
AGM 2021/2022

Hertfordshire Asian Women's Association

Welcome to Hawa



JULY 2022



Contents

Message from Chair3

Our principles5

Meet the Team7

Habiba Gardens8

Supporting Families in Crisis13

Martial Art Classes14

The Big Iftar15

The HUB.....16

The Food Bank and HAWA Partnership.....17

Saheli Tiffin Club.....18

Testimonials22

Finances.....23

Message from Chair

I am amazed to find how the past six years has flown by as a Chair of HAWA. This journey has been incredible as we had to adapt with the onset of the Pandemic which seemed to have lasted a long time. I am pleased that we are now finally able to look at recovery from COVID-19.



I was extremely proud to hear from The Mayor's Office that I was nominated as a finalist for The Mayor's Pride Awards 2020 as a Community Champion of the Year. This prestigious Award is rewarded to people who have regularly given up their spare time and gone out of their way to help others in the community.

In my stature as a Chair of HAWA, we have encountered many challenges and achieved tremendous success with wide-ranging results, especially during the last two years. I am proud to say that HAWA has again had phenomenal success in obtaining generous funding from St Albans City and District Council and Hertfordshire Community Foundation.

HAWA's main ethos is to empower, inspire and motivate Asian women in Hertfordshire. Our aim and objective is to help older, as well as, younger ladies to improve their confidence enabling them to seek knowledge through education and employment. HAWA continues its crucial online work with the Citizens Advice St Albans to provide free independent, impartial and confidential advice. HAWA has also provided befriending service to ethnically diverse communities in order to overcome loneliness and isolation. It is a great privilege to find HAWA is now recognised as one of the main associations in St Albans for ethnically diverse communities. We continue to work with Community Action Dacorum and St Luke's Church to provide this vital service to Saheli Tiffin Club ladies.

HAWA's picnic in Clarence Park, in collaboration with Active Lifestyles, was an incredible success. Our Saheli Tiffin Club members and ladies and gentlemen from

Active Lifestyles had a fantastic time to socialise and enjoy delicious Caribbean and Asian cuisine in May.

HAWA has been very successful in having a very dedicated and committed Management Committee. Unfortunately, our critical and crucial work, at The Hub and the Tiffin Club, had to stop due to the lockdown imposed by the UK Government and Public Health. However, we have joined forces with other Hub partners to provide these services over the telephone and online. I have personally also kept regular contact with HAWA members, especially those who live alone or are isolated, to ensure that they are keeping safe and well and to see if they need help with food shopping, prescription collection and so forth.

Finally, I would like to thank all our partners and stakeholders, without whose support and help, we would not have been able to fully achieve HAWA's aims and objectives. My sincere thanks also goes to the Management Committee of HAWA, especially to Zia Kiani, who has given me her unstinting support and assistance during the past six years. I am also very pleased that both Farhat Zia and Rafina Bardell, together with various volunteers, have dedicated and worked extremely hard to get Habiba Garden looking so superb. We have also planted beautiful roses to pay tribute to some of our previous Committee members and Tiffin club members, who passed away during the Pandemic. I am delighted to see how the association has grown tremendously over the past few years. Exciting changes are happening within HAWA's Structure and committee. I will update everyone once things are finalised.

Our Mission

Women's Multicultural Service - Helping women from ethnically diverse communities
have a voice

Community: Culture: Empowerment

Our Aims

- Work towards the advancement of women and promote human rights and gender equality.
- Work towards a society based on the principles of social justice, equal rights and opportunities for all.

Our Values

- To work with empathy and integrity
 - Ensure equality and diversity
 - To demonstrate sustainability

Our Goal

- Increasing representation in the community for ethnically diverse Women and increasing inclusivity in the wider community.

Our Objectives

- Provide educational activities that support women to empower themselves, develop their self-confidence and enhance self-esteem.
- Provide opportunities to have a voice and influence change through for a, seminars, meetings etc.
 - Coproduction sessions that influence service development.

-
- Hold connection groups to stave off social loneliness.
 - Provide opportunities for women to take a practical part in developing their day-to-day activities and living.
 - Provide information, advice, and guidance.

Meet the Team



Rushna Miah

Chair/Treasurer



Farhat Zia

Executive member



Zia Kiani

Vice Chair/Treasurer



Zaitun Sadikali

Executive member



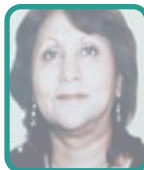
Sufia Ali

Executive Member



Mubin Mohammed

Executive Member



Rafina Suffee

Executive Member

Habiba Gardens

Habiba's garden has seen great improvement over the summer months. The patio area is completed, and a wooden seat has taken a proud place for the weary volunteers.

The roses have been pruned and the soil are well prepared and ready for spring. Daffodils have been planted in early December and these classic yellow trumpet flowers are more likely to greet us first in early spring as well.

Two water butt containers are in place to store rainwater which can then be used to water the plants.

There is nothing more disappointing than to see Habiba's garden being neglected. Taking care of it for an hour a week for some weeding, watering, pruning, deadheading and keep an eye on bugs will give us a sense of purpose and enjoyment. Moreover, it's a great feeling knowing that we are creating an oasis for those who are going through time.



Coriander Plants



Tiffin Club Artwork for Habiba Gardens

Sustainability



We went on a personal Eco Journey. This was Hertfordshire Asian Women Association’s 5th year running, taking part in the SustFest 21. The festival is making its mark; making the communities aware of the challenges we all face due to climate change. This year Rushna and Farhat focussed on their respective countries. Linking St. Albans with their hometowns in Bangladesh and Pakistan. How the climate change and plastic pollution effecting their countries. Here is a LINK to our presentation.

<https://sustfest.org/catchup/>

Rafina and Farhat organised an event as part of # Sustfest 2021. The focused talk was about “Fenugreek and Ginger” learning about herbs and health benefits also focussing on empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainability through learning about different herbs and spices.



A Rose Memorial Garden was created in April for our dear members who we lost during the covid pandemic. A challenging time for all. Members of the community, friends and family were invited to celebrate their life and contribution they made in general also to their loved one. Family members were invited to say a few words about their loved one followed by Planting “Rose Bush” for each in their memories. It was memorable too that “Aylet Nursery and HAWA” have Contributed a rose bush a little gift. We are thankful to all for taking part but a special thanks to Gail Jackson who supported us through her role as trustee for Sustainable St Albans



Her Majesty platinum Jubilee The Queen`s Green Canopy (QGC) celebrating Her Majesty`s Platinum Jubilee HAWA took part in The Queen`s Green Canopy (QGC) a unique tree planting “Local Interfaith Initiative” introduced to mark Her Majesty`s Platinum Jubilee in 2022. Communities also individuals from across the United Kingdom took part “Plant a Tree for the Jubilee”. We planted 80 number of trees at the Highfield Park.

Multifaith groups are thankful to the management of the “Highfield Trust” also “Hertfordshire County Council” for providing the trees grounds for the planting. Members involved in the plantation pay a regular visit to see the growth.



Oxfam Herts Hike unfortunately we were not able to partake in our annual walk for the Oxfam due to covid, however we manage to take part in World climate March day.

members of HAWA took part in the walk in Highfield park on very cold wintery day totalling 28 miles , each step for climate change. Every step can make a change



St Albans Friends of the earth was organised ahead of COP26 climate event with world leaders that took place in Glasgow in November 2021. A group of volunteers had created a paper mache sculpture of the world in flame, with the shapes of the continents made from blue and green paper slips featuring people's hope for the Glasgow event .We had over 200 people and numbers of Climate activist taking part on the day with our MP Daisy Cooper as the main speaker.



Supporting Families in Crisis

We have been collaborating with other organisations in welcoming and helping families who have been evacuated from Afghanistan. The families have been affected by the conflict in Afghanistan.

Most recently we have been visiting the families and offering our support. Many of the women required emotional support due to trauma they have endured.

We applied for funding to help us support the women with their health and wellbeing. We successfully secured £5,000 in funding to help us access resources for the women affected. We arranged for the women to partake in therapeutic beauty sessions focusing on their health and wellbeing.

We arranged a social event at the London Colney Islamic Center for the families to meet and enjoy a lunch together. The purpose of this event was to allow the families to experience a sense of community spirit.



Martial Arts classes

This year we secured funding to run Martial Arts classes aimed at adults and children over 12yrs. The purpose of these classes was to grow confidence in a healthy environment, promote wellbeing and fitness while learning self-defiance.

We offer classes for men and women to participate.

The Classes are currently still running twice a week with a charge of £3 as these are subsidised from the local council, we have another 6 months of funding secure and in place.

We have had very good feedback with the ladies aiming towards getting their belts.

We were extremely fortunate to be visited by the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire and then to be given an award by him presented to Rushna



The Big Iftar

This year we saw the return of the Big Iftar following the easing of the pandemic restrictions. This event was a celebratory community event marking the last day of fasting in the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

The event was open to all members of the public inviting them to come and celebrate with us. To enjoy an Iftar meal as well as stores and activities available.

We worked with St. Albans City and District Council and local businesses and Charities.



The HUB

HAWA HUB ADVISORS ROSE TO THE CHALLENGE DURING COVID

Since the Covid-19 pandemic began the hub advisors have been working remotely from home. Due to the increase in people needing assistance, we increased the hub sessions to 4-5 days a week, as an alternative of the once a week that was previously available at the Council site.

The Hub has been truly tested and rose to the challenge to become an integral part of the community during this pandemic. People have been struggling in the community with housing issues, benefits, domestic violence, energy bills, needing grants and food supplies to name a few. The volunteers have done what was needed to be available and assist as well as they can.

HAWA takes mental health issues very seriously. Many non-English speaking community members were confused and stressed with the lock down and not fully understanding what was happening in the world. At times along with assistance in issues they were having, they simply needed our befriending service to hear a kind and caring voice. As all our volunteers are bilingual in various languages, this was achievable.

We have worked with our partner organisations, which have sent us referrals to follow up. Additionally, they have aided us in securing computers for community members who did not have online access to join in online classes that HAWA has to offer. At times not being able to advise face-to-face has been a hurdle. Often applications require signatures, or when you call on behalf of a member to an official body, they need to hear the named person is present and giving the advisor permission to talk on their behalf. Our Hub advisors have had to find ways to overcome such hurdles, even making house visits when truly stuck and lock down was over. This was a service that went above and beyond its original nature and has only grown in strength with the pandemic we have gone through the past two years.

Finally, now in 2022 life has started to normalise again, and we look forward to carrying on the high level of work from home and trying to regain the face-to-face Hub services at the various locations we previously offered.

Food Bank and HAWA Partnership

We were humbled to have had the chance to partner with St Alban's Food bank and help over 80 families in 2021 from April to December. Many ethnically diverse communities have a certain stigma attached to reaching out for such help. However, thankfully we were able to use our connections and find those in need. Then handle everything in a discrete manner respecting people's personal sensibilities. Additionally, breaking certain societal taboos and enabling the families who required assistance to understand there is no shame in this, we all must do what is needed to survive and give our families the basic necessities.

Unfortunately, from January 2022 we have not been able to use the Food Bank facilities, as they are going through a refurbishment with change of location. However, HAWA has managed to maintain some of our work and distributed food packages ourselves, even though during Ramadan there were a lower number of volunteers available to us.

We hope once everything has settled at the Food Bank we can partner with them again and continue our successful work that enables us to reach further within the community.



Working together for Change

Saheli Tiffin Club

At the Tiffin Club we pride ourselves on a friendly and welcoming atmosphere providing a safe and fun environment for our Tiffin Club ladies. The primary aim of the project is to help decrease isolation, build confidence, Teach new skills and general wellbeing of our older Ladies from all ethnic backgrounds. This has helped the ladies to overcome language and social barriers.

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

It's been a challenging year following the corona virus outbreak; however, this has not stopped us engaging with the Tiffin Club ladies and providing the best possible service we can in these strange times.

Here's a look at what we have been doing.

Saheli Tiffin Club

Exercise with Rabina

Every Thursday Rabina provides online exercise

Tiffin Club Trips -Members meeting for afternoon tea



Online English classes

We have been providing online English classes every Thursday to continue the literacy classes for the club ladies. The classes also provided an opportunity for the ladies to see and support each other.

Exercise Classes

classes via Skype, this has allowed the Ladies to keep their fitness levels up and general wellbeing.

"I look forward to working out with Rabina as I do not get out much and helps me to keep moving, Tiffin club member"

Legs, Tums & Bums Class HAWA
HAWA HERTS
HERTSHERTS
HERTSHERTS
HERTSHERTS
HERTSHERTS

KEEP FIT AND FIND YOUR INNER PEACE THROUGH ONLINE EXERCISE SESSIONS.

Sessions will run every Sunday
11.00AM- 12.00PM Via Zoom.

Community Action Dacorum hawa@hawaherts.co.uk
For more information:
Contact Rabina
(Exercise Instructor):
07912603893

Bike Fitness

Healthy Snacks

Keeping healthy is one of our main objectives and providing healthy snacks to the ladies each week allows them access to essential nutrients through fruits and vegetable that they may not always be able to get access to. This also provides an opportunity to have chat to one of our Tiffin Club staff as many of the ladies live alone and look forward to seeing out staff.

“I love receiving my healthy snack, it’s always a surprise what in the bag and I like to try new things. I enjoy chatting to the staff and its lovely seeing a friendly face, Tiffin Club member”

Winter Bags

We teamed up with Small Acts of Kindness again this year to provide the elderly and venerable with winter bags. The Tiffin Club ladies took a bag each and gave it to someone who needed it. The ladies enjoy giving back to the community and helping others as they are aware of how hard it can be at times.

The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Services Nomination

Hawa and The Tiffin Club were nominated for the Queens award this year. This meant that we could open the club for the day to show the valuable work we do to make a difference in the club members lives. It was a wonderful day seeing the Tiffin Club ladies enjoying being back in the club and taking part in all the activities.



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

Iftar Packs

During the month of Ramadan, we provided the club ladies receiving my iftar pack as the food is so delicious and allows me to with a balanced meal to break their fasts.

“I love have a chat with the staff Tiffin Club member”

Testimonials

~ A. Begum ~

I would like to say a big Thank you to HAWA Hub for all the help they have given me the past 2 years. I am a single mum with children under 3 years old and was struggling financially and with my housing needs. This covid lockdown period has not been good and quite scary at times. But Zia and Rubeca have done so much to make my life easier, helped with grants, housing and school issues. As I need help with my English, this can make dealing with Local Authority matters daunting for me. I hope HAWA hub is always available as I know there are many other women who have benefited from the service.

~ August 2021

~ S. Parveen ~

Thank you to everyone at HAWA who has given me support at a very emotional and distressing time in my life. My husband passed away 2 months ago and HAWA members have done a lot for me to figure out what I should do, as I recently came to the U.K and have no one. I am glad a group like this is available in St Albans for women, **as it gives me** hope and confidence that I can deal with all the tough situations a head with support.

- November 2021

Finances

For a copy of our year-end financial report please forward your request to

Chair@hawaherts.co.uk

Alternatively, please call 07786530751

Rushna Miah

Chair & Co -Founder

Hertfordshire Asian Women's Association (HAWA)

Special thanks to our committee members and volunteers for helping construct this report.