

VRINDAVANAM

Charity Number: 1204487

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 24 August 2024

1. Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: VRINDAVANAM

Charity Number: 1204487

Charity Type: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Date of Incorporation: 25 August 2023

Governing Document: Constitution adopted on 25 August 2023

Registered Address: Vrindavanam, FAO Mr S Verma, 9-11 New Broadway, LONDON, W5 5AW

Trustees Serving During the Year:

Prashant Sharma (*Chair*)

Meenu Bhardwaj

Rajesh Bharadwaj

Sanjeev Kumar Verma

Vivek Gautam

Neha Babbar

2. Structure, Governance and Management

VRINDAVANAM is a registered **Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)**, established on **25 August 2023** and governed by a constitution that complies with the requirements of the **Charities Act 2011**. The CIO structure provides the charity with legal personality and limited liability while ensuring flexibility and simplicity in governance, appropriate for a faith-based community initiative.

Governing Document

The charity operates under a **written constitution** adopted at inception, which sets out the charity's objects, powers, and governance arrangements. It ensures the trustees act lawfully, in furtherance of the charity's public benefit objectives, and provides the framework for financial controls, safeguarding, and decision-making.

Trustee Board

The charity is overseen by a **Board of Trustees**, who are the charity's only voting members. The board is responsible for:

- Setting strategic direction and ensuring delivery of charitable objectives.
- Overseeing good governance, safeguarding, and financial stewardship.
- Monitoring compliance with relevant laws, policies, and regulatory obligations.

New trustees are appointed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the constitution. The board seeks individuals with relevant skills and lived commitment to the charity's vision, and provides all trustees with ongoing support, including induction and access to sector guidance.

Meetings and Delegation

The trustees meet regularly throughout the year to review programme progress, financial management, and future planning. While day-to-day activities may be delegated to volunteers or sub-groups, ultimate accountability remains with the board.

Safeguarding and Risk Management

Trustees maintain oversight of the charity's safeguarding duties and have begun to implement a basic safeguarding framework tailored to the charity's scale and community context. A more formal safeguarding policy and named safeguarding lead will be designated in the coming year.

3. Charitable Objectives

The fundamental purpose of **VRINDAVANAM**, as outlined in its constitution, is to **advance the Hindu religion for the public benefit**, in accordance with the teachings of sacred scriptures such as the **Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam**, and other revered texts of the **Sanatan Dharma** tradition. Our objectives are not merely philosophical but deeply practical — designed to serve individuals, families, and communities by providing spiritual enrichment, cultural education, and compassionate outreach.

We believe that **spiritual knowledge, cultural rootedness, and compassionate action** form the triad of a fulfilled and balanced life. To that end, our charity pursues its aims through a broad and inclusive range of activities:

- **Spiritual Teaching & Devotional Practice**

We promote the principles of **Bhakti Yoga** — the path of loving devotion — through regular satsangs, collective kirtans (devotional singing), guided mantra meditation, and discourses on sacred texts. Our goal is to make ancient wisdom available in a form that is relevant, accessible, and engaging for modern spiritual seekers.

- **Providing Sacred Space and Community**

Creating spaces — both physical and virtual — for spiritual gathering is central to our mission. These spaces become sanctuaries of learning, reflection, and community bonding. Whether through hired halls in London or streamed events online, we offer environments where individuals can connect with themselves, with others, and with the divine.

- **Education and Cultural Transmission**

Education lies at the heart of transformation. We deliver structured programmes in **Hindu philosophy, Indian languages (Sanskrit and Hindi), devotional music, art, and ethics**. These not only preserve the rich traditions of the past but equip new generations with tools for moral clarity, cultural identity, and respectful living.

- **Literature and Digital Resources**

To reach a wider audience, we publish and distribute **printed and electronic materials** that share scriptural insights, spiritual commentary, and devotional guidance. This includes articles, e-books, audio teachings, and digital content shared via our website and social platforms.

- **Festivals and Holy Celebrations**

Celebrating **Hindu holy days and festivals** is a powerful way to bring communities together. These events combine joy, ritual, and meaning — creating opportunities for shared prayer, cultural immersion, and spiritual reflection. We commemorate Janmashtami, Diwali, and other festivals with open, inclusive gatherings.

- **Charitable Outreach and Relief**

As part of our dharma, we are committed to **serving the poor and underprivileged**, particularly in India. Our food distribution projects, school kit donations, and support for families in hardship reflect our belief that **service to humanity is service to God** (*Nar Seva Narayan Seva*).

- **Interfaith and Inclusive Dialogue**

In a diverse and global society, we actively promote **interfaith understanding**, welcoming individuals from all backgrounds to experience the beauty and universality of Hindu thought. We engage in partnerships, roundtables, and dialogues that foster unity, empathy, and common ethical values.

4. Chair's Statement

It brings me great joy and spiritual fulfilment to present the inaugural annual report of **VRINDAVANAM**. Since our formal inception in 2023, we have been blessed to witness the transformative power of **seva** (selfless service), **shraddha** (faith), and **sangha** (community). What began as a heartfelt desire to share the eternal wisdom of the Hindu scriptures has blossomed into a vibrant spiritual and humanitarian movement — modest in its material means, yet profound in its intention and impact.

Our journey began not with fanfare, but with purpose: to create a sacred space — physical, digital, and emotional — where people of all backgrounds can connect with the life-affirming philosophy of the Vedas, experience the joy of **bhakti** (devotion), and participate in practical acts of compassion. Over the past year, we have hosted devotional gatherings in London, distributed hot meals to struggling families in Vrindavan, empowered youth with cultural education, and built a growing digital presence that makes the timeless teachings of our tradition accessible to all.

These accomplishments are not ours alone. They belong to the **volunteers who offer their time without expectation**, to the **donors who give with love**, and to the **spiritual elders and guides** who bless our journey. Each moment of contribution, whether it's packing a food parcel or leading a kirtan, becomes a strand in the fabric of a movement that is as ancient as it is urgently needed.

But let us be clear — this is only the beginning.

As we look to the future, we see a horizon filled with opportunity. The need for spiritual grounding in a fragmented world has never been greater. The hunger for belonging, for meaning, and for service calls out not only in the temples of India, but in the heart of every city, every home, and every soul.

In the coming years, we aspire to create a dedicated devotional and educational centre in London, deepen our impact in India through food and educational support, and expand our digital footprint to reach seekers and communities across the globe. Most importantly, we aim to keep our hearts open and our mission anchored in humility and service.

I thank every member of our growing family — from the youngest participant in a music class to the elders offering their blessings. You are not just supporters of VRINDAVANAM; you **are** VRINDAVANAM.

Let us walk forward together — not only in remembrance of Vrindavan as a sacred geography, but in the awakening of Vrindavan in every heart.

With gratitude and prayer,

Prashant Sharma
Chair of Trustees

5. Activities and Achievements

During the financial year 2023–24, **VRINDAVANAM** delivered a diverse and impactful set of activities aligned with our charitable objectives. Each initiative combined devotional practice, education, outreach, and community building:

- **Organised multiple monthly satsangs and devotional kirtans** in hired venues and online across London. These gatherings brought together huge participants throughout the year and provided spaces for chanting, scripture readings, and spiritual fellowship.
- **Conducted continuous online scripture classes** via Zoom, focusing on the Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, and other Vedic teachings. These sessions provided an accessible platform for spiritual growth and were attended by seekers from the UK, India, and beyond.
- **Initiated youth learning programmes in harmonium and tabla**, These encouraged cultural education and devotional expression among young members of the community.
- **Distributed prepared meals in the events** Food was served as sanctified prasad in accordance with Hindu traditions, and the initiative was supported by local volunteers and on-the-ground coordinators.
- **Celebrated major Hindu festivals**, including Janmashtami and Diwali, through community events that combined worship, music, drama, and cultural presentations. These festivals fostered inclusiveness and cross-generational engagement.
- **Established a digital presence** with an actively updated website and social media channels.
- **Launched interfaith roundtable discussions** with local organisations in West London to promote religious harmony, dialogue, and mutual understanding across cultural lines.

6. Public Benefit Statement

In accordance with the **Charities Act 2011**, the trustees confirm that they have **paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit** in all aspects of the charity's planning, decision-making, and delivery of services.

The activities undertaken by **VRINDAVANAM** during the year have directly contributed to the advancement of its charitable objectives while delivering demonstrable benefits to the public. These benefits have been inclusive, accessible, and relevant to a wide range of individuals and communities, both in the UK and abroad.

Key Areas of Public Benefit:

- **Making Hindu spiritual wisdom and devotional practice freely accessible** through satsangs, kirtans, scripture classes, and online teachings open to all regardless of background, belief, or ability to pay.
- **Enhancing community welfare** by distributing food to the needy, supporting basic education for disadvantaged children, and providing spiritual guidance to individuals facing hardship.
- **Promoting peace, diversity, and interfaith harmony** by organising inclusive events and participating in roundtables that encourage mutual understanding and shared values among different religious and cultural communities.
- **Fostering cultural preservation and appreciation** among youth, especially from the South Asian diaspora, through music, language, philosophy, and moral instruction rooted in the Hindu tradition.
- **Encouraging ethical living and inclusive service** by inspiring volunteers and beneficiaries to engage in selfless action, personal growth, and community contribution guided by dharmic principles.

Through these actions, VRINDAVANAM ensures that its work is not only religious in nature but clearly contributes to the **spiritual, cultural, and social upliftment of the wider public**.

7. Volunteering and Community Engagement

At the heart of **VRINDAVANAM's** growth and impact is a vibrant community of **dedicated volunteers** who bring the charity's vision to life. Their contributions are not only essential to delivering programmes and events, but also deeply aligned with the ethos of **selfless service (seva)**, which underpins our spiritual mission.

During the reporting period, volunteers collectively contributed **over 500 hours**. Their service reflects a unique blend of compassion, faith, and professionalism.

We actively encourage a **participatory culture**, where individuals feel inspired to engage meaningfully with our mission. All new volunteers receive informal orientation, access to senior mentors, and opportunities to deepen their understanding of devotional service through experience and dialogue.

Core Areas of Volunteer Involvement:

- **Event coordination and logistics**

Volunteers assist with venue setup, seating, audio-visual arrangements, prasad preparation, and post-event cleanup for satsangs and public festivals.

- **Teaching and mentoring**

Experienced volunteers support the delivery of classes in music, philosophy, and youth engagement, often bringing their own expertise to enhance learning.

- **Digital communications and outreach**

Roles include social media management, website updates, video editing, and email newsletters — allowing us to reach a global audience with daily wisdom and news.

- **Administrative support**

Volunteers assist with bookkeeping, donation tracking, procurement coordination, and records management — ensuring transparency and compliance.

- **Food distribution and aid logistics**

In India, local volunteers help identify families in need, coordinate bulk food purchase, and oversee safe and respectful delivery of meals and supplies.

As a young charity, VRINDAVANAM's strength lies in the devotion and energy of its supporters. We are committed to growing this volunteer base and formalising a **Volunteer Development Pathway** in the coming year to recruit, train, and retain individuals who wish to serve in alignment with our values.

8. Digital Outreach and Communication

Recognising the importance of technology in contemporary spiritual engagement, **VRINDAVANAM** has made significant strides in building a robust and accessible **digital presence**. Our aim is to ensure that the timeless teachings of Sanatan Dharma can be shared not only within local communities, but also with seekers across the globe, regardless of geographic or physical barriers.

In our first year of operation, our digital outreach strategy has focused on **education, accessibility, and community-building**. Through a blend of social media, mobile communication, virtual classes, and digital resources, we have created a vibrant online ecosystem that complements our physical activities.

Highlights of Digital Engagement:

- **Launch of our official website**

The website now serves as our central hub for sharing upcoming events, devotional blog articles, scripture resources, and donation portals. It is regularly updated and designed to be accessible to all age groups.

- **WhatsApp devotional updates**

A weekly circulation of inspirational messages, short teachings, kirtan clips, and service opportunities is sent to subscribers via WhatsApp, nurturing a spiritual rhythm among followers. Feedback has been consistently positive, with many describing the updates as a source of daily upliftment.

- **Active presence on social media**

We have steadily grown our presence on **Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube**, reaching **unique users each month**. Our YouTube channel features recorded satsangs, while Instagram and Facebook are used to promote event content and spiritual reflections.

- **Live and recorded virtual classes via Zoom**

Throughout the year, we delivered over **20 virtual sessions**, including Bhagavad Gita study, devotional music tutorials, and Q&A satsangs.

These digital efforts have allowed us to **scale impact efficiently, engage diaspora communities**, and remain accessible to those who may not be able to attend physical events due to health, location, or scheduling constraints. We consider digital outreach to be a **permanent and growing pillar** of our mission delivery strategy.

9. Financial Statements

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 24 August 2024

Income	Amount (£)
Donations (Unrestricted)	11,727.81
Total Receipts	11,727.81

Expenditure	Amount (£)
Marketing and Advertisement	1584.83
Bank Charges	25.26
Rent and Hiring Charges	5490.13
Food and Kitchen Expenses	1941.62
Computer Software and Website	360.71
Expenses from Prior Period	175.38
Sundry Expenses	1583.56
Total Payments	11,161.49

Net Surplus for the Year	£566.32
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Statement of Assets and Liabilities (Balance Sheet)

Category	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	Total (£)
Fixed Assets	582.64		582.64
Cash at bank and in hand	739.00	-	739.00
Debtors / Prepayments	35.00	-	35.00
Other current assets	-	-	-
Total Current Assets	774.00	-	774.00
Liabilities (unpaid expenses)	(755.00)	-	(755.00)
Other creditors	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	(755.00)	-	(755.00)
Net Assets	566.32	-	566.32

Reconciliation of Funds

Fund Type	Brought Forward (£)	Incoming (£)	Outgoing (£)	Carried Forward (£)
Unrestricted Funds	–	11,727.81	(11,161.49)	566.32
Restricted Funds	–	–	–	–
Total Funds	–	11,727.81	(11,161.49)	566.32

10. Future Plans and Strategic Direction

As **VRINDAVANAM** moves confidently into its second operational year, the trustees have outlined a set of strategic priorities that reflect both the growth potential of the charity and the evolving needs of the communities we serve. These plans are shaped by our experience in the first year, the feedback from beneficiaries and volunteers, and the overarching aim to deepen our **spiritual, cultural, and social impact**.

The trustees are committed to ensuring that the charity develops **sustainably, inclusively, and innovatively**, balancing devotional depth with effective programme delivery.

Strategic Priorities for 2024–2025

- **Secure a dedicated venue in West London**

One of our foremost goals is to secure a semi-permanent space where we can hold **regular satsangs, youth classes, kirtans, and workshops**.

- **Launch an immersive annual retreat**

We plan to organise an **annual spiritual retreat** for at least 50 participants. This residential programme will combine scriptural study, kirtan, seva, and guided meditation — offering a deeper and more transformative experience of devotional life.

- **Pursue external funding for key projects**

Trustees will begin applying for **grants and institutional funding** to support specific projects including **volunteer training, cultural education**, and digital resource development.

- **Develop a structured e-learning platform**

We will initiate the design of an **online learning hub** offering pre-recorded classes, downloadable study guides, and interactive learning modules for Bhagavad Gita, devotional arts, and cultural heritage topics.

- **Formalise volunteer infrastructure**

The formation of a **Volunteer Development Committee** is planned to help strengthen the recruitment, support, and retention of volunteers. This body will also oversee volunteer safeguarding and skills development.

- **Build meaningful partnerships with faith organisations**

We aim to **collaborate with at least two UK-based temples or interfaith charities** to co-deliver public events, promote shared values, and engage in community bridge-building across traditions.

11. Safeguarding and Inclusion

The trustees of **VRINDAVANAM** are fully committed to creating a **safe, inclusive, and respectful environment** for all individuals involved in the charity's activities — including participants, volunteers, trustees, and members of the wider public. While the charity does not regularly provide services to children or vulnerable adults, we acknowledge the potential risks that can arise in **faith-based, community-facing environments** and the corresponding duty of care.

We believe safeguarding is not simply a matter of compliance, but a fundamental reflection of our dharmic values of **respect, non-violence (ahimsa), and integrity**.

Safeguarding Measures Implemented During the Year:

- **Volunteer awareness and oversight**

All volunteers who are involved in youth-facing roles (e.g. music teaching or event assistance) are personally known to the trustees and are supervised during activities. Informal vetting and referrals are part of our internal process.

- **Code of conduct communication**

We have introduced basic **expectations of conduct** for all volunteers and event participants — covering respectful communication, non-discrimination, and boundaries in both physical and online spaces.

- **Initial safeguarding policy adopted**

A **preliminary safeguarding policy** has been drafted using templates and guidance from the Charity Commission. It outlines reporting procedures, whistleblowing guidance, and expected behaviours. This policy will be reviewed and expanded as the charity grows.

- **Safeguarding oversight commitment**

The trustees have pledged to **appoint a named safeguarding trustee** in the next financial year. This individual will be responsible for leading safeguarding training, updating policies, and liaising with external experts where necessary.

In the year ahead, we will continue to strengthen our safeguarding framework in proportion to the scale of our operations — with a particular focus on training, documentation, and safe recruitment.

12. Related Party Transactions

In the course of the year, the charity engaged in the following transactions with trustees and related persons. All transactions were conducted on an arm's length basis and in furtherance of the charity's objects. The trustees received no remuneration for their roles.

Name / Relationship	Amount Spent (£)	Amount Reimbursed (£)	Net Balance Due / (Repaid) (£)
Garima Verma (Wife of trustee Sanjeev Kumar Verma)	798.82	767.32	31.50 (due to related party)
Neha Babbar (Trustee)	179.99	0.00	179.99 (due to trustee)
Prashant Sharma (Trustee)	2,632.26	2,080.00	552.26 (due to trustee)

Total amount due to related parties at year end: £763.75

This comprises:

- £552.26 due to Prashant Sharma
- £179.99 due to Neha Babbar
- £31.50 due to Garima Verma

These balances are included in trade creditors within the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

13. Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved this trustees' report and financial statements. It has been signed below by the Chair on behalf of all trustees.

Signed: _____

Name: Prashant Sharma (Chair)

Date: _____

14. Chair's Vision: Three-Year Outlook

As Chair of **VRINDAVANAM**, I hold a deep conviction that our charity can serve as a **nationally recognised beacon of Hindu spirituality and community service** in the UK and beyond. Our first year laid the groundwork; the years ahead offer an opportunity to scale our impact while remaining rooted in humility, tradition, and shared purpose.

The challenges facing the world — from loneliness and moral confusion to material hardship and spiritual disconnection — call for a response that is not only charitable, but **transformative**. I believe our dharmic values, when expressed through modern and inclusive means, can provide that response.

In the next three years, our strategic vision is centred on building **infrastructure, leadership, and long-term sustainability**. The trustees and I hope to pursue the following milestones:

- **Establish a permanent devotional and learning centre**

A physical centre in London will allow us to hold **weekly satsangs, youth programmes, interfaith gatherings, and cultural workshops** in a sacred, welcoming space that belongs to the community.

- **Expand operations in India**

In partnership with trusted local NGOs, we aim to launch **medical camps**, offer **education scholarships**, and increase our food relief coverage — extending our reach to thousands in rural North India.

- **Publish devotional resources**

Each year, we will publish **two educational and devotional booklets** — one in English, one in Hindi — designed for youth, families, and seekers new to Hindu practice. Topics may include daily practices, scriptural insights, ethical living, and stories from the epics.

- **Create a volunteer academy**

Our vision includes a structured **Volunteer Academy**, where dedicated individuals will be trained and certified in specific roles such as **youth teaching, devotional music, and event facilitation** — enhancing the quality and sustainability of our offerings.

- **Host an annual diaspora leadership summit**

We plan to initiate an **Annual Spiritual Leadership Conference** for Hindu voices across the UK and Europe. This forum will offer thought leadership, collaboration, and collective vision-building for the next generation of dharmic service.

Through these initiatives, we aspire not merely to grow in scale, but to **deepen in sincerity, integrity, and public benefit**. VRINDAVANAM will continue to stand as a bridge between ancient wisdom and modern relevance — rooted in scripture, active in service, and open to all.

16. Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement

At **VRINDAVANAM**, we recognise that sustainable impact is rarely achieved in isolation. The spirit of collaboration is deeply embedded in the Hindu worldview — one that honours **shared purpose (sahadharma)**, collective learning, and mutual service. As such, we actively seek to engage with like-minded individuals and organisations to amplify our mission and enrich the communities we serve.

During our first year of operation, we established a number of informal yet meaningful collaborations with both **faith-based** and **secular** partners, in the UK and India. These engagements have strengthened our delivery capacity, cultural richness, and community reach.

Key Engagements During the Year:

- **Local mandirs in Southall and Wembley**

We partnered with established Hindu temples to co-host devotional events and **collaborative food drives**, allowing us to reach wider audiences and strengthen cultural unity.

- **Small charities in Vrindavan, India**

On the ground in India, we worked alongside trusted grassroots organisations to manage **logistics, family identification, and distribution** for our food relief programme. These relationships ensured local cultural sensitivity and operational accountability.

- **Cultural educators and artists**

VRINDAVANAM collaborated with talented **musicians, dancers, and language instructors** to deliver engaging youth workshops in harmonium, tabla, and devotional arts — making learning joyful and interactive.

- **Digital service platforms**

We utilised tools such as **Zoom, YouTube, and Canva** to disseminate teachings, promote events, and connect with dispersed supporters globally. These platforms have been instrumental in establishing a professional digital identity.

Vision for Future Collaborations; Looking ahead, the trustees plan to develop **formal Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)** with key partner organisations. These agreements will define roles, expectations, and shared outcomes — enabling:

- Greater transparency and accountability
- Scalable co-branded initiatives
- Knowledge-sharing across missions and communities
- Broader representation in interfaith and cultural networks

We believe partnerships are not only operationally beneficial but **spiritually aligned** with our ethos — a reminder that the highest service is often done together, in unity and humility.