



HAWA

HERTFORDSHIRE ASIAN
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
community | culture | empowerment

Annual Report 18/19



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HAWA Management Structure

Chair:

Rushna Miah

Vice Chair:

Zia Kiani

Treasurer (Acting):

Rushna Miah and Zia Kiani

Secretary:

Ayeisha Ahmed

Executive Members :

Rafina Suffee, Zaitun Sadikali, Farhat Zia, Farah Everitt, Monica Ali, Parveen Begum and Mubin Mohammed, Sufia Ali

Funding Coordinator:

Sabina Mostafa

Social Media Administrators:

Rimona Begum

Admin support:

Rubeca Khanom

Saheli Tiffin Club

Tiffin Club Project Co-ordinator:

Touria Oulhat

Tiffin Club Sessional Workers:

Sadia Sharif and Shanaz Shama

Message from the Chair

This has been an exceptionally outstanding year for me as I have had the honour of being the Chair of HAWA for three years. We have encountered various challenges and made enormous progress. We are very proud to know that HAWA is finally recognised as one of the main associations in St Albans City & District Council British Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) catering for Asian women, although we are now working hard to include young as well as older ladies from various backgrounds, cultures, races, ethnicity and religions as we believe that inclusion will lead to more understanding and diversity.

One of our biggest achievements for HAWA was to obtain more funding from various organisations for Saheli Tiffin Club. We are delighted to say that we had had a phenomenal success in obtaining substantial funding from Hertfordshire Community Trust, People's Health Trust, Barchester Health as well as local Councillors. We also work in partnership with Community Action Dacorum and St Luke's Church so that we can continue this vital service for the elderly Asian women.

HAWA has been working extensively with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to set up a Community Information Hub with various other partners at the Civic Offices of St Albans City & District Council. The Hub provides free independent, impartial and confidential advice to the BME communities. Our trained volunteers are bilingual and they are able to offer advice on various topics such as domestic violence, forced marriage, benefits and so forth. These sessions are run on various days and locations.

We are very fortunate that the Tiffin Club has been privileged to have had various speakers from local, charitable and statutory organisations to come in and talk to these ladies on what they do and the key services they provide. As you will see from this Report, these speakers have included the Mayor of St Albans, Chief Executive of St Albans City & District Council, Old People's Trust, Oxfam, Sustainable St Albans City & District Council as well as Prescription Arts.

Apart from having speakers at the Tiffin Club, we were thrilled to take our Tiffin Club ladies to London by coach to see Buckingham Palace in September. Some of these ladies had never been to London so it was fascinating to see their faces when we reached London and saw the grandeur of Buckingham Place and the numerous State Rooms of the Palace and the Palace Garden. St Albans City & District Museum + Gallery was another outing for these Tiffin Club ladies.

I would be proved positively wrong not to surmise that another one of the highlights of these Tiffin Club ladies was to join Lady Verulam and her Church group to the British Museum to see the new Albukhary Foundation Gallery of the Islamic World. After this trip to the British Museum, we were delighted to be invited to Lady Verulam's home for lunch and to talk about our views on Albukhary Foundation Gallery.

We continue our annual work with Oxfam and, in October, we took part in Oxfam Herts Hike. This year the Hike took place in Heartwood Forest raising money for clean water for people living in disaster countries. I am pleased to report that the Hike raised well over £500 from sponsorship and Tiffin Club food stall.

HAWA has been very successful in having a very dedicated and committed Management Committee and without their full support and hard work, HAWA would not have accomplished so much since its formation over a decade ago. I would like to thank our partners and stakeholders without whose support we would not have been able to fully achieve HAWA's aims and objectives.

Saheli Tiffin Club

Here at the Saheli Tiffin Club, we pride ourselves on a friendly and welcoming atmosphere providing a safe, fun environment for our Tiffin Club ladies. The primary aim of the project is to help decrease the isolation of BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) older ladies.

The Club has helped these ladies to overcome language and social barriers. This, in turn, has given the BME ladies confidence in integrating with the local community and local services.

The Club gives older people the opportunity to meet with friends they have made at the Club and to make new friends while having fun and sharing common interests.

The group meet at St Luke's Church every Thursday from 11am - 2pm during school term only.

At the Club, we provide a three-hour activity programme which includes two one-hour sessions of Pilates classes and two one-hour sessions of English classes. In the last hour, we provide refreshments and arrange for a speaker from a local, voluntary or statutory organisation to come and talk to the ladies about what they do and the services they provide.

Over the past three years, the Club has received funding from the People's Health Trust. We have also been successful in receiving funding this year from the Hertfordshire Community Foundation. We have also worked in partnership and have been supported by Community Action Dacorum and St Luke's Church. We are privileged to have our volunteer tutors, Kathryn and Gill, to teach the ladies literacy.

We would like to say a big thank you to our funders, Hertfordshire Community Foundation, St Albans City & District Council, Barchester Health and some of our local Councillors, Anthony Rowlands, Geoff Harrison, Roma Mills and Chris White. Without their continued support, we would not be able to offer this valuable service.

HAWA & Saheli Tiffin Club Hub

HAWA continues to work in partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau to run fortnightly sessions every alternate Friday at St Albans City & District Council. We also run similar sessions every Thursday at Tiffin Club, St Luke's Church, Cell Barnes Lane and every Tuesday and Friday at Mandeville School, Mandeville Drive. Our trained volunteers are bilingual enabling individuals to seek with ease confidential and objective advice to gain support within the community.

We offer guidance to those who attend on a wide array of issues ranging from domestic violence, forced marriage and benefits to simply assisting with filling out forms for blue badges and bus passes.

We have managed to receive funding from St Albans City & District Council of £4,479.25 to enable us to further expand our outreach work and help more individuals by taking the Hub sessions at the

local mosque. We have conducted a Hub session at London Conley Islamic Centre (LCIC) and are in talks with them to set up further Hub sessions in the London Colney community too.

Over the year, we have helped over 300 people from different communities including those within BME communities. Many have benefitted from our advice and many have felt comfortable enough to return with further issues or for more advice.

Habibah Tiffin Club Community Garden

As with each year the CDAH community garden is growing and blooming beautifully.



Last year, we took part in Sustainable St Albans 2018 Week in April where we showcased "How to grow and use Asian Herbs in cooking ". We had number of visitor to our community garden and were able to share recipes and sample food from the Asian continent.

Speakers & Organisations



Oxfam Water Aid

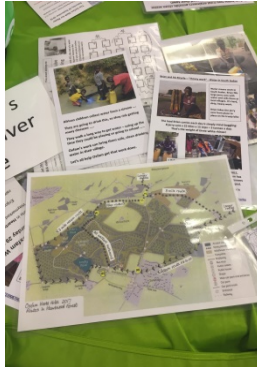
HAWA has been working in partnership with Oxfam St Albans participating in their annual Oxfam Herts Hike. Hilary from Oxfam came to the Tiffin Club on 20th September to encourage the ladies to take part in the Oxfam Walk for Water on Saturday, 29th September 2018.

Hilary asked us to help for the water cube fundraising. The Oxfam Lifesaver Cube filters dirty, dangerous river water turning into clean, safe drinking water. The Lifesaver Cube cost £21 and a family of four can use it for up to six months and it is ideal for emergency situations.

She told us a little bit about the other projects which Oxfam has recently carried out. One of them is Brian and his bicycle - "thirsty work" - water in South Sudan. She told us that Brian used to fill large jerry cans with water direct from River Nile, which is polluted and carries waterborne disease, and sold these cans at local villages. Now Oxfam has made clean water system for the community, so Brian's customers get safe water and the spread of harmful diseases has now stopped. Brian is still shifting three tons a day of water on his bike, but his water is clean now.

Hilary also told us that Oxfam is supporting local authorities across Iraq in repairing water systems after ISIS destroyed their town. She said that war had destroyed buildings and there was no clean water available. With Oxfam's help they have repaired the damaged plant and fixed 80% of the town's water pipes. So when other residents return and start rebuilding their lives, water supply is one less thing they will have to worry about.

She also spoke to the ladies about other ways they could help Oxfam such as to take part in a walk, volunteer their services or make donations.



Old People's Day - St Albans City & District Council



Peggy Sharp from St Albans City & District Council came into the Tiffin Club to speak to the ladies about the Old People's Day hosted by St Albans City & District Council. She spoke about the fun activities and the other organisations that would be attending including Hertfordshire Police, Fire Brigade, community Safety, support and advice groups, Fun and Learning - Music, Art and Entertainment, Clubs, Societies and Social groups. Peggy then invited the ladies to attend the Old People's Day which was to be held on 17th October 2018.



St Albans City & District Council Hub



Lorraine Dawson, Customer Services Manager, St Albans City & District Council came to the Tiffin Club to speak to the ladies about the services they provide and other organisations they work with in the Hub at St Albans City & District Council and the Tiffin Club. Some of the partner services they work with are CAB, Community Central, and Oaklands College.

She spoke about how they build trust and help people find work for people with disability or disadvantage for e.g. they direct people to the Stop Smoking Clinic which is run by Herts County Council or Herts Practical Parenting Programme which helps family in crisis.

Amanda Foley, Chief Executive of St Albans City & District Council

Amanda Foley came in the Tiffin Club to speak about her role and how she got to where she is today. She spoke about her family and the different jobs and challenges she went through and how this has made her the person she is today. She also spoke about her role as Chief Executive of St Albans City & District Council and all the different issues she deals with and how no day is the same. Amanda's talk was very inspirational and informative.



Housing Repairs - St Albans City & District Council

Rebecca and Sacha from Housing Repairs come to the Tiffin Club to speak to the ladies about the current services they provide. They mentioned that the Council will soon be rolling out new online service and how to register and the benefits of contacting them online.



Mayor of St Albans City & District Council

On 29th November, the Right Worshipful the Mayor of St Albans, Rosemary Farmer, visited the Tiffin Club. She spoke about her life and different roles she has had over the years. It was a very inspirational talk and the ladies enjoyed her bubbly personality. The Mayor then joined the ladies for lunch and then she had to dash off to her next appointment.



Healthy Lifestyle

Galina came into the Tiffin Club to speak to the ladies about alternative remedies. She asked the ladies about their lifestyle habits and explained that simple changes in the way they eat, drink and exercise could make a big difference to their health and how taking herbal remedies could help with things like blood pressure, stress and sleep.



St Albans Old People's Trust

Paul Smythe from St Albans Old People's Trust came into the Tiffin club to discuss the free service they provide. The St Albans Old People's Trust is a local charity established in 2000 to help local residents over 60 to remain independent and comfortable in their own home. This help could include things like providing white goods, warm clothing, mobility, household aid, financial help with gas bills and cleaning.

Reflexology

Irene Hewitt, a Complementary Therapist/Reflexologist came and did a presentation to the Tiffin Club ladies on the benefits of reflexology and other complementary therapies for older people. The ladies enjoyed a taster reflexology treatment and also booked some sessions with Irene.

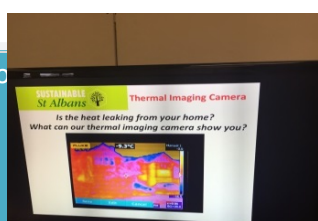


Sustainable St Albans Thermal Imaging Camera



Caroline Penn from Sustainable St Albans came at the Tiffin Club to speak to the ladies about the benefits of using a Thermal Imaging Camera at home to identify areas where heat is lost and how to improve insulation in order to keep fuel costs down and keep your home warm. The camera works by enabling you to see heat leaking areas in your home or cold air coming into your home by taking colour-coded pictures highlighting temperature differences.

Sustainable St Albans has two thermal imaging cameras which residents can borrow; one in Harpenden and one in St Albans.



Prescription Arts, St Albans

Angela and Rose from Prescriptions Arts, St Albans came in at the Tiffin Club. Studies have shown that participating in art activity can boost a person's sense of well-being, from the relaxation and enjoyment to learning something new to decreasing isolation and building confidence. They got the ladies to participate in creating artwork using paints, paper templates and cut outs. The ladies really enjoyed the session and produced some lovely artwork.



Farhat, Zia along with Nelly and Betty, who are part of a group of ordinary people exploring how to make environmentally friendly planting, came into the Tiffin Club to speak to the ladies about the garden and how they can help. They explained to the ladies how we can make a difference by making small changes, like instead of using plastic pots to plant we can make plant pots out of newspaper. Farhat brought in some seeds, compost and newspaper and got the ladies to make the pots and plant the seeds, which they will grow and then plant these in Habiba Garden at a later date.

This will be a second year Habibah Garden has collaborated with Sustainable St Albans to learn new skills and work in collaboration with other groups at the CDAH at Community Gardens at Hixberry Lane. We are going to grow painted mountain/glass corn and turmeric for the first time. The Tiffin Club ladies will also be sharing and growing vegetable from native countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan and Africa.



Adam from Age UK came to the Tiffin Club to speak to the ladies about the services they provide. Hertswise is one of the areas Adam covers and it is a countywide support for people living with dementia, memory issues and cognitive impairments. Adam spoke about the challenges that people face with dementia and carers and support groups that are available. The ladies were very interested as a lot of their family members are affected by this illness and they did not know that there were support groups who could help them.



The Cathedral and Abbey church of St Albans

Lindsay Wong – community Engagement Officer

Lindsay came into the Tiffin club to speak to the ladies about all the new exciting things have been happening at the Cathedral. Lindsay gave a brief talk about the history of the Cathedral which the ladies found very interesting.

She spoke about the new welcome centre with its new exhibition space throughout the welcome centre and in the Cathedral building, which will tell the story of Alban. As well as the long term project to restore the shrine of Amphibalus. She also spoke about up coming events, one of which is the 10 day Roman Festival which will be held throughout the city of St Albans.



End of Year party

At the end of July, we held our Tiffin Club end of year party. All the ladies dressed up for the occasion and all brought a dish along. It was a chance for the ladies to get together and enjoy good food and company. The Tiffin Club ladies also brought some gifts to say thank you to their English teachers and HAWA Management team for all their help and support over the year.



Day Trips & Visits

Oxfam Herts Hike



In October HAWA and the Tiffin Club ladies joined Oxfam for the Oxfam hike in Heartwood forest in order to raise money for water for people living in natural disaster countries who do not have access to clean drinking water. The Hike took us through beautiful countryside, fields and woodlands. On the way, we admired the wild flowers and even got to stroke a few horses. The hike was a total of 6 miles and, at the end of the Hike, we had refreshments and a chat with the Mayor of St Albans City & District Council and other participants. We managed to raise £526.00 from sponsorship and HAWA stall, run by the Tiffin Club, also donated some of the food that was sold.



International Women's Day

Farhat, Henna and Zaitun were privileged to represent HAWA at International Women's Day celebrated by Soroptimists International St Albans City & District Club. It was held on Thursday, 7th

March 2019, rather than on the actual International Women's Day which was, in fact, on Friday, 8th March 2019. Soroptimists International St Albans City & District Women's Group is the local branch of the global women's organisation. Soroptimists' projects address issues such as maternal and child health, human trafficking and the economic empowerment of women.

St Albans Soroptimists and sponsors "The Talent Keeper Specialists" welcomed The Right Worshipful the Mayor of St Albans, Councillor, Rosemary Farmer, and other distinguished guests at this live debate held at The Sandpit Theatre, The Ridgeway, St Albans. This event was chaired by Dr Jessica Chivers, The Thinking Woman's Coach and the panel included Claire Harvey MBE, Director of Culture and Inclusion at EDIT Development, Min Rodriguez, Head of Inclusion and Diversity at The Law Society, Dr Laura Abbott, Senior Lecturer and Fellow of The Royal College of Midwives and one of the world's experts on pregnancy in prison, Chandni Hanif, Luton-based Director of fashion business Urban HAYA and Dannielle Lemaire, Law student of University of Durham College and Rep for DUACAS (Durham University Afro-Caribbean Society).

This discussion was broadcast live by Radio Verulam and the panel considered in great detail the question "Are women their own worst enemy?". This event marked the United Nations International Women's Day theme this year which was "Balance for Better – the better the balance, the better the world..". The panel considered various topics such as equality, women and employability, domestic labour, domestic abuse, women's health, societal and media pressure on women and how women experience the criminal justice system. After this emotive debate, the audience had a chance to participate and ask various questions to the panel as well as network with all the distinguished guests and panel members.

As thank you gifts, the Chair and all the panellists were presented with beautiful flower arrangements by Perfect Moment, a St Albans florist.

All profits made by St Albans Soroptimist International for this event were donated to the St Albans and Hertsmere and Welwyn Hatfield Women's refuges.

Buckingham Palace trip

In September, we took our Tiffin Club ladies to Buckingham Place. We headed off by coach at 9.30am from St Lukes Church and we were blessed with a beautiful sunny day. The ladies seemed to be thrilled and it was all chitchat and singing all the way to London. Once we arrived there, it was about a 10 minute walk to Entrance A from our drop off point for us to pick up our tickets and head on in. We went through security and into the temporary reception area to receive our electronic tour guides, which the ladies seemed horrified by. After going through the main courtyard of the Palace, all was forgotten. We then made our way to the Grand Staircase with its lush red carpets and gold banister staircase. The upper staircase walls were covered in full length with portraits of Queen Victoria's family. We then went from State Room to State Room each more magnificent than the other, there were 19 State Rooms in total to see. The ladies were in their element. Once we completed our tour of the Palace, we enjoyed lunch in the Palace Garden Café. After lunch, we took a guided tour of the Palace Gardens, each section of the garden had a story to tell. Once we completed our Gardens Tour, we went off to the Souvenirs Shop to purchase some souvenirs.



St Albans Museum + Gallery

In December, we took the Tiffin club ladies to the St Albans Museum + Gallery which opened to the public in June 2018. We were met by Peggy Sharpe from St Albans City & District Council who had arranged the tour for us. The museum is set over three floors with state-of-the-art galleries showcasing priceless heritage and contemporary artwork. We were taken for a tour of the old jail cells and the old court room, which the ladies enjoyed.



The British Museum with Lady Verulam

In January 2019, the Tiffin Club ladies joined Lady Verulam and her Church group for a trip to the British Museum to take a look at the new Albukhary Foundation Gallery of the Islamic world. We broke up into small groups and went around the galleries which were displayed across two magnificent refurbished galleries at the heart of the British Museum. The British Museum's Islamic collection comprised of a broad and diverse spectrum of the material culture produced from the seventh century to the present day in the Islamic world, a series of regions stretching from West Africa to Southeast Asia.

The ladies were fascinated by the extent of the galleries and the beautiful items on display. After looking at the galleries, we took the ladies to lunch in the Great Court and then it was off to the souvenir shop to get some goodies.



Lunch at Lady Verulam's

At the end of January, HAWA and the Tiffin Club ladies were invited to Lady Verulam's home for lunch to discuss our trip to the British Museum. We talked about the Islamic World Exhibition and all the fascinating things we saw and we also did a bit of Islamic calligraphy. All the ladies brought home made dishes which we later had for lunch.



HAWA's Annual Fundraising Dinner

In May 2018, we partnered with St Albans Friends Society to raise money for the Tiffin Club and Rohingya Refugees. St Albans Friends Society presented us with a documentary on the work they have been doing in Bangladesh to help the Rohingya Refugees. Anne Main, MP, and the Right Worshipful the Mayor of St Albans, Mohammad Iqbal Zia, also attended the event and spoke to us about the work they are doing. Anne Main kindly donated a Pearl Necklace which we auctioned off to help raise money. This was followed by a three course meal and raffle. Later on, we had a singing performance from Nazma which all the guests enjoyed and joined in.

We were delighted to raise £1,763.00 for both causes.



Al Bayyinah School Eid Fair

In June 2018, Tiffin Club had a stall at the Al Bayyinah School Eid Fair. The Tiffin Club ladies cooked Biryani, Samosas, Bhajis, Dal and sweets which we sold at the fair. We managed to raise £136.00 for the Tiffin Club.





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ASIAN WOMEN SINCE 2008**

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