

Kings College London Sikh Society

**Annual Report
2009-2010**

**Kings College London Sikh Society
promotes activities that appreciate the
culture, history and ideology
of the Sikh way of life.**

OUR VISION, VALUES & AIMS

- To build a larger Sikh student network within the university and across the nation
- Provide a relaxing, informative and spiritual realisation to Sikhism through meditation and discussions
- Help answer the unanswered questions behind Sikhism
- Bring about a greater awareness of Sikh culture, faith, values and promote Seva (selfless service).

INTRODUCTION

Being one of the most active and most established Sikh societies in the UK, we strive to provide as many opportunities as possible for Sikhs and non-Sikhs to increase their knowledge of Sikhi and pursue a path of spirituality. This includes a weekly simran (meditation) session every Tuesday where students and non-students come from all over London to participate and join in discussions. We look forward to sharing different views and perspective on the controversial topics of today, and those questions we never seem to know the answer to. The society believes meditation is the key to Sikhi and with this as the core focus we unite and aim to achieve peace of mind amongst the congregation.

This year the social events have undergone a massive change with the 5K run being the main attraction. The charity run helped raise over £1,500 for WaterAid, and was a great way of promoting good health and meeting new faces. Alongside the 5K run were many other social events, which include ice skating, bowling and trips to the Shepherd Bush Gurdwara.

Sikhi week was focused around the five senses and each day the society had a different event running. The theme worked well and helped acknowledge a number of different issues as well as attract a number of students from different universities. The Roben Suite kirtan proved to be the highlight of the week for most people as it accommodated a wide range of talented kirtanis' and a traditional langar afterwards. The week came to end after the Homeless run around Strand which was the highlight as it proved very rewarding, just emphasising the importance of Seva, another fundamental part of Sikhism.

By inviting inspiring talkers and carrying out more rewarding events, the society will succeed in the task of making Sikh Society a larger part of students lives. The main aim is to provide the students with a clearer picture of what Sikhism is about, as many people nowadays are afraid that religion is something beyond their capacity. There is a huge misconception that societies hold, which needs to be replaced so that students can openly approach Sikh society whenever they feel the need.

The society has some great ideas planned for the near future and together with determination and financial help we can help improve the outlook of Sikh students and promote a better way of student life.

MEMBERSHIP & OFFICERS

SELECTION PROCESS

Becoming a committee member was open to anybody who was already a member of Sikh society. Those that were interested in becoming a part of the new committee were asked to submit a formal application stating their reasons for volunteering, what they have to offer, and the position they were going for.

The applications were then reviewed by the current president, vice president and treasurer and a decision is made of who fulfils the new positions best. We always try to find a place for every applicant by putting them in the position we feel they will bring the most to the society.

SOCIETY OFFICERS

Prabhjot Virk – President
Gurnam Aulakh – Vice President
Rajpreet Sidhu – Treasurer
Simran Gill – Secretary

Socials

Gurdev Thethy
Sharondeep Gill
Gurjeev Nandra

Simrun Co-ordinators

Sandeep Bassi
Sharan Rayat
Sandeep Singh
Pavneet Sandhu

Sports

Navjit Sohal

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Number of paid members: 40
Average attendance for a general event: 25
Cost of membership: £5
Number of members added to database this year: 15

STUDENT SERVICES

ACADEMIC STUDIES

None offered

WORKSHOPS

Sikhi Week Workshops – Love (25 attended)

Sikhi Q/A (20 attended)

Akhand Paath Workshop (15 attended)

Yoga workshop (18 attended)

What's Under the Turban? (15 attended)

Tabla, Jap Ji Sahib and Vaja lessons (0 attended)

ASSISTANCE

None seeked.

ACTIVITIES

SPORT

Only one football tournament was held by Sikh society this year but next year we endeavour on promoting football, netball and kabadi against other societies and universities. We also wish to make the 5K run a larger event as it is a great way of promoting good health, unity and selfless service.

ARTS

None offered

WELL-BEING

Physical - Football Tournament, 5K Run
Mental - Homeless Run, Yoga workshops

SOCIAL LIFE

FRESHERS WEEK

Committee members helped promote Sikh society by telling the fresher's what Sikh society is about, and what they can look forward to throughout the year. Two committee members were at the stall at all times where they signed up people that showed interest and gave out fresher's packs that were provided by BOSS.

CELEBRATIONS

Cha & Somosa Party – 100 attendees
Roben Suite Langar – 80 attendees
End Of Term Meal – 25 attendees

EXCURSIONS

Diwali trip to Shepherds Bush Gurdwara – 8 attended
Collaborations (Imperial) – 10 attended
UCL Langar – 12 attended
Akhand Paath – 50 attended

CAMPAIGNS & EVENTS

MAJOR EVENT

The 5K Run for WaterAid had the largest attendance this year. It was a new event that worked really well as it appealed to non- Sikh society members and managed to get other universities involved as well. Having this event near the start of the year and doing the run for a neutral cause definitely attracted a large number of people and helped raise a respectable sum of money.

ACTIVISM

5K Run for WaterAid

Homeless Run around Strand – two separate occasions (food provided by shephards bush gurdwara)

COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS

MODES OF COMMUNICATION

Many different forms of communication were used throughout the year for different events. Facebook was utilised a lot this year as many students were already members. The Sikh society facebook page was regularly updated and messages were sent using this tool. Emails were also sent using the university email system.

Posters were also used for the social events and sikhi week. This was less effective as the posters were generally small and in black and white. Very little money was invested in visual advertising of the events. The fresher's fair was a great time to make people aware of the early events in the year.

Announcements at the end of each simran always included upcoming events. Word of mouth always proved to be a good method of communication. The kings college London website was up and running but was not viewed very often so may be discontinued this year.

PARTNERSHIPS

WITHIN KCL

The 5K run was open to members of any society, therefore increasing the number of people participating in the event. We aim to have more inter-society events in the upcoming year to improve our relationship and awareness of other religions/groups of people.

NATIONAL BODY

We receive information packs from BOSS for fresher's fair and appreciate the help they provide. Accenture have been in touch this year promoting there business to young students interested in that specific field.

EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Throughout the year we have always seeked the lowest prices for everything from flyers to food. For charity events such as the Homeless Runs, Shepherds Bush Gurdwara has been kind enough to provide us with food free of charge. We are grateful for having the close contacts to provide us with the resources we needed this year.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

SUMMARY

As a society that relies heavily on the donations of others, including the langar from Shepherds Bush Gurdwara, the KCLSU grant dependent on the previous years' membership numbers and the generosity of the Kirtan attendees we have always fallen short of money to spend on advertising. This had a knock-on effect on the turnout of our events as there was a limited amount of printing we were able to do, the number of posters printed was minimal and the quality was poor as they were often small and black and white.

Our number of members has halved over the last year which has led to our KCLSU grant being halved. I think the main reason for this was not being able to sign up for membership at Fresher's Fair, as you could do this in previous years. If this is the case in future we need to make sure we advertise the benefit of becoming a member (discounted ticket prices, discounted hoodies and a free goody bag with posters and Kirtan CDs).

A large portion of our budget is spent quite early in the year on our hoodies. A major flaw this year was marketing the hoodies at £20 for members. Consequently many members did not purchase them and so in future we hope to keep the price under £15 (if feasible to do so).

ACCOUNTS

Refreshments for weekly simran and other small events throughout the year:
£100
Cha & Samosa party refreshments: £100
Hoodies: £650
Printing: £40

KCLSU Grant received: £75
Current cleared balance: £120

Please not this is estimated as we do not have access to the accounts until October.

THE FUTURE

The future of Sikh society is simple. The aims are clear; simran (meditation) and seva (selfless service). To better Sikh society, these two major components need to be improved. To help improve simran, the kirtan and shabads that are being read should be understood rather than just sang. This can be achieved by utilising Sikhi to the Max. To help improve seva, more charitable events can be carried out together with doing seva wholeheartedly to experience that unique rewarding feeling that seva provides.