



**SUDARSHANAM-NI Annual Report**

**DECEMBER-2022 TO NOVEMBER 2023**

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE ABOVE DURATION**



The trustees are pleased to submit the report and accounts for Sudarshanam Hindu Samajam for the period December 2022 to November 2023.

#### Name, address and Constitution of the charity

**Charity Name:** Sudarshanam NI Hindu Malayalee Samajam  
**Charity Number:** 104670  
**Address:** 331, Spectrum Centre, Shankill Road, BT13 3AA

#### Structure, Governance and Management

Sudarshanam NI Hindu Malayalee Samajam is a voluntary charity organisation formed in October 2014 whose main objective is to bridge the cultural gap between Indian and Northern Ireland Culture, thereby providing an integrated welcoming environment where communities come together to educate, spread awareness and celebrate their festivals and traditions.

Sudarshanam Hindu Samajam provides a common platform for communities to come together, comprehend, celebrate and promote the eternal truth and teachings of Indian culture. The liability of its members is limited in that every member of the organisation undertakes to contribute an amount not exceeding £20 as monthly subscription towards the rent for weekly get together.

Our annual general body meeting was held at Spectrum on 04 December 2022 when we elected the following members to be a part of our Administration team.

#### Trustees selected on 04 December 2022:

**Pushpa**



**Suchitra**



**Saneesh**



**Nithin**



**Vidhya**



**Srikanth**



**Rajeev**



**Sreejith**



**Rajagopal**



**Bindu**



**Shivani**



**Rahul**



**Rohit**



Position	Member
Chairperson	Pushpa Srikanth
Vice Chairperson	Suchitra Surendran
Secretary	Saneesh Soman
Joint Secretary	Nithin Nath Somanath*
Finance Coordinator	Vidhya Ponulli
Cultural Coordinator	Srikanth Ganapati
Daily Program Coordinator	Rajeev Nair**
Antrim/Ballymena Program Coordinator	Sreejith Mohandas
Committee Members	Rajagopal Karunakaran Nair & Bindu Biju
Youth Representatives	Shivani, Rahul & Rohith

\*Resigned from the position during year and left Sudarshanam.

\*\*Resigned from the position during the year.



The legal governance of Sudarshanam Hindu Samajam is the responsibility of the charity trustees.

Sudarshanam Hindu Samajam registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

Trustees are appointed as required. Potential new Trustees are identified and invited to join by agreement of the existing Trustees. Trustee meetings are held during the year at which the activities, direction and finances of the organisation are discussed.

#### **Introduction:**

Sudarshanam Hindu Samajam NI is a charity organisation working towards promoting Hindu culture and among Indian Malayalee communities and promoting cultural relationships and exchanges between various communities in Belfast.

Sudarshanam Hindu Samajam is non-denominational. Sudarshanam Hindu Samajam has a child protection policy. Everyone working with the children has been Access NI checked.

Sudarshanam Hindu Samajam has a Vulnerable Person Safeguarding Policy. The trustees wish to record their gratitude and appreciation to the elders, core serve team, children's teams, house group leaders and the many other people who serve the organisation in various capacities and without whom the organisation could not function.

#### **Objectives and Activities of the Charity**

The main purpose of the Sudarshanam Hindu Samajam is to preserve & extend the knowledge of Hindu Culture, profound of Kerala Hindu community in Belfast, in particular, and around Northern Ireland in general. This is not restricted to the Indian population but disseminated to the local community as well. We want to ensure the new generation of Indian do not lose the Kerala Hindu culture of their motherland.

#### **Activities – December 2022 to November 2023**

We are proud that we were able to organise the following events which showcased the tradition and culture of Malayalee Hindu community.

<b>2022-2023 Event Calendar</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Sound &amp; Light Hire</b>	<b>Food</b>
31 Dec 2022	New Year Party	St. Patrick's Church	Biju Sound & Systems	Nice Catering Services
15 Jan 2023	Makaravilakku	Spectrum Centre	-	Internal
18 Feb 2023	Shivarathri Puja	Member's Residence	-	Internal
25 Feb 2023	Cancer Charity Event	Action Cancer	-	-
15 April 2023	Vishu Celebrations	Spectrum	Biju Sound & Systems	Internal
30 April 2023	Belfast Marathon	-	-	-
09 July 2023	Sports Day	Dunmurry Community Association	Adam's Sound & System	Internal
16 July 2023	Summer Picnic	Carnfunnock Country Park	-	Internal
02 Sep 2023	Onam Celebrations	St. MacNissi's Parish Centre	Adam's Sound & System	Internal
10 Sep 2023	Sri Krishna Janmashtami celebrations	Spectrum	-	Internal
24 Sep 2023	Ganesh Chaturthi	Spectrum	-	Internal
15 Oct – 24 Oct	Navaratri celebrations	Member's Residence	-	Internal
12 Nov 2023	Valaikaapu (Baby shower)	Member's Residence	-	Internal
18 Nov 2023	Diwali celebrations	Spectrum	Adam's Sound & System	Internal



### 31 December 2022 – New Year Celebrations



New year celebration was the first event conducted after the new committee was elected. The event was held at St. Patricks Church in Lisburn. The members were requested to come dressed in a 90's Indian Cinema character. The best dressed members (Male and Female) were awarded for their best efforts in replicating the character they chose to be dressed as. Karaoke, Ramp walk, free style dancing and fun games were some of activities we conducted. Overall, it was a fun filled entertainment for the kids and adults as we welcomed the New Year with family and friends.

### 15 January 2023 – Makaravilakku



Makaravilakku is an annual festival held on Makara Sankranti in Kerala, India at the shrine of Sabarimala. The festival includes the Thiruvabharanam (sacred ornaments of Lord Ayyappa) procession and a congregation at the hill shrine of Sabarimala. An estimated half a million devotees flow to Sabarimala every year to have a darshan (vision) of this ritual this day.

We at Sudarshanam made special arrangements to celebrate the auspicious Makaravilakku 2023 at Spectrum Center on 15 January 2023. The members decorated the venue and performed padipooja. Ayyappa bhajans were conducted where the kids and adults participated with divinity. Adults and kids shared their divine experience of Shabarimala pilgrimage.





### **18 February 2023 – Shivarathri Pooja**



Maha Shivarathri ("Great Night of Lord Shiva") is the most important event in India's spiritual calendar. Maha Shivarathri festival honours Lord Shiva, also known as "Mahadeva". Lord Shiva is the oldest revered God in Hinduism, and Maha Shivarathri is a major festival which widely commemorates the conquering of darkness and ignorance in life and is also the night of marriage between Shiva & Shakti (Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati).

One of our Sudarshanam member organised a puja at their residence on 18 February 2023. Shiv puja conducted on this day is highly meritorious and bestows health, wealth, harmony, success and spiritual progress. The other members along with their kids participated in this puja to invoke Lord Shiva's blessings.

### **25 February 2023 – Action Cancer Charity Event**



Sudarshanam participated in the Action Cancer Charity Event that was held on 25 February 2023. Sudarshanam team put up a food stall for the event selling delicious Indian delicacies and made a profit of £291.50 from the stall. Sudarshanam is proud in being part of this charity event where Action Cancer raised £2,432 in total from the event.



### 15 April 2023 – Vishu celebrations



Vishu is a cultural festival celebrating the Malayali New Year in Kerala, India. The festival is marked by family time, preparing colourful auspicious items and viewing these as the first thing on the Vishu day (Vishukkani). In particular, Malayalis seek to view the golden blossoms of the Indian laburnum (Kani Konna), money or silver items, cloth (pattu), mirror, rice, coconut, cucumber, fruits and other harvest products. Days before Vishu, people start bursting fireworks at their houses and it concludes with lot of fireworks on day of Vishu. People wear new clothes (Koti) and they eat a feast called Sadhya. In Kaineettam, elders give a small amount of pocket money to children.

At Sudarshanam, we had organised a variety of cultural programs including a Vishu kai neetam and Sadhya. The highlight of this year's Vishu was that we welcomed people outside of Sudarshanam to join us and embrace our culture. A delicious Sadhya was prepared by the Sudarshanam family members. We collected around £1,400 by selling the Vishu tickets, through sponsorship and by selling raffle tickets.

Another highlight was that Sudarshanam donated £780 to Sabarinath. Sabarinath was a 23 year old Malayali student from Trivandrum who came to Queens University Belfast to study. Unfortunately, his whole body was paralysed due to an autoimmune disorder, due to lack of food and nutrition. Shabharinath was at the Musgrave Park Hospital for his treatment and rehabilitation therapy. We were overwhelmed and wanted to contribute towards his journey back to India. Sabarinath safely went back to India in the month of April. Sudarshanam wants to express its gratitude to all its members for the heartfelt contribution in helping Sabarinath go back India safely.







### **30 April 2023 – Belfast City Marathon**



In line with previous years, we formed a 5 Relay team from Sudarshanam and participated in the Belfast City Marathon 2023. As a tribute to our best friend Krishnan Subramanian (Ravi), we named our relay team starting with **R, A, V, I**.

This year, Sudarshanam raised £428 for AWARE NI. AWARE is the Depression Charity for Northern Ireland. AWARE delivers mental health and well-being programmes into communities, schools, colleges, universities and workplaces.

### **09 July 2023 – Sports Day**



Sport is an amazing concept that improves the lives of people. Mental health should not be taken lightly. In order to have a holistic and healthy life, at Sudarshanam we conduct Sports Day for the kids and adults. The sports day celebration showed the commitment that all our members have towards sports. Various activities were conducted, and the winners were awarded with prizes. We also donated £50 to the Dunmurry Community Centre.





#### **16 July 2023 – Summer Picnic**



In the summer, we had organised a one-day picnic with the families at the Carnfunnock Country Park. It was a very fun filled day and all the kids including the adults had a wonderful time.

#### **02 September 2023 – Onam celebrations**



Onam is an annual harvest and cultural festival related to Hinduism that is celebrated mostly by the people of Kerala. A major annual event for Keralites, it is the official festival of the state and includes a spectrum of cultural events. Onam Festival falls during the Malayali month of Chingam (Aug - Sep) and marks the homecoming of legendary King Mahabali. Carnival of Onam lasts for ten days and brings out the best of Kerala culture and tradition. Intricately decorated Pookalam, ambrosial Onasadya, breathtaking Snake Boat Race and exotic Kaikottikali dance are some of the most remarkable features of Onam - the harvest festival in Kerala.

At Sudarshanam we celebrated Onam on 2 September 2023 with all our members. Thiruvadira by the ladies of Sudarshanam and scrumptious sadhya prepared by the members was the highlight of the celebration. We also conducted Onam games like Vadamvali (tug-of-war), Kulam Kara, Musical chair etc. Overall, it was a fun filled day for all of us at Sudarshanam.





#### **10 September 2023 – Sri Krishna Janmashtami celebrations**



Lord Krishna's birth is celebrated as Janmashtami. Lord Krishna's devotees celebrate the day with great devotion and reverence. He is seen as a symbol of divinity, love, and righteousness. His life and teachings inspire devotees to lead a life based on dharma (righteousness), karma (action), and bhakti (devotion).

The kids from Sudarshanam were dressed up as little Krishnas and Radhas. There was traditional Krishna Bhajans and everyone were immersed in the festive atmosphere.

#### **24 September 2023 - Ganesh Chaturthi**



Ganesh Chaturthi is a ten-day festival that celebrates the birth of Lord Ganesh (Ganesha), a Hindu deity and god of wisdom and prosperity. As one of the biggest Hindu celebrations in India, Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated all over the country with massive public and domestic events. We at Sudarshanam performed a small puja and bhajan on this auspicious day invoking Lord Ganesh's blessings. The kids actively participated by dancing and putting up a play demonstrating the story of Ganesh.



Navaratri is an annual Hindu festival observed in honour of the goddess Durga, an aspect of Adi Parashakti, the supreme goddess. It spans over nine nights. We celebrated Navaratri for 9 nights at various houses volunteered by our members. This was a suggestion from our ladies group to organise bhajans and puja on all 9 days of Navaratri in 2021 and we have continued this as this was welcomed whole heartedly by all the members. Apart from the spiritual Vibe it had brought , this created a special unity , happiness and satisfaction for all of the attendees .we would like to continue this as part of our annual events calendar and would encourage all new family members to come forward and take part from next year.

**12 November 2023 – Valaikaapu (Baby shower)**



Valaikaappu is a prenatal ceremony or celebration similar to baby-shower, held by South Indian women, meant to bless a pregnant woman, celebrate her fertility, and prepare the baby and mother-to-be for a safe birth. It is typically held at the 7th month or the 9th month of the pregnancy. At Sudarshanam we had an opportunity to do valaikaapu to one of our members where we participated in blessing the mother-to-be for the safe pregnancy that results in the good health of the mother and safe birth of the child.





### **18 November 2023 – Diwali celebrations**



Diwali is the Hindu festival of lights. It symbolises the spiritual "victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance". The celebrations generally last five or six days. During the festival, the celebrants illuminate their homes, temples and workspaces with diyas (oil lamps), candles and lanterns.

Diwali was yet another successful event hosted by Sudarshanam. We had organised a variety of entertainment for the guests and the members. There was live multicultural program, traditional and Bollywood dance, Indian vegetarian food stalls and many other stalls for the people attending the event. We had also conducted drama, dance, arts and crafts workshops allowing everyone including the locals to participate.

The main reason for the success of this program was because of the support we received from the Belfast City Council. At the start of the year the council had kindly sanctioned us £2,250 to conduct the Diwali celebrations. We would like to thank the Belfast City Council from the bottom of our hearts for this gratitude.

### **Regular Sunday Sessions**

Regular Sunday sessions continued as usual at the Spectrum Centre. Spectrum Centre was not booked for regular activities during the summer months. This was mainly due to the fact that a lot of Sudarshanam members planned long holidays during summer months to visit India. Sunday sessions continued in the usual pattern without much changes. Yoga continued without much interruption.

Purna Vidya Classes could not pick up the momentum due to various factors and we are working hard to revive it to the original state. As part of restructuring Purna Vidya, we had arranged "Train the Teachers" program last year. Thanks to Our Purna Vidya Teacher from England, Vasumati Ji who had shown Great interest in sharing her wisdom to our teachers.

Our Admin team under Pushpa (Chairperson) and Suchitra's (Vice chairperson) leadership have spent quite a good amount of time in Virtual meetings etc to coordinate various activities, Sunday sessions and Food/snack rota. Our Sincere gratitude to all Admin team members.

Also, thanks to all local community leaders, PSNI and the Spectrum Centre for providing their continued support for all our activities.

Our Great Appreciation to Vidhya Ponnuli for all her efforts in systematically looking after the accounts, tracking the subscriptions, paying off expenses and coordinating all banking activities.



### **Public benefit**

Our main Beneficiary was AWARE NI to whom we donated **£428** through Belfast City Marathon Run.

### **Outcomes:**

- Maintaining Hindu Culture among our community by creating awareness.
- Showcasing the importance of our festivals and significance of various rituals.
- By involving local groups, helps in reducing hate crime, racism and prejudice thereby creating a sense of togetherness and contribute towards shared community.
- Encouraging cultural integration and bridging gap within our Local communities.
- A great way in bringing people together and create sense of purpose.

### **Membership growth:**

During the year we had 11 new families joining Sudarshanam and 4 families have left us.

As we grow exponentially, it's essential that we strengthen our relationship, know each other better, their strengths and weaknesses, help each other, share knowledge and ideas so that we all stand unite in all our activities and initiatives.

### **Achievements**

- Participated in the Action Cancer Charity Event.
- Unlike previous years, this year we opened Vishu celebrations to people outside of Sudarshanam and the event was very successful.
- Received a grant of £2,250 from Belfast City Council for Diwali celebrations.
- We now have our inventory tracking system. Still a long way to go but we have at least made a start to keep track of our inventory.
- We were able to successfully implement all the cultural celebrations as discussed in the start of the year.
- Participated in Belfast Marathon and raised funds for AWARE NI.

### **Challenges**

- Bringing our new members to regular Sunday sessions.
- Keeping the momentum of Purna Vidya classes. We need to restart the classes in a regular fashion for our Children to be aware of our cultural heritage.
- Collecting pending Subscription dues.
- Absence of Permanent Office / Venue for Sunday sessions / Storage area





### Income and expenditure account for the period from Dec 2022 to Nov 2023

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>££</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>££</b>
New Year 2022	963	Monthly Subscription	6,040
Vishu 2023	1,589	Cancer Charity Event	292
Sports Day 2023	451	Gross Income from Vishu	1,405
Onam 2023	777	Grants from Belfast City Council	1,800
Diwali 2023	1,349	Miscellaneous	2,454
Miscellaneous	4,113		
Bad debts	233		
	<b>9,474</b>		<b>12,503</b>
<b>Operating profit/(loss)</b>	<b>3,029</b>		
Balance brought forward	<b>4,153</b>		
Income	12,503		
Expense	(9,474)		
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>7,182</b>		

### Cash and Bank balances as at 30 November 2023

	<b>££</b>
Bank balance as at 30 Nov 2023	5,808
Cash in hand	1,374
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>7,182</b>

**Total income** for the period December 2022 to November 2023 is £12,503.

**Total expenditure** the period December 2022 to November 2023 is (£9,474).

Expenditure was in respect of various cultural activities, inviting local communities, awards & gifts (54%) and administrative expenses (46%).

#### **Income against expenditure**

There was an operating profit of £3,029.

#### **Cash in hand as at 30 November 2023**

Cash in hand is £1,374.

#### **Balance as at 30 November 2023**

Balance carried forward is £7,182.



### **Conclusion**

Sudarshanam team is grateful to all its members for their hard work and dedication to keep Sudarshanam activities going without any breaks. Efforts have been made to address the points members have raised during the general meetings. We are grateful to all the Admin members under the guidance of our Chairperson Pushpa and Vice Chairperson Suchitra for coordinating all the events and making another successful year of representing our cultural values and traditions to our kids. We are looking forward to the coming years for strengthening our relationship to create an atmosphere that helps younger generation benefits more from our existence. Also, we should strive hard to make a more profound positive impact in the community relations in all our activities.