



# Swindon Hindu Temple Trust

(Charity Registration Number: 1158603)

## TRUSTEES' REPORT

The Trustees present their annual report and Financial Accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2023. The financial accounts have been prepared generally, in accordance with Accepted Accounting Practice.

## REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

**Charity Name:** Swindon Hindu Temple Trust

**Charity Registration Number:** 1158603

**Website:** [www.swindonhindutemple.com](http://www.swindonhindutemple.com)

**Email:** [swindonhindutemple@gmail.com](mailto:swindonhindutemple@gmail.com)

**Bankers:** Barclays Bank

### Board of Trustees

(who served during the year or up to the date of this report)

1. Mrs Neetu Bhardwaj
2. Mr Vinay Kumar
3. Mr Ram Thiagarajah
4. Mr Pradeep Bhardwaj
5. Mrs Nirupama Satish
6. Mr Suresha Gattapur

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

### Governing Document

Swindon Hindu Temple Trust is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2014 under Charity Number 1158603. It is governed by a constitution/deed of trust last updated in Sep 2014.

### Organisational Structure

The Charity Trustees are responsible for the general control, management and governance of the Charity. The Trustees give their time, skills and services freely and receive no remuneration or financial benefits.

The Trustees meet together as a body on a regular basis and are responsible for all decisions taken in relation to running the Trust and the community facilities and activities provided by the charity.

## Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

Seven (7) Trustees were appointed initially at the time of setting up the Trust in 2014. Currently there are six (6) Trustees. Appointment of Trustees was made taking into consideration their individuals' skills, expertise, variety of backgrounds, past contributions, commitment and availability to undertake the Trust's activities and duties. In selecting new trustees, we seek to identify people who have consistently demonstrated strategic leadership, vision & forward thinking, regularly contributed to the objectives of the Trust, attend events and functions organised by the charity and are willing to volunteer to help in our broader community work and main objectives of establishing and managing the Hindu Temple and Cultural Centre in Swindon. New trustees are appointed only after they have successfully demonstrated their eligibility, personal competence, contributions, commitment, availability, specialist knowledge and skills over a period of time. No new trustees were appointed in the reporting period. There were no resignations in the reporting period.

## Induction and Training of Trustees

Following appointment, new Trustees are introduced to their role, the governing document, aims of the Trust, policies of the charity and the guidance from Charity Commission on charities and public benefit. This ensures that the new Trustees are aware of the scope of their responsibilities under the Charities Act. All Trustees are given induction training. The Trustees are also encouraged to undertake other training such as Basic First Aid Training.

## Risk Management

The Trustees regularly assess the risks the charity faces, the nature of those risks, the likelihood of the risks occurring, and measures taken to manage them. The Trustees are satisfied that systems/arrangements are in place to manage the risks identified.

## AIMS & OBJECTIVES

### Aim

The aims of the charity are set out in the charity's deed of trust and summarised below:

To advance the Hindu faith in the Swindon area for the benefit of the public in particular through the holding of prayer meetings, lectures, public celebration of religious festivals.

To build and manage a Hindu Temple and Cultural Centre in Swindon.

To provide facilities for religious, social and cultural activities for the use of the public with the objective of improving the conditions of life for all residents of Swindon and the neighbourhood by the provision, maintenance and management of a community/cultural centre.

### Objectives

To promote Hindu Faith, its doctrines, its scriptures and practice Hindu beliefs through assembly, worship and discourse.

To establish, maintain and manage a Hindu Temple and Cultural Centre for religious, social, and cultural activities for the use of the public.

To offer facilities for religious functions and for performing religious rites (as per Hindu Faith) related to births, deaths and marriages for people of all faiths.

To provide a meeting place for Hindus and for others who are interested in Hinduism.

To advance traditional Hindu cultural activities, religious studies & performing arts.

To provide facilities for and actively co-ordinate social care, social interaction, friendship and goodwill among people in the wider community.

To form a charitable and educational organization to promote social, cultural, religious principles and practice.

To conduct educational programmes for children as well as adults based on Hindu values and traditions.

## PUBLIC BENEFIT

The objects of the Trust are the promotion of any charitable purposes for the benefit of all residents in the Borough of Swindon and any other exclusively charitable purposes which are in the opinion of the Trustees beneficial to the peoples of Swindon. The Trust offers facilities for religious, social and cultural activities for the use of the public and for thousands of Hindus in the region in particular who do not have any such facilities. Within a short period, the Trust has already made its presence felt within the wider community in several ways.

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Aims and objectives and in planning future activities. The Trustees also confirm that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

The charity carries out a wide range of activities in pursuance of its charitable aims. The Trustees consider that these activities provide benefits both to those who attend prayers/religious events and the wider community of Swindon. Detailed information is provided in the Activities and Achievements sections in this Report about how activities of the Trust further the charity's purposes for the public benefit. The immediate identifiable benefits are (1) the value to those who regularly participate in the worship and other events of the charity and to the wider community of Swindon of the Trust's work, and (2) how the facilities provided by the Trust are made available to Hindus and the faith of Hinduism is communicated to non-Hindus through its work and that any member of the wider community of Swindon can benefit from the Trust's facilities, & social, cultural, community, charitable activities.

## STRATEGIES ADOPTED

In order to carry out day to day activities of the of the Trust, several volunteers are identified with specific skill-sets required for the various activities. Swindon Hindu Temple & Cultural Centre continues to serves as the focal point within the region for all matters related to the Hindu faith and population in respect of their religious, cultural, social, community and charitable aspirations and endeavours.

## ACTIVITIES

During the reporting period, the Trust mainly organised volunteering activities, and moved many of its activities to virtual/online format. As the Trust lost its premises due to the multiple break-ins in 2021, the Trust spent a significant amount of time, energy and resources to find new premises for the temple and then to refurbish and relocate the temple. This has been a very challenging period for the organisation as well as its members, office bearers and the congregation at large but we are relieved that we have found a new home for the temple now and it is fully up and running.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

The Trust has accomplished several milestones in a short period in last few years. The Trust has a good visibility into the local community and the local government. The Trust has truly become the focal point of contact within the region for matters related to the Hindu faith and population. In addition to the regular congregation, the Trust has also organised celebration of several Hindu festivals and important community events. The biggest achievement was re-establishing the Temple at its new site in the Town Centre.

### EVENTS /FESTIVALS

Since the loss of the original Temple site at Cheney Manor Industrial Estate on 21<sup>st</sup> Oct 2021, due to the lease of the premises terminated on health and safety grounds, the Temple was not operational for most part of the year. The moorthis and all the other possessions of the Temple were kept in temporary storage at Wyvern House, a site taken from the Council.

On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022, we had announced our plans for new premises for the Temple at Regent House, another site owned by the Council in the Town Centre. Rigorous work was then carried out to acquire this new site, as well as to obtain statutory planning consent and to undertake extensive refurbishment including moving the heavy wooden hand-carved mandapams, re-installing them at the new premises and redecorating the premises.

On 14<sup>th</sup> Oct 2022, we signed a formal lease with the Council for Regent House and after a prolonged period, we received the Planning permission for Regent House on 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 2022.

On 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 2022, we formally took for possession for Regent House and started to operate the Temple again from these new premises in the Town Centre, comprising of 4 halls located on 2 floors above the Chaat Café, opposite the Central Library.

Finally, on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2023, we had a big re-opening ceremony of the Temple with Ganesh Homam and Sudarshan Homam puja performed by professional priests. Hundreds of people participated in the re-opening ceremony. It was exactly 479 days since we lost our previous home for the Temple in Cheney Manor Industrial Estate and we were very excited to be able to start serving the religious, cultural, social and charitable needs of the community again. During this time, our countless volunteers worked relentlessly to re-establish the Temple and transform the place into a colourful, vibrant and welcoming hub for the community.

On 18<sup>th</sup> February 2023, we celebrated the auspicious festival of Maha Shivratri, attended by hundreds of people.

On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023, we observed the Festival of Colours, Holi at the Temple and then organised a big public celebration of Holi at Southbrook Inn on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2023 where hundreds of people played with colours.

On 19<sup>th</sup> March 2023, we hosted a programme of Sukshmakriya Yoga/Meditation.

On 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023, we celebrated the festival of Ram Navami.

It was a very difficult year for the Temple and the entire community but the Temple is back again on its feet, serving the people and the town with full vigour and enthusiasm.

## CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an important and valuable resource in both our faith and community work. While the Trustees provide overall leadership and strategic long-term oversight for the Trust, the day-to-day activities of the Trust are mainly managed and run by a team of enthusiastic volunteers who strongly believe in the cause and offer full support to the Trust. Swindon Hindu Temple Trust is well known in the entire area for its charitable work and activities and the strength of its volunteers.

The volunteers not only support the activities of the Trust but are also involved in similar voluntary contributions in other community organisations and the wider community in Swindon in general. The Trust formally records its immense gratitude and thanks to all the volunteers for devoting their time, efforts and support for the activities of the Trust.

The contribution of our volunteers was specially visible and felt in every possible way specially in this year when they worked relentlessly to restart the Temple at its new premises, moving all the artefacts, moorthis, mandapams, refurbishing and redecorating the premises and resuming the various activities that the Temple is so well known for.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Total income for the financial year ending 31 March 2023 is £23,249.36. The Income is mainly generated by donations given to the Trust by its members and the general public. The Expenditure for the same period is £16,995.64. The main expenditure items include professional services for Planning application for potential sites at Regent House and Old Coop Wroughton, Transport Planning consultancy for planning application, refurbishment expenses for Regent House, utility charges, insurance, bank fees, new website charges. Financial statement for the year 2022-2023 is submitted along with the Trustees Annual Report.

## RESERVES POLICY

The Trust's policy is to maintain unrestricted funds in the form of free reserves, at a level that equates to approximately 12 months of operational expenditure, to organise regular events/activities and to raise funds to facilitate the establishment of a permanent building or premises for Swindon Hindu Temple & Cultural Centre which can be used by community. The balance of reserves at the end of 31 March 2023 is £210,218.

**Approved by the Trustees and signed on its behalf by**

Chairman

**SWINDON HINDU TEMPLE TRUST**  
**INCOME & EXPENSES FOR 2022-23**  
**(Registered Charity number : 1158603)**  
2022-23

|                                      |                    |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Cash and Cash Equivalents 1st April  | £203,964.28        |
| Income for the year                  | £23,249.36         |
| Total                                | <u>£227,213.64</u> |
| Less: Expenses                       | <u>£16,995.64</u>  |
|                                      | £210,218.00        |
| Unaccounted                          | £210,218.00        |
| Cash in hand                         |                    |
| Cash at Bank                         | £210,218.00        |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents 31st March | <u>£210,218.00</u> |

2021-22

£204,314.51

£14,515.83

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£218,830.34

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£14,866.06

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£203,964.28

£203,964.28

£203,964.28

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£203,964.28

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