

## Annual Report 2023

The Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu rise to 8,000 feet above sea level and are stunningly beautiful, with abundant wildlife, dramatic waterfalls and mountainside covered with shola forest.

Geographically The Nilgiris with the neighbouring Wayanad district are situated between Karnataka to the north and Kerala to the west. The territory is extraordinarily diverse, as indeed is the climate. All over the Nilgiris swathes of forest and ancient grasslands have been destroyed and the landscape is populated by degraded and polluted watersheds and farms. Soil erosion is very noticeable, but yet there is a wealth of biological diversity corresponding to altitudes and geology. The communities living in the area are as diverse as the territory. Indigenous tribal communities survive alongside newcomers including refugees from Sri Lanka. Gudalur at the foot of the hills to the West has a large Muslim population as well as being a centre for the extensive Paniya community who until quite recently survived as bonded labourers.

This is the area, and these are the kinds of people upon which Friends of H.O.P.E focusses, we see the Earth and People as belonging together, encouraging communities to look after their land and use it well is at the very heart of our work.

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## **The Friends of H.O.P.E**

### **Charity directory**

**REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER** 3647389  
(incorporated: 9 October 1998)

**COMPANY SECRETARY**  
David Pople

**LIFE PRESIDENT:** Vanya Orr

**TRUSTEE DIRECTORS**  
Nicholas Grey, Michael Moore, David Pople, Dr Mahesh Mathpati,  
Mrs. Rosaleen Mulji, Prof Sheila Hillier

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER** 1083028  
(registered: 25 October 2000)

**WEBSITE:** [www.friendsofhope.org.uk](http://www.friendsofhope.org.uk)

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**ACCOUNTANTS**  
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## Executive summary

Our climate smart ecologically sensitive organic project was approved by the Department of Horticulture and endorsed by the Collector at a 25 year celebratory event in Ooty, recognising The Friends of H.O.P.E's achievement in Nilgiris via our partnering agencies. Ms Shibila Mary and the Collector spoke emotionally about their own experiences and why it was necessary to rebuild the soil organically free of harmful chemicals, pesticides and fertilizers. The degradation caused by destructive land use practices has been going on over decades. Consequential health impacts such as the increase in cancers touched a raw nerve for Ms Shibila. We can now report that we have been given the opportunity to lead organic transition under our programme, Organic Nilgiris 2030. Included in the project will be restoration of wetlands, and sustainable waste management. Post this current year end, the parties and stakeholders in Nilgiris approved the wording of an MoU committing to the principle of our holistic approach. However, realistically it may provide a challenge too far for them to see a formal agreement through. We were pleased that Vanya Orr was able to participate in this remarkable achievement.



*Above Vanya remembering her time with Jaykumar and his wife*

In the Nilgiris there are 72,900 smallholdings, all under 2.5 acres and 65,000 of those holdings are under 1 acre. The small marginal farmers and growers in these watersheds are most susceptible to economic forces due to climate change, and influence of middlemen on the prices they receive.

Thus, we have a real opportunity here to ensure the region becomes totally organic in the farming sense, to improve carbon enrichment, to prevent soil erosion and land degradation and to restore the natural grasslands and shola forest of the Hill area. Organics/biodynamics has a direct influence on improving the natural environment. We are the only NGO supporting the organic movement in a meaningful way that tackles climate change.

The Nilgiris natural ecosystem is being decimated. This ecological crisis is very much intertwined with the Indigenous people. Changes in the landscape have severely impacted the shola grassland mosaic and challenged the traditional lifestyles of the indigenous people and agricultural practices. The Nilgiris has the highest recorded use of fertilizer and chemicals in all India as researched by Keystone. To achieve a good yield of say garlic, a farmer may use 9 times the normal rate of nitrate (source Keystone) and bags of fertilizer can be seen all over the landscape waiting to be applied.

Indigenous knowledge is defined as 'A body of knowledge built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact with nature'. Traditional knowledge and practices have their own importance as they have stood the test of time and have proved to be efficacious to the local people and form the basis for their link with nature.



The Nilgiris is amongst the most fragile ecosystems in the world and must be protected, particularly as it is widely accepted that the region is the source of water for South India.

Our traditional health project (RTTMP) offers a regular health service for 64 villages. (VHO's) integrate with traditional healers. Statistically, over the course of a year, our 13 VHO's see 4100 patients. Last year we mentioned that we hoped to conclude an MoU with PSG but progress has stalled, not because of a lack of willingness, but such is the way in India which can be frustrating at times. We do know that the expectation is there as they are interested in working with us and using traditional treatments for their auto immune patients, and in strengthening our service with health screenings, camps and health awareness.

Our HIV and mental health team are quite remarkable and help just over 250 people monthly. Health awareness and stigma programmes have been recognized during the year have been positively received, resulting in more and more people coming forward for testing and reflected in the tested positive: testing ratio improving significantly even though the overall number of those registered for ART have gone up.

### **About us**

The Friends of H.O.P.E (FoH) has inspired many villages and rural communities of the Nilgiris to apply traditional self-help practical and sustainable knowledge that embraces traditional local foods, traditional health, medicinal plants and their uses, organic and biodynamic methods of agriculture, animal husbandry, water conservation and environmental protection.

FoH was formed in 1998 to support Vanya Orr's holistic vision for sustainable communities, our 'economics of permanence', in restoring

and protecting local traditions and cultures. The charity provides financial support, strategic guidance and practical advice where needed to our implementing partner agencies. All of our Trustees have Indian connections and experience in dealing with both tribal and non-tribal communities. - Mrs Rosaleen Mulji, David Pople and Prof Sheila Hillier served as trustees of The Nilgiris Adivasi Trust (NAT). Nicholas Grey (with his wife Mary) were the founder trustees of Wells for India which works in Rajasthan, Dr Mahesh Mathpati is a well-known and highly respected Ayurvedic doctor, and Michael Moore lived and worked in India for some years. All money raised by FoH, except for a very small amount needed to cover its administrative expenses, is remitted to the partnering NGO's. **The Trustees of FoH give their time and services entirely on a voluntary basis.**

All funding from us and sent to India meets FCRA rules and we are fully compliant. We expect that The Garden of HOPE Trust will apply for full, rather than partial, FCRA status during 2024/5 but in the meantime Prior Permission status is sufficient.

### **Our record of notable achievement.**

Over the 25 years, £1million has been sent to India for good causes.

One of our objectives and organic region is achievable, with a climate smart programme Organic Nilgiris 2030 endorsed by the Dept of Horticulture and The Collector and an MoU with the parties to be signed in June 2024

Our traditional health project, the RTTMP provides a health service for 64 tribal villages, a population of some 7500 people and over 3800 patients are now being treated annually.

We support over 250 people affected by HIV.

Initiated eco clubs in government schools.

## Poverty in the region

Poverty amongst Tribal communities is commonplace. These indigenous peoples rely on agriculture and the forest for their livelihoods, and farming is in crisis. Statistically in rural areas such as the Nilgiris over 31% of the scheduled castes and about 20% of the backward classes come into the poverty category (source: socialjustice.nic.in). The rural poor in the Nilgiris include an indigenous tribal population of almost 28,000 – Irullas, Kotas, Todas, Paniyas and Kurumbas being the principal groups. The agriculturalist Badagas, numbering some 200,000, are also often referred to as indigenous peoples as their origins can be traced back as far as the other groups, but mostly they migrated from the plains a few hundred years ago.

The daily wage for a male agricultural worker is between Rs450 and 1000 per day at the moment, and for women around Rs300-450 per day but many of the people we come across have a much lesser income. For example, those people who are 'retired' on a nominal pension income have to engage in the 100-day worker scheme to meet every day needs. But the poorest members of society we deal with are found in tribal communities and those affected by HIV, and who often only receive an average daily income of less than Rs300 (£3.00).

Malnutrition is increasing and many say this is due to poverty. Our research amongst those with anaemia, indicates this is true. Due to a shift away from traditional diets. The HIV community is particularly impacted contributing to their weakened immune systems.

*A typical example of poor housing in the region*



## Relationship between The Friends of H.O.P.E and its partners

The relationship between FoH and the partnering agencies is governed by Memoranda of Understanding (MoU's) or Project Agreement (the governing documents). These documents define the parameters as to how the charities work together, with FoH providing funding, advisory and practical help with Indian agencies being the implementing partners. The MoU's allow for FoH to be provided with regular reports, and also stipulate that each NGO will be fully accountable to FoH for the way in which funding is used. Therefore, those who give money can be assured donations are used for the intended purpose and not wasted.

## Aspirations for an Organic Region

Over the years we have consistently promoted an organic region as the practical way to restore soil and tackle the degradation of the landscape. The Nilgiris, an area of 2,500 sq km, is a unique Biosphere and many argue it is one of the world's most important. The State Government introduced The Tamil Nadu Organic Policy for the Nilgiris (March 2023) closely followed by an Agricultural Bill providing significant funding for organic awareness and transition (April 2023). We quote: " A special scheme to promote organic farming in the Nilgiris district will be implemented by the state government over a period of five years at an outlay of Rs 50 crore. Creation of awareness on organic farming, reducing the use of chemical fertilizers,

introduction of organic cultivation practices, providing guidance on the production of vermicompost, panchagavya and dasagavya, extending cultivation assistance, registration for organic certification and creation of markets for organic produces will be carried out in the coming year at an outlay of Rs 5 crore," said Panneerselvam, Agriculture Minister.

However, this may be a cosmetic statement as so much money is generated by the fertilizer lobby

The organic movement initiative was introduced by Vanya Orr and this movement, undertaken with FoH funding, is now implemented via our partner in India, The Garden of HOPE Trust (GOHT).

#### **How can this be achieved? Practical objectives**

- To upgrade the skills and methodologies of organic and biodynamic farming system among rural farming communities.
- Help 'chemical' farmers change their cultivation practice
- Help farmers and growers optimise yield and income
- To facilitate a concept of environmental citizenship among the Nilgiris farmers, through integration of knowledge, sense of responsibility and successful action to rebuild soil, mitigating topsoil erosion particularly during heavy monsoon rains.
- Using social media and TV channel media, target future generations and enlist their support in tackling climate change.
- To reinforce and reward existing environment friendly lifestyles among youth, engaging with their lobby via social media to eradicate chemicals and pesticides, improving health and nutrition of people and the environment (H.O.P.E)
- Work with colleagues who can offer significant knowledge and ways of furthering organic awareness in schools and organisations.

- To integrate the Nilgiris farmers' efforts into the global effort to gain global recognition and support.
- To mitigate climate change through organic farming.
- Whenever possible encourage the restoration of natural habitats, particularly at the forest line and restoration of wetlands
- Help achieve sustainable waste solutions at farm, household and village level.

#### **Revisiting our strategy for Organic transition and tackling climate change**

As mentioned in our executive summary, we held a celebratory event in Ooty in October marking and informing people of our achievement since we were formed in 1998. The event provided the ideal opportunity to launch our 'climate smart' micro-watershed approach titled 'Organic Nilgiris 2030'.



*Above, formal presentation of Organic Nilgiris 2030 project to the Joint Director, Horticulture Ms. Shibila Mary*



In principle, 12 organic awareness centres (OAC's) will be established on farmers' land in each of the different climatic zones of the Nilgiris. At the time of writing, we are six months into the program and 2 OAC's are established. 2 more OAC's have been commenced, each owned by enthusiastic women, and 3 are currently in the process of selection out of a total of 23 potential farmers. We expect a lot from the OAC. The farmer is expected to host visits from other farmers in his watershed valley (thus creating farmer interest groups) and encourage households to establish kitchen gardens. In return we engage by helping with detailed planning, provision of technical assistance and initial financial support.

Our watershed mapping identifies wetlands, ancient water courses, that need to be opened up, and sustainable waste programmes are being planned for implementation at household and village level, indeed, these might be exciting participative projects for schools and colleges! In other words, we shall continue with our holistic approach.

Full data capture is being gathered from the first two selected micro-watersheds. GPS mapping is key as there are 233 watersheds in the Nilgiris!!

Bench terracing is important to the watershed valleys and significantly is recognized by Organic producers as a means to prevent further soil erosion. Watershed 'management' provides the opportunity to look at restoration of natural habitats and the shola forest with other stakeholders such as the Forest Department and the Directorate of the SADP. We seek to engage with indigenous groups who, when all is said and done, are the natural custodians of the forest, and document and understand the ancient ways that should be reintroduced to manage the ecology of the Nilgiris biosphere in the face of extreme climatic change.

### ***Coping with animal conflict.***

The loss of natural habitats and forest for wildlife has meant that farmers cultivations are frequently destroyed by wildlife seeking water and food – in particular “bison” ruining crops. Elephants too can cause severe problems. Livestock is threatened by tigers, leopards, panthers and the like. Livestock numbers are down which is a problem in itself as the product of the cow is essential to organic applications, BD composting, BD preps, panchagavya etc.



*Above Mohanraj called to free a leopard caught in wire on a tea estate at Lovedale, near Ooty.*

Aggressive weather patterns, drought and consolidated periods of monsoon, can be devastating for the smaller enterprise. Our climate smart resilient farming and horticulture strategy, recognises the need to restore natural habitats and the forest ecology. Some fertilizers and chemicals are applied 9-fold, for example to garlic, in order to obtain a yield; no wonder there is such degradation here and increases cancers.



*Kota farmers receiving training*



*Below: Jaykumar explaining organic inputs from recycled waste to Chandran, Assistant Director, Horticulture*



*Some 30 farmers, the JD Horticulture and The Collector came to the inauguration of the first OAC established on Jaykumar's small holding of less than an acre.*

## ***Engagement with the community***

Educating local schools, colleges and communities about the impacts of climate change on micro watersheds and the importance of adopting sustainable land-use practices, is an important part of our educating process. Organic awareness and climate change campaigns is leading to the community's involvement in sustainable land-use practices and promote a more climate-resilient micro watershed.

*Janardhan talking to JSS students about impact of climate change*



*Below, Blue Mountain students forest experience and climate change*



## Our traditional health service programme (RTTMP)

The value of local health traditions to indigenous communities goes back in time over thousands of years. Our health programme focuses on tribal villages found on the Eastern slopes near Kothagiri town in the Nilgiris. The strategy defined by our team and local healers proposes key activities to sustain the project and which are set within the broader FoH objective of drawing upon traditional knowledge to improve health for tribal communities, linking environmental concerns for the forest and the urgent need to restore soil health within agriculture and horticulture.

Our team of 13 tribal women (VHO's) together with a group of local traditional healers, resource the project. Five members of our VHO team are also now recognised as healers evidenced by Quality Care India certification. And we are looking at testing other VHO's who we feel meet the required standard.

The RTTMP programme looks at long term TRADITIONAL health sustainability for the people by the people. Local knowledge utilises the power of medicinal plants efficacy. Over 3876 patients were treated during the year, an average of 323 per day.

We continue to review progress, and collection of patient and village data allows us to determine the number of households by village and their health condition(s). Further, a patient's illness is coded red, amber or green, with red demanding constant or frequent support. Chronic conditions which our team categorise as long-term medical conditions might include anaemia and diabetes with underlying causes identified and recorded.

Capacity building is provided by FRLHT/TDU.

In March 2023 we signed a 5-year MoU with TDU as research partner, and GoHT as the implementing partner via the RTTMP programme. This allows for the anaemia research project to be extended by a further 3-4 years. Currently 650 families are participating. The local healers and VHO's have gained insightful knowledge about iron deficiency anaemia and sickle cell. Planning is in hand to extend both number of villages and families which mean that more local healers will be needed. Provision for other research programmes as may be agreed, was also written into the agreement.



The RTTMP team meets each month to review progress and discuss cases. To help regularise data collection it was agreed that a mobile APP be developed. Most of the team have smart phones but Wi-Fi/WhatsApp connectivity is sometimes problematic. The team outlined the activity (strategy) they wished to strengthen over the next 3-4 years: -

- Improve the basic health service provided.
- Continue to document ancient traditional knowledge handed down through generations and thus safeguard for the future.
- Participate in the anaemia research programme by monitoring Hg levels, dietary outcomes and well-being.



- Increase health awareness. Vanya had a syllabus of educating village women in particular on the way the body functions and the importance of a good balanced diet.
- Develop traditional medicines and oils. This involves an understanding of standards and licensing.
- School programme – to introduce, or improve awareness of the value of, and how to identify, medicinal plants and their uses.
- to offer internships to university students and to those from tribal villages seeking to gain knowledge.
- Continue to prepare and distribute pandemic decoctions at village level.
- Work in a holistic manner to encourage villagers to establish kitchen nutritional gardens.

81 kitchen herbal gardens have been created. and 26 schools are involved in the school programme.

Interaction occurs with organic farmers in the tribal villages.

Students in 26 schools learn about medicinal plants found in the forest around their school, whilst also learning about basic health.

The plan for the latter part of 2024 is to extend the RTTMP to other tribal areas, notably Gudalur valley, and villages dotted around Coonoor and Ooty. This will mean taking on 4-5 more VHO's who would work alongside the certified healers in those areas.

It is hoped that the discussions with PSG Hospitals about a partnering under the terms of an MoU can be progressed in 2024. PSG seem keen to use the RTTMP's tribal health products for treating their autoimmune disease patients. In return PSG have offered to help us with screening programmes and health awareness generally. There are other potential benefits as well, including internship exchange with PSG's climate change students field testing soil etc.

Sl.No	TRADITIONAL VILLAGE FOOD	Common name	Iron (mg/100g)	Groups
1	Amla	Gooseberry	1.25	FRUITS
2	Pomegranate	Pomegranate, maroon seeds	0.31	FRUITS
3	Fig Fruit	Fig	0.69	FRUITS
4	Guava	Guava, white flesh	0.32	FRUITS
5	Mint	Mint leaves	8.56	CONDIMENTS AND SPICES-FRESH
6	Sigappu Ponnanganni	Ponnanganni	3.88	GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES
7	Drumstick Leaves	Drumstick leaves	4.56	GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES
8	Curry Leaves	Curry leaves	8.67	CONDIMENTS AND SPICES-FRESH
9	Jack Fruit	Jack fruit, ripe	0.36	FRUITS
10	Sirukeeral (Amaranthus)	Amaranth leaves, green	4.64	GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES
11	Beetroot	Beet root	0.76	ROOTS AND TUBERS
12	Jamun fruit	Black berry	0.63	FRUITS
13	Dates	Dates, dry, pale brown	3.2	FRUITS
14	Black Grapes	Grapes, seeded, round, black	0.22	FRUITS

Below: Tribal healers from Gudalur taluk receiving their certificates, each healer received Rs50,000 on passing the test programme.



*A selection of traditional oils and medicines*



## Our HIV support and stigma programmes

We are supporting over 250 of the 503 people on the ART register, a further significant increase on the year before.

One to one counselling, group therapies, stigma reduction, nutrition, mental health, are all essential interventions. Sathiya, our programme manager, and his small team are building relationships and trust.

Regular visits are made to the ART offices, either to collect prescriptions on behalf of clients or importantly to ensure close ties

With Sathiya stepping up to be overall health programme director we are looking to recruit one or two more people from the HIV community to train as counsellors.

The table below lists the number of meetings (and attendance) of people who have participated in our stigma, HIV awareness programme. Our stigma programme is planned over 3 years – always there are new groups to meet and talk to. Whilst we believe the programme is working well, we still come across many instances of anguish caused by lack of awareness, lack of patient privacy and ignorance.

The programme records that there has been -

	2023		2022	
	meetings	participants	meetings	participants
Hospital settings	32	1207	37	987
Schools/colleges	46	2809	57	3169
Employers, tea factory	41	318	34	421
Individuals		3282		3405
100-day workers	21	475	36	1244
New clients		39		

We are evidencing some success as we extend our health awareness and HIV stigma initiatives. Statistically, more people are coming forward for testing. Although the total number of recorded HIV affected people has risen as per the ART register, indeed, on the balance of probabilities that would obviously be the case, the ratio (number of tests: tested positive) has improved. In school, college and education centres we have been particularly well received and although we don't have the analysis of the groups coming forward for testing, our openness in talking about a taboo subject is welcomed amongst the



Student population





HIV awareness and stigma in the hospital environment

There is a continuing need to address stigma but a strong focus for us is the student where there is a real perception of the young learning from the sessions we provide. In schools and colleges, we historically noticed significant discrimination and ignorance, and have reports on file of teachers refusing to let children continue in school once their HIV status is known, or indeed where HIV positive children are not allowed to socialise, necessitating a school transfer. We now see a much better situation. The young have the potential to be great peer educators, via technology and social media.

The problem will never really go away, given the cultures of the region. Constant village visits will be necessary over the next year when a final review will take place. People with HIV or affected by HIV will continue to face discrimination by mainstream society and are badly treated everywhere. There is a huge reluctance to talk about HIV, making our counselling forums essential. Most people affected, including children, acquired HIV without any knowledge and it is only when they are tested that they find out, often with calamitous consequences to family and community life. It was to address this need that our nutritional and psychological support programmes were also started.

We offer frequent counselling for individuals, families and communities to help them overcome concerns and issues they sense and meet in their day to day lives. This is done by constantly raising awareness. Gradually, we have seen knowledge levels improving, and numerous changes in attitudes and behaviour have been noted in visit reports and monitoring. The client also is noticing an improving situation.



People with HIV often suffer the impacts of stigma when visiting health care settings. Sathiya reports that training and meeting with health care staff over the past years has dramatically improved staff understanding of HIV, from paediatric care to ART delivery. The healthcare sector has its own challenges, frequent staff rotation, new staff and we are talking to the sector about regular induction of staff. We hope to see further improvement across this sector over the next twelve months. Sathiya makes regular visits to key healthcare managers and doctors and the relationships are testament to the goodwill he is creating.



*Above: Sumithra talking to daily wage workplace and tea estate workers*

*Below: Nutrition distribution and group therapy event in Ooty Feb 2023. 116 Beneficiaries received nutrition supplements on that occasion.*



Meetings led by Sathiya create a safe environment in which to share problems, struggles and provide enlightenment and motivation to live meaningfully - different problem-solving strategies are discussed. Individual as well as group counselling sessions, are available. We want to restart regular distribution of much needed nutritional supplements and organic vegetables which we had to stop because of lockdown restrictions and the logistics of delivering both supplements and produce to each centre. We manage our unrestricted funding to

provide nutrition supplements marking auspicious occasions, such as Divali.

Everyone asks when the monthly nutrition and group therapy meetings will restart. They recognise the enormous benefits, both physical and mental, this service gives. By charting each client before and after nutrition we can see a huge improvement in CD04 levels. Support was available 24/7 for anyone who needed help.

When funds were available to provide nutrition support, approximately 120 beneficiaries on average received supplements and vegetables on each occasion, free of charge.

### **Eco-Clubs**

The aim of the Eco club is to develop a green consciousness and social responsibility. Through Eco Clubs we promote recycling, composting, organic gardening, evidencing the importance of the natural environment – the forest and plants found in the forest, particularly medicinal plants found around the villages in the Nilgiris region. With so much emphasis placed on climate change we are introducing climate change into the eco club syllabus. The syllabus will cover classroom-based activity, practical work – nutrition school garden, forest and wetland visits and restorative projects, regular village clean up drives etc. and an introduction to sustainable waste.

Currently, the RTTMP team have engaged with 26 schools and our ecology team has imitated clubs in two elite schools Riverside and Blue Mountain. A further short list of schools wanting to join the eco club network has been drawn up following conversations with head teachers. We plan to help the schools establish organic gardens growing vegetables, culinary and medicinal herbs, and where space



permits, encourage the creation of a botanical garden and tree planting.

Our climate smart resilient farming strategy encompasses environmental protection, and the tribal schools are to be approached to help with research and documenting traditional conservation of the forest around them.

*Below, students at Pudur and Garikiyur schools*



**PhD: exploring self-reliance in primary healthcare among families and communities using traditional medicine.**

We are looking forward to the publication of this valuable research programme.

### **Our Education Fund**

FoH support young people from tribal communities and/or backward class family backgrounds. Through the Garden of HOPE Trust, we are looking to introduce internships for students attending the Government Arts College, Ooty; Emerald Heights and Providence and JSS colleges, and which might be offered across our range of activities...social media, website, traditional health, maybe mental health, environment/climate change, ecology/biodiversity, and organics.

The FoH fund provided support to Emima through to 2023, and at the end of the year, we were rewarded when Emima was achieved a 1<sup>st</sup> Class degree and is now Dr Emima, Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medical Sciences degree (BAMS). She has accepted a two-year post qualification practical opportunity at the I-AIM hospital near Bangalore during which she'll be exposed also to A&E, and non-traditional interventions during secondment to one or two Bangalore City based hospitals.

### **Fundraising events**

No fundraising events were held during the year.

### **Financial review**

The FoH accounts are available separately and upon request. They are also found via our web site or on the Charity Commission's web site. Income during the year amounted to £43,676 (previous year £52,612). The Trustees' policy is that all funds (except for nominal administrative costs) should be sent to India, and particularly at times when we can

take advantage of preferential exchange rates. In this way we can optimize our project funding. Total funds expended on projects during the year amounted to £32,552 (previous year £61,521).

Local UK administrative costs amounted to just £950 (previous year £1,785 as detailed in the annual accounts). Grants and donations over £700 were received from the following organizations: - The Souter Charitable Trust; St Clare and St Francis Trust; The Cumber Family Trust, Nilgiris Adivasi Trust, CB and HH Taylor 1984 Charitable Trust, The Farthing Trust.

We are also grateful to other charities and individuals who have contributed to our income by way of grants, donations, responses to appeals and gift aid. Your support is so very much appreciated.



*Before lockdown: The Collector visiting the GoHT stand at an Organic conference in Ooty.*

## Photo Gallery

*Lakshmi being tested during Quality Care India certification programme. Lakshmi was one of six of our VHO's who received certification and recognition as an approved Healer.*



*Kesalada school medicinal plant and botanical garden*



*Below: a farm worker learning how to prepare Jeevamritham*



*Sathiya posing with a group of healthcare students and staff*



*Above and below: HIV stigma 'workplace' awareness meetings*



*100 day worker group, Masinagudi.. Health and HIV awareness meeting*

## **THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.**

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

### **DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023**

The directors, who are also trustees of the charity, present their report and the accounts for the year ended 31 October 2023.

The governing document of the charity is the Memorandum and Articles of Association incorporated on 9 October 1998. The Friends of H.O.P.E. is a company limited by guarantee. The liability of the members is limited by their guarantee. In the event of the company being wound up during the period of their membership (or within a year following), members undertake to contribute such amounts as may be required, up to a maximum of £10.

The annual general meeting deals with the appointment of trustees and other matters such as approval of the report and accounts and the appointment of auditors.

The objectives of the charity are:

- a) the relief of poverty and sickness and to advance education among the inhabitants of the Nilgiri region of India; and
- b) the encouragement and promotion of the protection and preservation of the environment in the Nilgiri region of India.

#### **RESERVES POLICY AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

It is the objective of the directors to hold whenever possible approximately six month's expenditure in reserves, but it is also our policy to take advantage of a good exchange rate whenever possible. We therefore monitor the combined reserves of our NGO partners and The Friends of H.O.P.E on a monthly basis to preserve a sound reserves policy.

The risks to which the charity is exposed are frequently reviewed and procedures have been established to manage those risks.

#### **DIRECTORS / TRUSTEES**

Dr Nicholas Grey  
Prof Sheila Hillier  
Michael Moore  
Dr Mahesh Mathpati  
Rosaleen Mulji  
David Pople

## THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

### DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023 (CONTINUED)

#### DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and regulations.


Company law requires the directors to prepare accounts for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company at the end of the period and of its income or expenditure for the period. In preparing those accounts, the directors are required to:-

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts;
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies regime under section 419(2) of the Companies Act 2006, and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Statement of Recommended Practice: applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

By order of the board on  
and signed on its behalf by



M Moore  
Director



## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 October 2023, which are set out on pages 22 to 27.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT**

As the trustees of the charitable company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the charitable company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charitable company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the '2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

### **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

- 1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charitable company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- 2) the accounts do not accord with those accounting records; or
- 3) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- 4) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

CJ GOODHEAD FCA  
KNIGHT GOODHEAD LIMITED  
Chartered Accountants  
7 Bournemouth Road  
Chandler's Ford  
Eastleigh  
Hampshire SO53 3DA

**THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.**

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023**

(Including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
<b>Income</b>					
Donations and legacies	3	22,376	21,300	43,676	52,612
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>22,376</b>	<b>21,300</b>	<b>43,676</b>	<b>52,612</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Charitable activities					
H.O.P.E. projects	4	16,183	17,319	33,502	63,305
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	5	<b>16,183</b>	<b>17,319</b>	<b>33,502</b>	<b>63,305</b>
<b>Net income for the year</b>		6,193	3,981	10,174	(10,693)
<b>FUNDS AT 31 OCTOBER 2022</b>	8, 9	4,918	1,188	6,106	16,799
<b>FUNDS AT 31 OCTOBER 2023</b>		<b>11,111</b>	<b>5,169</b>	<b>16,280</b>	<b>6,106</b>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.  
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

**THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.**

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2022**

(Including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2022 £
<b>Income</b>			
Donations and legacies	22,123	30,489	52,612
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>22,123</b>	<b>30,489</b>	<b>52,612</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Charitable activities			
H.O.P.E. projects	21,342	41,963	63,305
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>21,342</b>	<b>41,963</b>	<b>63,305</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) for the year</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>(11,474)</b>	<b>(10,693)</b>
<b>FUNDS AT 31 OCTOBER 2021</b>	<b>4,137</b>	<b>12,662</b>	<b>16,799</b>
<b>FUNDS AT 31 OCTOBER 2022</b>	<b>4,918</b>	<b>1,188</b>	<b>6,106</b>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.  
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**BALANCE SHEET AT 31 OCTOBER 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors	6	5,533	1,227
Cash at bank and in hand		11,961	5,516
		<u>17,494</u>	<u>6,743</u>
<b>CREDITORS: amounts falling</b>			
due within one year	7	(1,214)	(637)
		<u></u>	<u></u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		16,280	6,106
		<u></u>	<u></u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u><b>16,280</b></u>	<u><b>6,106</b></u>
<b>FUNDS</b>			
General Fund	8	11,111	4,918
Restricted Fund	9	5,169	1,188
		<u></u>	<u></u>
	10	<u><b>16,280</b></u>	<u><b>6,106</b></u>

For the financial year ended 31 October 2023, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 Companies Act 2006. No member of the company has deposited a notice, pursuant to section 476, requiring an audit of these accounts.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the company keeps accounting records, which comply with section 386, and for preparing accounts, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its income and expenditure for the financial year, in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the company.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the board of directors on  
and signed on its behalf by



M Moore  
Director



## THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

### NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023

#### 1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

##### *Accounting convention*

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Statement of Recommended Practice: applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

##### *Income*

Income is recognised when received, together with any associated tax refund, except for income given for specific purposes where it is matched against the related expenditure.

##### *Expenditure*

Expenditure is recognised in the period to which it relates and is allocated to the appropriate cost heading. No material items of expenditure require apportionment across more than one category. Support costs are allocated between funds based on the corresponding income split in the period.

##### *Fund accounting*

- Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.
- Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.
- Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

#### 2 LEGAL STATUS

The charitable company was incorporated on 9 October 1998 in England and Wales and was registered on 25 October 2000 with the Charity Commission in England and Wales. The registered number is 03647389 and the charity number is 1083028. The charity is a public benefit entity.

The registered office of the charity is 7 Bournemouth Road, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO53 3DA.

**THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.**

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023 (continued)**

3 TOTAL INCOME	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Grants	19,699	21,300	40,999	50,489
Donations	2,143	-	2,143	1,656
Gift aid reclaimed	534	-	534	467
	<u>22,376</u>	<u>21,300</u>	<u>43,676</u>	<u>52,612</u>

4 HOPE PROJECTS	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Grant funded activities	15,111	16,300	31,411	57,441
Fundraising	585	556	1,141	4,080
Support costs	148	141	289	1,154
Accountancy and independent examination	339	322	661	630
	<u>16,183</u>	<u>17,319</u>	<u>33,502</u>	<u>63,305</u>

**5 TOTAL EXPENDITURE**

No director received any remuneration during this or the previous year. During the year reimbursed expenses relating to project costs of £1,999 (2022: £801) were paid to one trustee.

6 DEBTORS	2023 £	2022 £
Gift aid recoverable	533	467
Accrued income	5,000	-
Prepayments	-	760
	<u>5,533</u>	<u>1,227</u>

7 CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	2023 £	2022 £
Trade Creditors	589	84
Accruals	625	553
	<u>1,214</u>	<u>637</u>

**THE FRIENDS OF H.O.P.E.**

(Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023 (continued)**

8 UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	Funds brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Funds carried forward £
General funds	4,918	22,376	(16,183)	11,111
9 RESTRICTED FUNDS	Funds brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Funds carried forward £
Education fund	-	300	(300)	-
HIV/Health	-	6,000	(6,000)	-
Farming and sustainable villages	1,188	15,000	(11,019)	5,169
	1,188	21,300	(17,319)	5,169

**Education fund:** The Nilgiris Adivasi Trust (NAT) and Friends of HOPE contribute to tribal school running costs and bursary support for students attending higher secondary schools.

**HIV/Health fund:** The funding for people living with HIV covers screening for both HIV and TB, counselling, vocational support and nutritional supplements.

**Farming and sustainable villages:** Encourages farmers to convert to organic farming practices and to restore goodness to the soil, thus helping to protect the natural environment.

10 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
<i>As at 31 October 2023</i>			
Debtors	5,533	-	5,533
Bank and cash	6,792	5,169	11,961
Creditors	(1,214)	-	(1,214)
	11,111	5,169	16,280
<i>As at 31 October 2022</i>			
Debtors	1,227	-	1,227
Bank and cash	4,328	1,188	5,516
Creditors	(637)	-	(637)
	4,919	1,188	6,106