection of 25 Indian food varieties, all of which were sold out within a mere two hours.

The constant and overwhelming footfall demonstrated the event's popularity. The Newbury Sevikas deserve commendation for their exceptional cooking efforts. Distinguished guests, including Deputy Mayor Andy Moore, attended the event, adding significance adding a positive impact that HSS Newbury and Sewa Day is making.



Bharati Shakha Newbury

Tree Planting

HSS Newbury Swayamsevaks and Sevikas, young and not so young came together on 4th December to undertake real graft. That is to plant 27 of the 100 trees promised under the 'Making Newbury Greener' tree planting project. The rest of the trees will be planted by February 2024. Cllr Nigel Foot, Mayor of Newbury was also in attendance to give a helping hand. The wet weather had not deterred anyone, on the contrary, it helped to gel a spirit of oneness with nature.

Tree plantation invests in community sustainability

Hutton Close native trees initiative promotes environmental conservation

By CAMERON BLACKSHAW

cameron.blackshaw@newburynews.co.uk
@cameronb_nwn

NEARLY 30 trees were planted by members of the community in a field in Newbury as part of an initiative promoting environmental conservation and sustainable urban development.

Hindu community group HSS Sewa teamed up with Newbury Town Council and residents of Hutton Close in Shaw to carry out the tree plantation drive on Sunday.

Despite the rain, several Newburians turned out to take part in the community-driven planting session on the recreation ground on the northern side of Robin Hood Roundabout behind Sutton Close.

Newbury mayor Nigel Foot, known for his commitment to environmental causes, was present on the day.

He expressed his vision for a greener Newbury and emphasised the importance of community involvement in achieving this goal.

Mr Foot said: "The success of



Newbury mayor Nigel Foot unveils the commemorative signpost

Ref: 48-1023B

our town depends on the health of our environment.

"By planting trees and promoting green spaces, we are investing in a sustainable future for our community."

The volunteer group of gardeners planted 27 native deciduous and fruit trees.

HSS Sewa member Sanjeev Agarwala said: "The choice of native species for planting was intentional, as it ensures that

the newly-planted greenery adapts well to the local climate and contributes to the overall biodiversity of the region.

"In addition to enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the area, the initiative aims to combat climate change, improve air quality and provide a healthier living environment for Newbury residents."

A signpost has been installed at the site to commemorate the



tree planting and all the efforts of those involved.

The plantation drive was part of the HSS Sewa charity project, which involves HSS members completing community projects with local authorities for the betterment of the community.

HSS Sewa pledged to plant 100 more trees by January 2024 and to continue such efforts in the future.

Mr Agarwala added: "As Newbury takes significant strides towards a greener future, the plantation drive stands as a shining example of the positive impact that collective action can have on the environment and the community at large."

Bharati Shakha Newbury

Tree Planting



Carmarthen, Wales

Sewa in Local Care Homes

Though a shakha is not yet established in Carmarthen, two Sevikas utilised their Sangh Shiksha Varg training, which has given them a newfound inspiration. They had decided that they could still do Sewa in the community.

As it was approaching the major festival of Diwali, they visited their local care homes. The spirit of Diwali was enthused through interactive activities. to help engage the audience, performed 3 dances – including one Bharatanatyam piece. Chair yoga and Bingo were also popular. The residents described the workshop as “an incredible way to express the Indian culture” and “a very enjoyable and entertaining experience”.



Bracknell Nagar

Supporting Local Foodbank

Bracknell Shakha carried out their first Sewa activity, with food collection and donation to the local food bank. MP James Sunderland along with his colleagues also joined the Shakha that day and was very glad to see our weekly activities. They also had a detailed discussion with everyone about various topics about Bracknell township.





Aberdeen

Sewa on the Beach

A dry day with sunny spells, not too windy either. A perfect day for our Sewa activity at our beautiful Aberdeen Beach! It was a great team-building activity. Our kids were super excited and were fully absorbed in the activity. This was our first major Sewa where our younger generation was involved and it was great to instill the spirit of true Sewa in the community. Keeping the beach beautiful made us all feel good too!



**£614
Raised**

Shiv Shakti Parivar Shakha, Leicester

Fun day for Rainbow Hospice

Shakti Parivar Shakha Leicester organised it's Charity Fun Day in support of Rainbows Hospice and the great work they do.

Gary from Rainbows Hospice also attended the event and spoke about the work the hospice does. The fun morning consisted off warm ups, relays, ring, cricket, There were also stalls on the day like mehndi, nimbu shertbert, games, cakes, tombola. We finished with garba and a maha picnic.





Sanskār • Sewā • Sangathan

HSS SEWA BIRMINGHAM

HSS Sewa Birmingham
Blood Donation Drive 2023



HSS
sewā
BIRMINGHAM

Saturday 16 Sept
#ThisIsAmazing

 Save a life
Give blood



Birmingham

Blood Donation

The annual Blood Donation Drive was arranged by HSS Sewa Birmingham Madhav Shakha. This year 11 donors participated this morning, an increase over the previous year. The experience and satisfaction of giving something that would save someone's life showed enormously on everyone present. And to top it up, the tea and biscuits never tasted so good!



~£600
Raised

High Wycombe Shikha

Connecting with 'Mind Wycombe' and 'Growing Hope'

High Wycombe Shikha, as part of its community connect, committed to supporting the two local charities, 'Mind Wycombe' and 'Growing Hope' which work on supporting Mental Health. The community rallied together for fundraising, through a Cricket tournament, Charity Walk, and Bake sale. We had a wonderful opportunity to host Mayor Arif Hussain, Deputy Mayor Nabila Rana, and Cllr Maz Hussain last Sunday and the gathering was attended by close to 90 kids and adults. There were fun sports and a guided talk on mental health techniques. The dignitaries participated enthusiastically and appreciated the activities of HSS HW and their efforts to create a value-based community and contribution to society.



Manchester Balagokulam & Parivar Shakha

Sewa in the Park

Sevikas and Swayamsevaks from Manchester Sale Shakha decided to spend four Sunday mornings in the park to do Sewa. Their task was to litter pick and make the environment clean and spiritually charged. The participants ended the morning with Suryanamaskars in the parks.



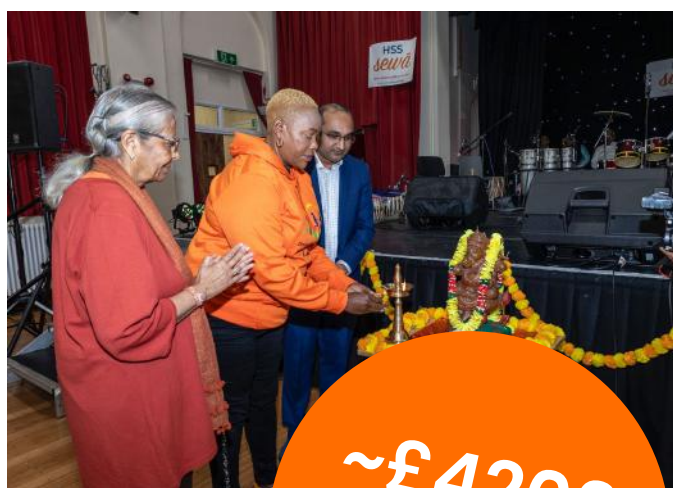
Manchester Nagar

Supporting Francis House Children's Hospice

On behalf of HSS Sewa Manchester Nagar, Mayor of Trafford, Cllr Chris Boyes along with Dr Girdhari ji Bhan presented a cheque of £1000 to the Francis House Children's Hospice team.

Francis House supports approximately 2000 people at any one time with respite care, home care, sibling support, end-of-life care, and emotional and bereavement support across Greater Manchester.

<https://twitter.com/francishousech/status/1662125163041652736?s=24>



Manchester Nagar

Supporting Dimobi Children's Disability Trust

Manchester team of HSS Sewa selected Dimobi Children Disability Trust, a local charity that works tirelessly to uplift the lives of disabled children.

A musical extravaganza evening '*Geet Gaata Chal*' a very high standard musical event attended by around 300 people, was organised. Artists, who included a SaReGaMaPa TV show finalist came from various parts of the U.K. including Belfast, and they did not even charge transportation costs/airfare. There were many local talents from Manchester including mesmerising Bharatnatyam & Kathak performances. It was an unforgettable evening of music and compassion (Sangeet and Sewa).

Over £4000 was collected which will be further supported by the Corporate sector contribution of around £1200.

**~£4200
Raised**



**£245
Raised**

Hanuman Balagokulam, Leicester

Hanuman Chalisa Recital for Rainbow Hospice

A total of 68 children and parents gathered at Shree Hanumanji Mandir, Melton Road. Together they sang 11 Hanuman Chalisa and a few Dhuns and Bhajans, creating a very good aura at the temple. Blessed by the Mandir members and other devotees, they raised a total of £245 and bucket loads of blessings from Hanuman ji. This was done to obtain blessings and best wishes for all those who are involved at the Rainbow Hospice.

Well done to all the children and a big thanks to the parents for their encouragement.



Leicester Nagar

Karaoke Night for Rainbow Hospice

Family members and friends of Shree Ram Shakha, Sindhu Shakha, and Guru Nanak Shakha came together for an evening of fun and singing. The overall objective was to raise funds for a worthy cause and they had chosen Rainbow Hospice, a charity for Children and Young People providing care and support for babies, children, young people with serious and terminal conditions, and their whole family, across the East Midlands.

Kids group sang amazing classical songs, and 21 raffle prizes donated by local shops from the Belgrave area also help to raise awareness amongst them. The occasion was graced by Rushey Mead Councillor Devi Patel and raised over £1000 for the local hospice. Well done all and keep singing!



Photo by Robert Collins on Unsplash

Peterborough Shakha

First Steps Supporting Little Miracles

**£101
Raised**

With Peterborough being a relatively new shakha, it was felt that an HSS Sewa project in aid of a local charity should be undertaken.

Step one was to choose a charity and they were touched by the work of 'Little Miracles', a charity that supports families that have children with additional needs, disabilities, and life-limiting conditions.

Just like everyone else these children need a place to play, laugh, and create friendships. Little Miracles provides this environment for children whilst families can access the advice, support, and care everyone deserves. Step one was completed, and £101 was raised.



Faith Communities and Groups get active in the Big Help Out

Faith communities and activists have played a significant part in volunteering activities for the Big Help Out on Coronation Bank Holiday Monday. Events and initiatives took place all over the country involving Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Sikh and other communities. Anoopam Mission's Bake competition was a major highlight of the community events.

Senior faith leaders also took part in Big Help Out activities. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby with his wife Mrs Caroline Welby, served lunch at a homeless charity, Catching Lives in Canterbury. The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, and Deputy Lieutenant of North Yorkshire, Rebecca Cottrell, helped out at a Trussell Trust food bank at St Joseph's Church in York.

Faith communities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland also led volunteers into action as part of the Big Help Out. Interfaith Scotland partnered with Trees for Life to plant trees in the World Interfaith Harmony Grove in the Scottish Highlands while the Archbishop of Wales Andrew John led a beach clean in Dinas Dinlle in North Wales. In South Belfast, Northern Ireland Interfaith Forum worked with local volunteers as well as those who have recently arrived in Belfast from Ukraine and Russia to completely rebuild the Windsor Community Garden.

Faith activists leading other Big Help Out projects included the following:

Sukhbir Singh, Founder of Feed My City (Sikh community charity), said:



"Feedmycity as part of the #The Big Help Out Coronation celebrations of our King Charles, have provided hundreds of hot meals to Faith organisations, Community groups, Homeless Shelters and street parties in Greater Manchester! We are proud of our inspirational, amazing volunteers who work so hard and joining in the festivities to celebrate the Coronation."

Gurpreet Singh Anand, Chair of the Central Gurdwara (Khalsa Jatha) London (Sikh Temple), said:

"The Khalsa Jatha British Isles is delighted to be participating in The Big Help Out today, a campaign championing faith groups and volunteering to make a real difference in our communities. We prepared 150 hot meals for the homeless to be distributed by our partners SWAT."

Zaki Cooper, who led the mobilisation of faith communities for the Big Help Out, said:

"The UK's range of faith communities did amazing volunteering today as part of The Big Help Out. They donated and distributed food, collected old clothes as well as organised tree planting, litter picks and even a beach clean-up in Wales. Inspired by their religious obligations to do good and build a better society, they volunteered in very high numbers. They were also moved to be active in tribute to the King, who has been so passionate about cultivating strong



relationships with all of Britain's different faith communities. They helped to make the Big Help Out even bigger and better and to enhance community spirit. By focusing on what we have in common rather than what divides us, we are so much stronger as a nation."

Across the nation, the volunteers at Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh UK (HSS UK) were enthusiastically participating in activities as part of the BIG HELP OUT. Nine HSS shakhas, 132 participants engaged in 11 different community projects. Clearing community gardens, planting flowers, serving teas, cleaning benches, clearing charity shop clutter, litter picking, visiting care homes, cooking and serving meals, and taking calls on helplines were just some of the activities that were well received with much gratitude and lovely words of gratitude by the elderly and the infirm, community groups, temples and charity shops.

The Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh UK volunteering activities took place alongside 55000 The Big Help Out volunteering initiatives nationwide.

Dr Harsha Jani at HSS UK Outreach Team said, 'We love volunteering and really it comes naturally to us as Hindus. It was a privilege to participate in the Big Help Out and contribute positively to the welfare of so many.'

The Big Help Out

HSS(UK) was mentioned for their contributions to the Big Help Out in Asian Voice.

<https://barnetpost.co.uk/2023/05/12/finchley-club-welcomes-volunteers-for-coronation-initiative/>

Sewa

Working with other
Organisations





Post



Lord Mayor of Birmingham

@BrumLordMayor

Over the weekend, I supported @sewaday #Birmingham in packing hampers for families in need 🇹🇷 ❤️

It warmed my heart to see so many people volunteering - thank you to everyone who came out to help!

#LordMayorBirmingham

#BirminghamCivic

@LMLieutenancy



Post your reply

Sewa Day – A Glimpse at One of Many Projects

Schools Hampers Support

Of the many support projects that Sewa Day undertakes, one such project is the support of schools with School Hampers over the end of school half and full terms. These hampers are targeted to provide support to children with families on low-income. Birmingham, Coventry, Nottingham and Cheltenham Sewa Day teams are currently running these projects.

Before the Christmas end of term, the Birmingham team of 56 volunteers supplied 306 hampers across 19 local schools.





Sewa UK

It would do great disservice if we were to summarise activities of Sewa UK into a couple of pages. Better still, click on the link for an insight into all projects undertaken Sewa UK, our charity partner.

<https://sewauk.org/NewsletterDecember2023>



We want to hear from you!

When submitting your articles, here are a few points to consider:



Provide a summary

keep articles short, highlighting the best parts



A picture tells a thousand words

select your best photos **(maximum of 8)** to go with your article in the same email



Who it's from

Don't forget to include your Shakha name and location

Send all articles to sanghmail@hssuk.org

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