

ipswich hindu samaj

Annual Report

Year ending 31 December 2007



Dear Members and Well Wishers of the Ipswich Hindu Samaj,

It is my privilege, as the Secretary of the Ipswich Hindu Samaj, to present my first Annual Report. It is 18 months since the formation of the Samaj. Since then your Executive Committee [EC] has been actively busy in trying to address some of the more major issues. Our most important concern has been to find a suitable place that we can call ours. Negotiations have been taking place with local authorities but as yet not much progress has been made. It has been very frustrating & time consuming activity. We hope next year will bring success.

Major Achievements:

- ♣ Registered IHS with Charities Commission.
- ♣ Hold regular religious function
- ♣ Celebration of Hindu Festivals
- ♣ Participation at Ipswich Mela
- ♣ Joint IHS/ISIA Diwali Dinner Dance
- ♣ Working with Local Authorities
- ♣ Letter of pledge drafted to raise funds
- ♣ Fund Raising
- ♣ Letter of petition seeking help to establish Cultural & Heritage Centre.

Raising Funds for the Ipswich Hindu Samaj:

One of the aims of the Samaj is to have its own place of worship. This aim needs funds to realise it. Your EC has started the ball rolling by actively seeking new members, gaining publicity for the Samaj and hence the possibility of new members. Donations by good people have also been pouring in to support the Samaj. Life membership has been set up so that we can get extra funds upfront. We have been investigating ways to raise funds through Lottery or Heritage funds. Funding may also be available from the Art's Council & European Social Funds. Various Avenues are being explored. Any ideas for fund raising will be welcome and carefully considered. **Please contact us with your ideas to raise funds.** Donate by becoming a life member. *Sushil Soni raised £340 at Orwell Walk.*

Suitable site for the Samaj:

In spite of working very hard we have had one big disappointment. Throughout the last 17 months, we have collaborated with Ipswich Borough Council [IBC] & Suffolk county Council [SCC] to find a in getting a suitable place for the Hindu Samaj activities & worship, either on a permanent basis or semi-permanent basis for few years until we are ready to acquire/build our own permanent place. So far we have had no joy. The money climate has also changed in that these days the Councils are also strapped for cash. We have considered that for a short term, while we establish ourselves, we are willing to accept any suitable place that we can use regularly for the next few years. At least it will be a place that we can call is ours.

We envisage our sister organisation, the Ipswich & Suffolk Indian Association (ISIA) can also use the place for their meetings and functions. We have set up petition to our MPs to help us in getting a suitable place. **Please sign our petition at Indian shops or at our functions.**

Books on Hinduism

Two books were distributed, with compliments of Ipswich Hindu Samaj, to the members of the Samaj at the Janamashtmi function. One book describes 'why do we perform various religious activities e.g. ring bell in a temple or offer a coconut etc. The second book is 'Hinduism That is a Sanatana Dharma'

Your Commitment:

What we need is a will and commitment from all of You, if we are to have an Indian Cultural & Heritage Centre and a Temple, in Ipswich.

Support us now so we can support you in the future.

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Cultural & Heritage Centre:

Our vision is to have a Cultural & Heritage Centre in Ipswich.

This Cultural & Heritage Centre is urgently required as it would incorporate a **Temple** to meet the religious needs of community interested in Hinduism and a **Heritage Centre** to provide the Educational & Information Centre on Hinduism for all Communities in Ipswich & surrounding areas.

The centre will also provide opportunity for school children to understand & gain knowledge on Hindu Culture.

The centre would also act as social gathering place for all communities, but predominantly for Hindu Community.

Our community:

We are part of a growing Indian Community in Ipswich and Suffolk & adjacent Counties of Cambridgeshire, Essex and Norfolk are desperately interested in the formation of an Indian Cultural & Heritage Centre in Ipswich. No such Centre exists in East Anglia. Please assist us be the first to have such a centre. There are well over 1000 families in Ipswich alone & others in Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk & Essex who would support & participate in the activities of the Centre.

Pledge Letter:

Pledge letter is being sent out to various organisations seeking financial support for Cultural & Temple funds. We are seeking a commitment & not necessarily any exchange of monies at the present time. Once site is available then we would request that payment of pledge made. However if anyone wants to donate any monies now, then we would welcome it with open arms.

Mela Report

The Samaj had a stand at the Ipswich Mela in July 2007. Members donated items of food, books, CDs, tapes etc. that were sold to raise additional funds.

We collected just under £700.00 at the Mela.

Thank You to all those who helped make the Mela a memorable day.

Considering the wet summer we have had this year, we were also very lucky to have no rain on the Mela day.

Events Organised to date:

Havan (Yagna) &/or Bhajan Evenings – held on 3rd Friday of each month

Ram Naumi (Birthday of Lord Rama) where reading from Tulsidass Ramacharit Mannas & recitation of Hanuman Chalisa

Makar Sankranti – Lohri

Janamashtmi (Birthday of Lord Krishna)

Families Fun day in Christchurch Park, Ipswich

Diwali Dinner Dance in conjunction with Indian Association

Navratri Celebrations

Ganesh Puja – 5 day celebrations - one of the most popular & well supported functions

Most of these events are planned to be held annually. If you would like to hold a particular event, then contact any of the EC or Trustees.

Anil Khosla, Secretary
1 December 2007

Our vision:

- Build a centre of Indian Culture & Heritage
- Build a Mandir
- Promote Hindu Religious & Cultural activities with other religious organisations
- Promote Hindu Religious & Social activities with Schools & Colleges
- Celebration of Hindu Festivals
- Spiritual Enlightenment such as Yoga
- Cohesion between Communities
- Seminars on contemporary issues
- Assist with Social needs of Indian Community
- Cohesion between Indian & other Communities
- Hold Seminars & invite guest speakers

Thank You to :

Ipswich Gurdwara Committee for donating £501.00 to the Ipswich Hindu Samaj.

Suffolk New College for their support & for providing the facilities to us for Inaugural & subsequent Meetings.

Ipswich & Suffolk Indian Association for agreeing to hold joint functions & help raise funds.

Trustees & Rev. Cliff Reed of Unitarian Meeting House for permitting us to hold our religious functions there.

Mrs S Nair [Dr Soni's sister] in Newcastle upon Tyne for raising approximately £900 for IHS.

Publicity:

The Samaj has been actively liaising with Local papers and Suffolk Radio to get maximum publicity.

Web Site:

I am pleased to announce that we now have a web site reachable at:

www.ipswichhindusamaj.org.uk

Volunteers Needed:

If have some spare time & would like to volunteer your services to help the Samaj, in any way, then go to our web site and email to the Executive Committee. We always need volunteers at the events we organise. Come & do a good deed.

AGM on 23rd January 2008:

The first AGM of the Samaj will be held on 23rd January 2008 at 7:30 p.m. This will provide you with a forum to air your views & an opportunity to stand for election as an Executive Committee Member or as a Trustee. Please attend.

Date: Wednesday, 23rd January 2008

Time: 7 for 7.30 to 9.30 p.m.

Venue: Suffolk New College, Boardroom 1
See you at the AGM.