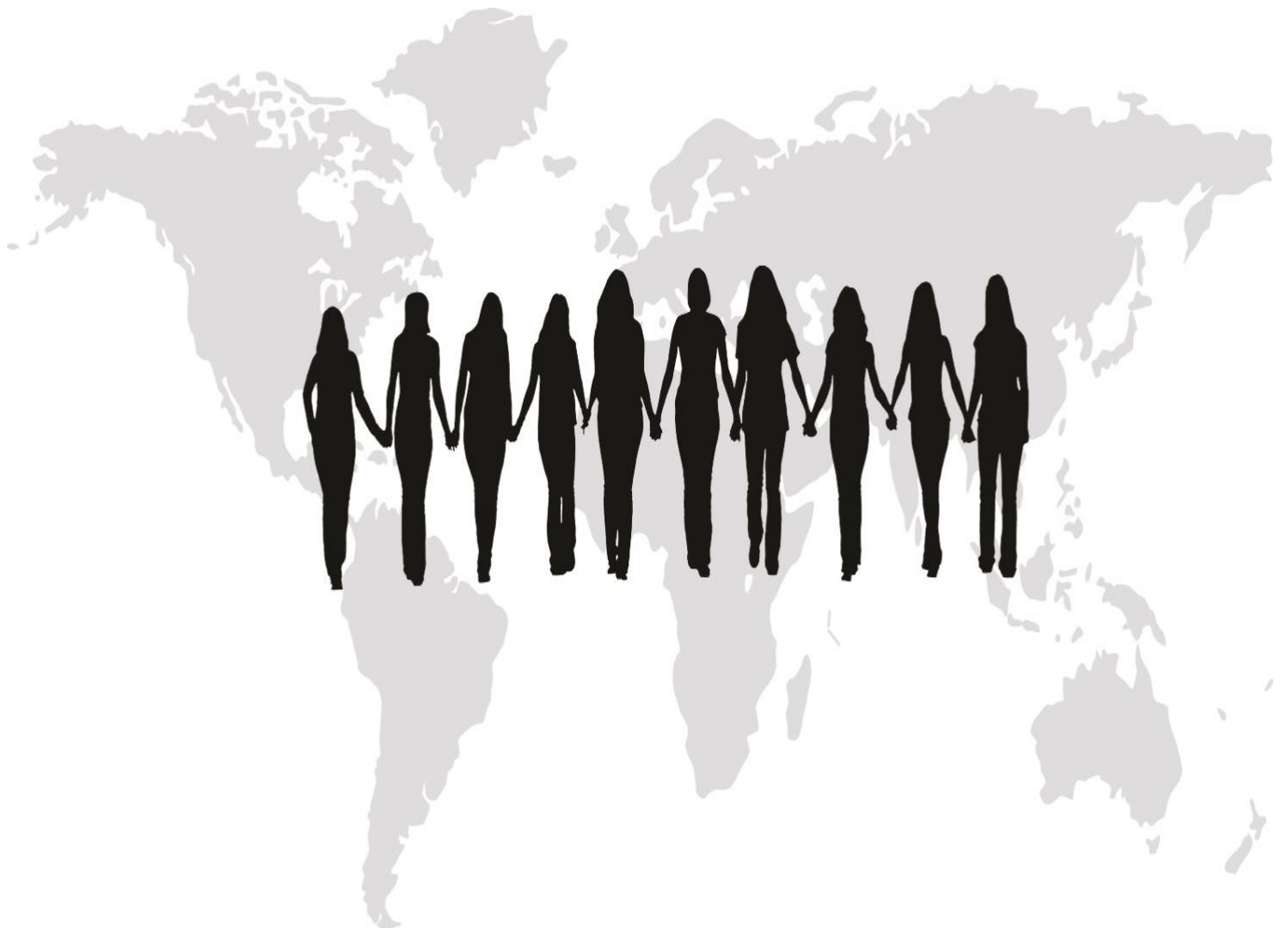


HAWA



HERTFORDSHIRE ASIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (HAWA)

Annual Report 2017/18



Management Structure

Chair: Rushna Miah

Vice Chair: Zia Kiani

Treasurer: acting Rushna/ Zia

Secretary: Ayeisha Ahmed

Executive Members: Rafina Sufee, Zaitun Sadik Ali, Farhat Zia, Farah Everitt,
Monica Ali, Parveen Begum, Mubin Mohammed

Social Media Administrators: Rimona Begum

Admin support: Rubeca Khanom

Tiffin Club

Tiffin Club Project Coordinator: Touria Oulhat

Tiffin Club Sessional Workers: Sadia Sharif and Shanaz Shama

Message from the Chair

On behalf of all our members and myself, I would like to welcome you all to our Annual General Meeting.

Firstly, a little about our history; HAWA was founded in 2008 with the aim of working at a local level to provide support for all BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) women. When you have a passion to create a long-term successful and sustainable NGO that benefits the community, it is imperative to make the best possible decisions with strong leadership and surround yourself with the right team and partnerships.

Through our continued partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Central, St Albans District Council and many more, we thrive to improve our service every year, and now offer guidance to all those who attend our sessions on all manner of subjects, from housing, domestic violence, forced marriage and benefits to name a few. We can also assist those wanting to give back to the community via projects like Habibah Garden, or a charity such as our annual participation of the Oxfam Herts Hike.

As you can see from our report which lists all our activities the past year, you can tell it has been an exciting and busy year for us here at HAWA. Between regular events namely the Herts Hike and Annual Fundraising Dinner, to new projects such as Habibah Garden. Also our flagship project The Saheli Tiffin Club has been as active as ever, having been to many enjoyable and informative events which you can read about below.

I am proud to say HAWA has been able to reach out to a greater range of women than ever before, due to this we have fresh faces in our Executive Committee who have helped to bring in new ideas. However, there is still much more to do. We hope you enjoy both our AGM this evening and the annual report.

I would like to thank the HAWA Management Committee for all their hard work during the past year. I would also like to thank our partners and stakeholders for their continued support.

We look forward to welcoming you to many more events to come.

Rushna Miah
Chair

Oxfam Herts Hike

(Written by one of our young HAWA members)

Initially when I was told about the hike I thought that it would be a waste of time, however my mother persevered and I finally agreed to go.

We opted for the three-mile walk. Whilst on the walk I got to meet a lot of new people including the Mayor of St. Albans and had many great conversations. The time flew by and I didn't even realise that the 3 miles were up! The forest was very beautiful, and at the end of the day we were provided with some delicious pakoras which were generously donated by HAWA.



What a lovely idea by Oxfam St Albans to help such a great cause to help raise money for clean water in Kenya. In total we raised £500. Hilary Tyrell was presented with a cheque at the Tiffin Club.

If I get the chance again next year I will attempt to do the 10 mile walk. Who knew that a hike could bring you so much joy?

A day trip to London House of Commons and the Crown Jewels Tower of London

HAWA members were invited to the House of Commons by Anne Mains office organised by the chair of HAWA. It was a day trip on the 18th September 2017. The first visit was to the

House of Commons, there was a tour guide to show the ladies around each chamber, starting from the Cromwell Green entrance.



Once inside, the first port of call is Westminster Hall, this is the oldest part of the palace complex. A marvel of medieval engineering, as you go up the steps of the far end of Westminster Hall and turning left will bring you into St. Stephens Hall. There were paintings and statues of famous parliamentarians, Kings and Queens. Afterwards the ladies went into the central lobby which can be seen on the news; the ceiling was gilded with a massive stunning chandelier.

After this, we proceeded to the Lords area, the tour guide gave brief history into every lobby, hall, and chambers they passed. The ladies enjoyed purchases made at the gift shop. The next visit was the Crown Jewels Tower of London; the ladies went to the top of the tower and enjoyed the view. Lastly the visit went on to the Finsbury mosque; they performed Zuhra prayer and enjoyed their lunch in the canteen whilst relaxing. All in all, it was a great day and the ladies were very happy.

Visit to the Lady Verulam's Gorhambury Estate

Lady Verulam invited Tiffin club ladies to visit her and have a tour of Gorhambury House on 29th June 2017. We arrived there at 11 o'clock, where she welcomed us in a very warm and welcoming way and received us outside her estate.

Almost 20 ladies attended the visit. We took photographs outside, and then went in to Verulam house. She introduced herself as Dione Verulam daughter of Jeremy Smith, and then told us she is married to John Grimston who is the 7th Earl of Verulam. Dione Verulam has 4 children. Her eldest son James Grimston and daughter in law live in the stately house. We met her daughter in law and she informed us that we are very fortunate as our tour is the last tour as the state building will be having extensive renovations. Lady Verulam now lives in the farm house within the estate.



We split into 2 Groups each with a guide; they showed and told us the history of Verulam house. Then lady Verulam took us to her quarters where she lives with her husband. She served us a very lavish tea. After tea we went to her studio where she showed her paintings and how she spent her time. It was a very wonderful experience for all the Tiffin club ladies who enjoyed themselves immensely.

Older people's forum at Alban Arena

The aim for the Forum is that all older people within the District have an opportunity to have their say and influence decisions that directly impact their quality of life.

We are proud to be part of the older people's forum for the last 5 years. This year we attended the older people's forum in October with a HAWA stall.



The event was very informative and most of our Tiffin Club ladies attended the event. There were several activities for people to participate in, knitting, painting, colouring and board games all enjoyed with tea and cakes. The local Police Service and Fire Service did a presentation on health and safety.

Rohingya Charity Event – St Albans Friends Society

On October 15th HAWA was asked by St Albans Friend's Society to organise a charity lunch for ladies to raise money for Rohingya who are in desperate need of our help. The lunch was hosted in Café Masala and St Albans Friend's Society did the catering.

The event was attended by 83 guests and members from both HAWA & St Albans Friends Society. Our guests enjoyed a 3-course meal, raffle, auction, and Henna hand painting. All of the raffle gifts were donated by generous members of our community as it was for a good cause. HAWA's Chair, Rushna Miah gave a speech about the cause and thanked everyone for their help and contribution. Finally the afternoon finished with lovely singing by our very talented friend Nazma.



The Charity Lunch was very productive for our ladies. The event gave HAWA a great opportunity to expand their reach and raise awareness. In doing so, they were able to welcome new members, especially from the next generation of our community. It was also an opportunity for our ladies to relax and mingle with one another.



This was very successful and we are delighted to announce that we were able to raise an astounding £2500 on the day and further £300 after the event, so a grand total of £3370. The remarkable amount was only achievable because of people's generosity and heartache in seeing the plight of the Rohingya people.

The money raised will be used to buy essential items for the people of Rohingya by members from St Albans Friends Society; who will be going to Bangladesh to deliver the goods first hand.

Celebrating Commonwealth at The Abbey Cathedral

Commonwealth day is an annual opportunity to celebrate the links between the commonwealth countries across the world.

From Australia to Zambia, 53 Countries unite under one flag to celebrate their vast diversity and strong unity. The theme of 2018 is working towards a common future.

To mark this annual event, the Dean and Chapter of St Albans Cathedral gave thanks for the long standing ties of affection and respect which have united so many races and cultures in a spirit of family and fellowship. The service continued with traditional hymns, readings and songs by the girls' choir and men of the Cathedral Choir as well as procession of the flags. Finally the eventful day ended with the national anthem.

HAWA- was represented at the event by the Chair Rushna Miah, Zia Kiani and Rafina Suffee. They were welcomed by Lady Verulam. The event was well attended by many dignitaries who enjoyed the occasion.



Amnesty international St Albans group meeting

HAWA attended the Amnesty international St Albans meeting, which was held by Jerry Allen who is the country coordinator for Bangladesh and the South East Asia.

Since August, nearly 700,000 people – mostly Rohingya – have fled Myanmar to nearby Bangladesh.

Jerry Allen spoke about how the ethnic Muslim group are denied the right to a nationality, and face severe restrictions on their rights to freedom of movement, access to education, healthcare, and livelihoods, to practice their religion and participate in public life and crimes against humanity.

The Mayor's Annual Civic Banquet and Ball

Rushna, Rafina and Zaitun were honoured to represent HAWA at the Annual Civic Banquet and Ball on Friday, 9th March 2018. It was held by the Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City and District of St Albans, Councillor Mohammad Iqbal Zia and Mayoress, Mrs Farhat Zia at Sowell House Hotel, a luxurious 4 star hotel in St Albans.

Over 185 guests including Mayors from across Hertfordshire, Dignitaries and delegates from St Albans Council and other voluntary, national and international organisations participated on this auspicious occasion. All the guests were officially received by the Mayor and Mayoress at the Drinks Reception where we had an opportunity to network. The Mayor and Mayoress were then led to the Banqueting Hall with the Sea Cadets' Guard of Honour and Fanfares by Members of the St Albans City Band. We were treated to an Asian-inspired three course vegetarian and non-vegetarian dinner followed by tea/coffee and petit fours. Entertainment included a Bollywood-style dance performance provided by Love Bollywood Dance School and music by Co-Jones Band.

Lord McNally, a former Minister of State for Justice and a Patron of Youth Talk, gave an after-dinner speech celebrating the City of St Albans. Toasts were proposed by the Mayor and Lord McNally. Prior to the Mayor's speech, the mayor invited Mr Mohammad Abdul Muhit, Mayor's Chaplain and Imam of London Colney Islamic Centre to say Grace and Mr Muhit recited a prayer from the Holy Quran. In his speech, The Mayor thanked everyone who supported the annual Civic Ball for their help in raising funds for his nominated charity of the year, Youth Talk. He added that Youth Talk works tirelessly to provide young people help with social, emotional and educational needs by giving confidential counselling and support services.

A raffle, tombola and silent auction were held during the evening to help raise funds which totalled just over £4,000 for the charity. We were extremely proud of Iqbal bhai and Farhat's achievements especially as they proved themselves to be tremendous role-models for Hertfordshire and its wider BME community.



Herts Equalities Event

The chair and vice chair Rushna and Zia were invited to attend the Equal Herts Event which was held on Wednesday 21st March 2018 at Focolare Centre for Unity, 69 Parkway, Welwyn Garden City. The event commenced at 6:30 pm and finished at 8:30 pm.

The purpose of the event was to raise equality issues affecting different communities in Hertfordshire. Speakers were invited to discuss the various issues and challenges faced by the Black and Minority Ethnic communities and the experiences of these diverse communities.

Kate Belinis chaired the event supported by Hemant Mistry as well other trustees who were present. Rushna gave a 5 minute talk about the issues facing the BAME community in St Albans such as lack of funding opportunities, lack of provision for the BAME community within statutory organisations and the lack of diversity within the local workforce. Furthermore, she talked about how ladies from the BAME community wanted to work as carers, but are restricted by language barriers, training etc.

The attendees then discussed how HEC can work together to challenge and influence public bodies to bring about positive change.



HAWA Community Hub at St Albans District Council

HAWA has been successfully operating the community information and guidance Hub at St Albans District council on alternate Fridays and at the Tiffin Club situated in St Luke's Church on alternate Thursdays, for almost a year now. Having two access points for the Hub helps our community as they can go to the location most convenient for them.

We have six volunteers who have completed their information Buddy training delivered by the Citizens Advice Bureau. Our volunteers are trained and bilingual; this enables us to help our community as an access point to seek support guidance on any problem they could be facing so we give free independent impartial and confidential advice.

Where we cannot help solve issues, we work in Partnership with other essential organisations i.e. St Albans District council, Citizens Advice Bureau, Oakland College, Community Central and other key partners. We can send a referral to the organisation best able to meet the needs of the service user on their behalf.

An example of a recent incident that a volunteer has dealt with would be when a user came to the Hub with several issues relating to their property, bank account and others. As they were not able to converse in English confidently, and with no family member to help them, they had not been able to resolve the problems for several months and now were feeling frustrated.

Our volunteer was able to speak their language, so having understood their situation, called the council on their behalf about disabled adaptations needed on their property.

Furthermore, the user was assisted in dealing with unsanctioned direct debits taken from their bank account and a problem with their water meter; for these two points the user was referred to the Citizen Advice Bureau. Lastly the user wanted to know the procedure and fees for obtaining a replacement passport for their birth country as they held dual passports; this information was researched by the volunteer and instructions were given.

As you can see the Hub is a useful point of contact for many types of issues people in the community may be facing, we hope to increase the awareness of this facility so more people can receive the help they need.

Fundraiser for Ghouta

HAWA sponsored and attended the Ghouta Crisis Appeal fundraiser which was held by the Ladies Community Charity. Funds were raised by various stall who all kindly donated their sales to the appeal. An amazing £7000.00 was raised which will be going to Syria via the Ummah Welfare Trust who also attended the event. It was a great day had by all. Well done to all who help make this event so successful.



Stall at Al Bayyinna School Eid Fair

Al Bayyinna School very kindly donated a stall for HAWA at their Eid fayre. It was an opportunity for us to make people aware of HAWA and was a well-attended event.

Saheli Tiffin Club

Here at the 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 Tiffin Club gives older people the opportunity to meet with the friends that 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 term time only.

At the Tiffin club we provide a three hour activity programme which includes two one hour sessions of Pilate's classes and two one hour sessions of English classes. In the final hour, we provide refreshments and arrange for a speaker from a local organisation, voluntary or statutory organisation to come in and talk to the ladies about what they do and the services they provide.

Over the past three years, the Tiffin Club has received funding from the People's Health Trust. We have also been successful in receiving some 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 who teach the ladies literacy



Speakers/Organisations that attended Tiffin club



Community Grant St Albans Council

St Albans City & District Council distributes funding to community groups and projects through the Voluntary and Community Sector fund (VCS). The VCS fund is aligned to the Council's Priorities, helps deliver the Inclusion Strategy and has a positive impact on the community in terms of outcomes.

Peggy Sharp came from St Albans District Council attended the Tiffin Club. She deals with the Community Grant and spoke to the ladies about how the Fund aims to provide Voluntary and Community Groups with a flexible funding opportunity to support the delivery of projects and activities that benefit the local community.



Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

The CAB helps people resolve their legal, monetary and other problems by providing information and advice.

Ann from the CAB visited us on 28th September 2017. She spoke to the ladies about how the Citizen Advice Bureau helps the community. She also spoke about the free independent outreach drop in services they provide in Wheathampstead, London Conley and Redbourn. She also explained about the impartial advice they offer.



Friends of Khasdobir

Friends of Khasdobir are a UK-based charity that has been working for many years, in partnership with the Khasdobir Youth Action Group, to deliver a better future to people in the area of Khasdobir in Sylhet, Bangladesh. All of their UK staff members are unpaid volunteers.

Mike came in and did a presentation about his visit to Bangladesh. He talked to the ladies about the projects they are running from a free medical clinic and medicine, education, sewing workshops and much more. One of the projects Mike talked about was the 'school under the sky'. This is a project that has been running successfully providing education to the poor children in Khasdobir. He also spoke about the fundraising they are doing in order to provide a better life for the people of Khasdobir.

Oxfam

Oxfam St Albans are a group of volunteers based in and around St. Albans working to fundraise, campaign and support the work of Oxfam on various projects across the globe in order to fight poverty and suffering. Hilary talked to the ladies about ways they could help Oxfam with donations to their shops and also volunteering their services. HAWA has been working in partnership with Oxfam St Albans by participating in their annual Oxfam Herts Hike walk.



Herts Wellbeing services

The Wellbeing Service offers free and confidential talking therapy and practical support for Hertfordshire residents experiencing a wide range of mental health problems such as: worry, low mood, insomnia and stress.

Emma came in from the Wellbeing services and she spoke to the ladies about how her team can help their community and gave examples and advice in how to manage stress, work, insomnia etc.

Emma spoke about the workshops and guided self-help with telephone support. She offered individual sessions and other techniques aimed to help people to find better ways of coping and getting back to their usual self.



Food Bank

The St Albans and District Foodbank, was established in May 2014 as a member of the Trussell Trust's network of foodbanks. It is supported by a wide variety of churches, community groups and individuals.

Louise came in and talked about the emergency food they provide for people in crisis and how they help working people as well as those on benefits, from a wide range of

backgrounds. Louise talked about the people who visit the Foodbank and how they are given three days' worth of food, providing them with three meals a day plus some essential non-food items such as cleaning products and toiletries.

The Tiffin club ladies donated food to the food bank.



St Albans District Council (SADC)

Karen Dragovic from St Albans District Council's Housing services. She came in to talk to the ladies about the different housing services they offer, with help trying to stay in your current home, private sector, social housing, council leasehold services, council garages and benefits available. She was very informative and answered questions that were asked by the ladies.

Community Action Dacorum



Community Action Dacorum is a charity that provides a circle of support to the local community. As a council for voluntary service, they believe in bringing people together to achieve more in their communities and improve quality of life.

Guilia from Community Action Dacorum came in to the Tiffin club to speak to the ladies about the services they provide:

- Support voluntary organisations and community groups at the early stages of their development
- Provide funding advice, representation and a payroll service to help them grow and flourish
- Deliver services and projects that support local individuals, businesses and community groups

Community Action Dacorum have been supporting the Tiffin Club now for a number of years by providing the Pilates teacher, ESOL tutor and the helping with the hall hire.



ESOL TEACHER PAULINE

Edexcel ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) qualifications help learners gain English literacy for use in education, employment and everyday life.

Pauline come into the Tiffin club to talk to the ladies about ESOL classes that she holds for women at the Fleetville Junior School, St Albans. Pauline encouraged our ladies to join a 10-week course which ran every Friday from 9.30am till 11.00am



Beacon Victim Care centre

Beacon - The Hertfordshire Victim Care Centre went live on 1st April 2015 and provides an innovative new arrangement with Victim Support, working directly alongside the Constabulary's Victim Service Team.

Kate came in to the Tiffin Club and talked to the ladies about the free service they offer to victims able to access a range of coordinated services to enable them to cope and recover from their ordeal. The centre will provide a complete wrap around service to help victims to cope and recover regardless if they reported the crime to Police or not. Practical and emotional support will be given to those who need it most.

Trips

St Michael's Church, St Albans

Lady Verulam kindly invited the Tiffin club ladies to visit St Michael church to learn more about Christianity. She had previously visited the London Colney Islamic Centre. Kenneth Padley the Vicar of St Michael greeted us with Lady Verulam and gave us a tour and talked and the history of the church. After the tour we were invited to have tea and cakes with them. The ladies really enjoyed and learnt a lot from the visit. This was a fantastic opportunity to learn about each other's religion and build friendships.

Exercise classes

Pilates

We provide Pilates classes for younger people every Monday at Hatfield Road Islamic Centre. The ladies find these classes really do make a difference both mentally and physically.

Swimming

Every Friday evening we attend a woman's only swimming session at Westminster lodge. This allows the ladies to get a full body workout without the harsh impact of other sports.

Hot Yoga

One challenge all of us face is maintaining our health and wellbeing, acquiring the knowledge and the right techniques to a healthier lifestyle.

HAWA have arranged Hot Yoga classes for our Tiffin club and HAWA members. The sessions are held at Westminster Lodges once a week. The class is taught by certified yoga instructor.

Practicing yoga in a heated room increases your pulse rate and metabolism, allowing your blood vessels to become more flexible and making your body burn calories.

Our ladies have said they've seen the benefits of doing hot yoga every week, they feel light and refreshed after each session.

Working in partnership with CAB

We run a hub once a week at the Tiffin Club and St Albans council where we provide help and guidance with anything from helping them call the utility company, filling in forms or guiding them to the correct department within the council or organisation.

Habibah's Tiffin Club Garden

On behalf of Hertfordshire Asian Women Association (HAWA) the Habibah Garden project has been an exciting project over the last year and it has been really exciting to see the project progress from a patch of grass into a beautiful space created for all to enjoy. Eight tonnes of gravel have been used to create our garden, different types of flowers and herbs all have all thrived. The space has grown into a calm and invigorating place for our elderly ladies of the Tiffin Club to relax and enjoy.

The Habibah Garden is made up of an array of five raised flower and herb beds. The main focal point of the garden, the diamond shaped bed in the centre of the garden has the roses tended from Habibah's very own garden. Habibah was a very active member of the Tiffin Club who passed away few years ago. The garden is in her memory.

The central bed is surrounded by two raised beds. As the project develops each year we will continue to add more. Our wonderful local herb specialist and Tiffin Club volunteer Sheila Poole has helped create our herb bed, which now boasts local and International herbs for all to enjoy.

As we look forward to spring and summer our ladies from the Tiffin club will be taking part

in Sustainable Week. Farhat Zia who coordinated the project and will also be leading the session at the Sustainable Week where we will show how to grow Asian Herbs and what herbs are used in Asian Cooking. The Habibah Garden has taken a great deal of time to create we are grateful for the support from the People Health Trust and CDA who have generously contributed funds to enable us to develop the project each year. The financial support we receive helps us continue and develop this further and a big thankyou goes to all the volunteers who have given they time to help us create this peaceful space. We would also like to extend our thanks to Yahya, a Syrian refugee who has been homed in St Albans and Ozzy, our Australian gardener - whose continued hard work has been the foundation of bringing the garden to light. I would like to Thank Rafina, Mubin and Gul and HAWA members for their continued support.



Accounts Balance Sheet - 06/04/2017 to 05/04/2018							
	Tiffin Club Account			HAWA Account			TOTAL
Opening Balance	£6,580.97			£4,010.10			

Tiffin Club Balance Sheet - 06/04/2017 to 05/04/2018

Opening Balance £ 6,580.97

Income

People's Health Trust	£ 5,394.00
Dacorum	£ 1,125.00
Membership Contributions	£ 1,470.50
Fundraising	£ 590.00
Interest	£ 0.10
TOTAL	£ 8,579.60

Expenditure

Hall Hire	£ 1,594.00
Transport & Mileage	£ 1,335.00
Petty Cash	£ 598.79
Telephone	£ 452.25
Admin	£ 191.89
Wages	£ 3,745.20
Training	£ 47.00
Equipment	£ 360.91
Insurance	£ 191.52
Habiba Gardens	£ 771.39
Hot Yoga	£ 2,015.00
Tiffin Club Trip	£ 747.20
TOTAL	£ 12,050.15

Closing Balance

£ 3,110.42

HAWA Balance Sheet - 06/04/2017 to 05/04/2018

Opening Balance		£ 4,010.10
Income		
	HAWA Membership	£ 105.00
	Fundraising	£ 424.55
	TOTAL	<u>£ 529.55</u>
Expenditure		
	Meeting Room Hire	£ 30.00
	Website	£ 14.40
	Admin	£ 115.00
	HAWA Ball	£ 120.00
	Equipment	£ 306.13
	TOTAL	<u>£ 585.53</u>
Closing Balance		<u><u>£ 3,954.12</u></u>