



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From                      Period start date 31/3/23                      To 1/4/24

Section A                      Reference and administration details

Charity name                      Nishtha Trust UK

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any)                      1118248

Charity's principal address                      Nishtha Trust UK  
PO Box 203  
Totnes

Postcode                      TQ9 9BS

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1 Joanna Watt	Chair		All trustees
2 Daniel Russell	Secretary		All
3 Imogen Batterham	Treasurer		All
4 Maria Teresa Claridge	Trustee		All
5 Geraldine Gilbert	Trustee		All
6 Chris Kenyon	Trustee		All
7 Nicola Tansley	Trustee		All

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name                      Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information) n/a

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information) n/a

Section B                      Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Trust Deed
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Trust
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Trustees proposed and elected by existing Trustees.

## Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- Trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

Nishtha UK Trust has a key policy document held on a secure password-protected cloud-based drive covering its remit as set out in the Trust Deed. This is updated as required to reflect changes in the law – eg GDPR 2018 – Privacy, Fund-raising etc. It includes risk assessment and sustainability considerations.

The UK Trust holds meetings twice yearly (or more if required) either in person or virtually. It manages funds and projects for UK donors to the work of Nishtha India as set out in the Trust Deed.

Fund-raising is carried out by written agreement with an (unpaid by the UK Trust) India-based individual who works for Nishtha India and formerly ran tours around the project for international parties. UK-based individuals who have been on these tours or otherwise have contact with the projects then donate to the UK Trust. Careful management of the expenditure of the UK monies is carried out by the UK trustees to ensure that its objects are met.

## Section C

## Objectives and activities

### Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The primary object for which this Trust has been created is to support the work and interests of Nishtha Rural Health, Education and Environment Centre (Nishtha India) based in Himachal Pradesh, India, through generating awareness of the work done by Nishtha India, raising funds, and channelling the same through the proper channels to Nishtha India's bank account in India.

To support the running of Nishtha India's charitable health clinic which provides free or subsidised health care to disadvantaged needy people of Himachal Pradesh or any other area in which Nishtha India may decide to work, offering appropriate medicine at free, subsidised or non-profit rates in accordance with individual patients' means.

To promote education: literacy, skill enhancement, health education and empowerment of the local people, particularly focusing on disadvantaged women, children and youth.

To support the running of Nishtha India's community centre along with any programmes or enterprises that work for individual improvement and for the benefit of society as a whole, empowering rural communities to meet their particular challenges and to understand better how to work towards world peace.

To promote understanding of nature and awareness of environmental issues pertinent to Himachal Pradesh including disaster mitigation, organic agriculture and development of appropriate livelihoods and technologies.

### Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Nishtha Trust UK is fully aware of the Legal requirement we have as Trustees to comply with our duty to have due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising our powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant. Noting the guidance available on the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) web/site, a summary of the main activities approved and funded by Nishtha Trust UK can be provided upon request. These represent the approved selection of the proposals proposed by Nishtha India (our defined project) for the given year.

The original proposals are duly considered at the April meeting after discussion and verification of detail; then approved or not (eg modifications requested), as fulfilling the charity's Objects and clearly representing public benefit, with different

strands of activity benefitting different sections of the public. There is a primary focus on women and children.

## Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grant making;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

The Nishtha UK Trustees exercise their power in fulfilling their objectives and in line with the Trust Deed section 'Application of income' to determine whether or not a proposal from Nishtha India is funded or not, using the detailed criteria set out in the Deed.

The grant-making policy is described in the Policy Document, but at each meeting (held bi-annually) Trustees set aside significant discussion time in order to reach consensus on the validity and appropriateness of the funding proposals made for the year. This year, these were all agreed, given the disruption caused by Covid 19 and the need to adapt to circumstances on the ground quickly. See this year's activities below for more information.

All UK Trustees are volunteers, and all make a significant contribution to the success of the Trust - in particular those undertaking officer roles. Within those roles it is recognised that the time and dedication required for the Treasurer role is particularly demanding and appreciated.

## Section D

## Achievements and performance

**Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year**

The UK Trust has fulfilled its governing role through:

### ***To April Trustee meeting 2024:***

- considering and clarifying Nishtha India's 2024/25 proposals, ensuring these are aligned with the Trust Deed's aims and objectives and donors' wishes where relevant;
- receiving, managing securely, recording and inspecting as appropriate donations to Nishtha Trust UK
- submitting to HMRC applications for refund of Gift Aid from the express intentions of donors.
- thanking and responding to each donor and other relevant charity enquiry communications
- receiving communications and responding promptly from and to India-based operatives
- where possible, visits to project undertaken by one or more Trustees (self-funded by them) to ensure approved proposals are implemented optimally and to inform the other Trustees of progress
- monitoring fundraising activities by donors & India-based unpaid fund-raiser to ensure Trust's aims and objectives are met and uphold Charity's integrity
- reviewing funding decisions at the bi-annual meetings, considering and approving as appropriate the interim and EOY reports on expenditure and activities provided by Nishtha India
- as necessary sending prompt and secure email communications between trustees to review and modify any decisions made at the bi-annual meetings
- receiving and reviewing the activities of the India-based unpaid fund-raiser (with whom a written agreement exists) and approving targeted proposals from the fund-raiser to individual donors where relevant (usually 2 per year)
- managing any funds received through UK-based fund-raising sites eg Everyclick/Give as You Live/Facebook
- monitoring Charities Commission policies and procedures and changing or developing Nishtha Trust UK's policies and procedures in line with this guidance and UK/EU law (eg monitoring of GDPR)
- ensuring UK-related materials, eg the bank details, Trust personnel, Gift Aid procedures etc used on the India-based website are current and subject to UK laws (GDPR, Charities Commission)

- maintaining secure and detailed records of donations, donors (where consent has been given) and related financial records in line with UK charity policies and procedures, archiving as required
- ensuring we maintain an optimal number of Trustees experienced in the context and/or work of Nishtha India for balanced and meaningful decision-making – there have been 7 Trustees since 2020.
- monitoring all Trust activities to ensure they meet the Deed's wording and intention.
- Undertaking any other activities required by circumstance to fulfil the charity's objectives.
- Communicating by one annual Chair's letter of thanks and news updates with donors

During April 23 to March 24 the Trust has worked in the following areas through its India funding. Next year (2025) will be the 30th anniversary of Nishtha Trust so as we approach this milestone we celebrate the ongoing dedication of all the team in India.

### **Outreach health clinics**

The outreach health education clinics are key to providing health support to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the most remote areas. The single women activists take this opportunity to educate and support the most vulnerable in accessing government services that they would otherwise not be able to.

A new car purchased by a local donor has made accessing remote areas much more efficient.

Children and adults with disability and their families face severe challenges in day-to-day living. Through donations the Nishtha ambulance continues to transport the most needy to the local government hospital free of charge, so that they can at least access some basic care; it also takes children with disabilities to a nearby therapy centre.

The life of one of our most severely disabled people and her carer was improved by simply buying a bed and bedding - help for example in buying aids such as calipers can transform a young person's mobility.

### **Education, Children's and Youth Programmes**

Donations are currently supporting 21 students from disadvantaged backgrounds through college. These students who would not otherwise be able to continue with their studies are selected through interview. They are a close-knit group who maintain their ties with Nishtha and support younger children through programmes at the community centre which are very well attended.

The Wenlido programme to empower girls and young women mentally and physically continues to be a highlight in the programme of educational activities. It is highly valued.

Staff have now also been trained to deliver workshops to pre-adolescent and adolescent boys which have proved challenging and successful.

### **Clean Green Rakkar**

A commercial organisation has moved into the area collecting rubbish to sell on which has somewhat disrupted the hard-earned education work carried out by the Nishtha team of stressing the importance of segregating rubbish. So this year the focus has been on working with children to concentrate on local clean ups, drain clearing and education. The person who leads the programme is also now able to access villages where the outreach health clinics are held so we hope to expand the scope of this work.

The water filter maintenance remains perhaps the most important health intervention that Nishtha UK supports and should not be underestimated.

### Nishtha Benefit Cycle

We are organising another unique fundraising cycle trip in November 2024, around the area close to Nishtha India's work.

Sixteen cyclists from the UK will cycle some 400km in remote areas rarely seen even by those who live here. As well as visiting Rakkar village and engaging with the health and community work we are very pleased to be able visit the villages where outreach clinics are held. Donations have helped Nishtha to purchase a number of bicycles which are extremely popular with the children and we look forward to them sharing their skills and enthusiasm with us.

## Section E Financial review

### Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

#### Reserve Policy

The Trust maintains a minimum operational annual reserve of £400 for administrative costs and expense claims, with all remaining funds available for project implementation.

Due to the timing between funds raised and funds distributed, the Trust runs an implicit reserve equal to the last annual fund disbursement, providing a degree of comfort. The trustees reviewed reserve options in April 2014, 2018 and 2023, and agreed that the various formal reserve policy options suggested were likely to be overly restrictive. It was agreed to maintain the current flexible approach.

### Details of any funds materially in deficit

None

### Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The majority of the charity's funds derive from individuals' donations, the headline figure of which is supplemented by Gift Aid income from those eligible. In addition this year three small charitable Trusts have themselves donated to Nishtha UK as its aims and objectives align with those of the donating bodies. Our key objectives have been met by reviewing the proposals made by the India-based operatives and directing our donated funds to the areas indicated in the above reporting.

Due to the vagaries of Indian banking requirements and how the funds received can be managed throughout the year, it was formally agreed (documents available upon request by email) to place any reserves into an interest-bearing Corpus Fund to address sustainability issues and for it and any interest accrued (accounted for separately) to be used only by unanimous approval of Nishtha UK Trust Trustees. Transactions are governed by Indian banking law and require letters of intent to accompany each transaction.

The India-based unpaid by UK Trustfund-raiser communicates regularly with individuals and groups who have visited or expressed an interest in the charity's activities. This includes sending calendars and a public website <https://nishtha-hp.org/> where donors can see all the latest projects they have funded (as directed by Trustees).

UK Trustees endeavour to fund-raise as and where they can, eg by distributing information leaflets.

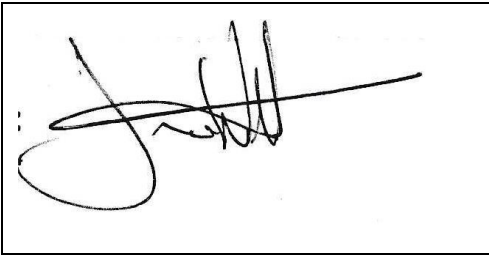
Investment of donated funds are a deposit account with the charity's current account bank, and this year Trustees agreed to re-deposit these invested amounts in a new fixed deposit account with a higher rate through to July/August 2025, as funding surplus to operational expenditure has historically been limited. This investment is reviewed annually to ensure it is fit for purpose.

Section F	Other optional information
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Section G	Declaration
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The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.  
Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)

	
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Full name(s)

Joanna Watt	
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Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)

Chair	
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Date

29 September 2024
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# **Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Nishtha UK Trust**

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Nishtha UK Trust**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Nishtha UK Trust for the financial year ending 31 March 2024.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

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

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act;
2. The accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. The accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

I confirm that there are no other matters to which your attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Full Name: Michael Chang Kit

Qualifications: MFin, CFA

Job Title: Director, Risk Management

Address: 16H John Spencer Square, London, N1 2LZ

Date: 8-Sep-2024