
Action for Harmony Practical Community Engagement Handbook

Empowering British Hindus - How to get involved in Civic roles and who to go to for support on various challenges:

- 1. Chaplaincy**
- 2. School Governorship**
- 3. Political Membership**
- 4. Crematorium**
- 5. SACRE**
- 6. Foster Care**
- 7. Domestic Abuse**
- 8. Grooming**
- 9. Anti-Hindu Hate**
- 10. Security & Safeguarding**
- 11. Join APPG for British Hindus**

Community Event Preparation - How to prepare your organisation to host 4 keys initiatives/campaigns across the country:

- 1. Raksha Bandhan**
- 2. Hindu Remembrance Day & Mission Marigold**
- 3. Teacher Appreciation Day**
- 4. UK Parliament Week**

Key organisations and contacts are listed after each section for guidance and support.

1. Chaplaincy – How to Become a Hindu Chaplain

What it involves:

Hindu chaplains provide pastoral, spiritual, and cultural support in hospitals, universities, prisons, and the armed forces. Their role is to serve not only Hindus but all individuals in need of comfort, spiritual care, and cultural understanding.

Requirements & Pathway:

- A background in Hindu philosophy, scriptures, or temple service (priests, teachers, or respected volunteers are well-placed).
- Strong communication and pastoral skills, with empathy for people of all faiths.
- Safeguarding, confidentiality, and pastoral care training.
- DBS check (criminal record check).

Steps to Apply:

1. Contact your **local NHS Trust chaplaincy department** or **University Multi-Faith Chaplaincy**.
2. Express your interest in Hindu chaplaincy and ask about vacancies.
3. Approach the **UK Board of Hindu Chaplaincy** for advice and endorsement.
4. Undergo training (often provided free or subsidised by NHS/universities).
5. Gain practical experience by volunteering at your local hospital or prison.

Tip: Keep a portfolio of your community work, references, testimonials, value lived experience.

Training and Register

World Council of Hindus (aka VHP UK) is training Hindu chaplains and maintaining a national register of Hindu Chaplains. Its education project VOICE has already delivered one training event and given certificates to 60 volunteers. The next training event will be in January/February 2026. Those who are interested can write to voicemanchester@gmail.com

Point of Contacts: World Hindu Council UK & Chinmaya Mission UK

2. School Governorship – How to Become a Governor

Role of Governors:

- Shape a school's ethos, policies, and budget.
- Ensure children receive a broad and balanced education (including fair representation of Hinduism in Religious Education).
- Hold headteachers accountable for performance.

Steps to Apply:

1. Register with **Inspiring Governance** (www.inspiringgovernance.org) or your **local council governor services team**.
2. Submit an application outlining your skills and interest in education.
3. Interview and DBS check.
4. Once appointed, attend mandatory induction training.

Skills Needed:

- Strategic thinking, financial acumen, experience in education/community work.
- Willingness to give 6–10 hours per term.

Action for Hindus:

Hindu governors are essential to ensure Hindu perspectives are represented in schools, especially in RE curriculum, cultural celebrations, and anti-bullying policies.

Point of Contact: Hindu Education Board UK - info@hindueducationboarduk.org

3. Political Membership – How to Join Parties

Why join?

Decisions are made by those in the room. Joining parties ensures Hindus shape policies, candidate selections, and manifestos.

Steps to Join:

1. Choose a party – Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrats, Green Party, etc.
2. Visit their official website and complete the **online membership form**.
3. Pay annual membership (£25–£50 typical, concessions available).
4. Attend your **local constituency branch meetings**.
5. Volunteer in campaigns – leaflet drops, canvassing, fundraising.

Progression:

- Run for local council.
- Apply for national candidate lists.
- Join policy forums to influence national manifestos.

Tip: Encourage youth to join and represent Hindu values within all political spaces.

Point of Contact: INSIGHT UK - info@insightuk.org

4. Crematorium Services – Lobbying MPs

Issue: Hindus face delays in cremation services, limited facilities for rituals, and restricted hours.

Steps to Lobby:

1. Gather evidence, testimonials from families, data on delays.
2. Write to your **local MP** (use www.writetothem.com).
3. Request a meeting with your MP to explain Hindu needs.
4. Suggest practical solutions:
 - Extended hours for cremations.
 - Dedicated space for prayers and rituals.
 - Quicker issue of death certificates.
 - Better staff training in cultural sensitivity.

Work with **Action for Harmony** to collate multiple community voices for greater impact.

5. SACRE – Representing Hindus in RE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education)

Role: SACREs advise local authorities on RE syllabi and collective worship in schools.

Steps to Get Involved:

1. Contact your **local authority education department**.
2. Ask about vacancies for Hindu representatives on the SACRE panel.
3. Submit CV and references from your Hindu community/organisation.
4. Attend regular SACRE meetings (termly) to review RE resources.

Impact: Ensures accurate, respectful teaching of Hinduism and prevents stereotypes.

Point of Contact: Hindu Education Board UK - info@hindueducationboarduk.org

6. Foster Homes – Protecting Hindu Children

Issue: Hindu children are sometimes placed in non-Hindu foster homes, losing cultural continuity.
Contact:

Steps:

1. Apply to become a foster parent via your **local council fostering services**.
2. Highlight your capacity to provide a Hindu environment (dietary needs, festivals, language).
3. Lobby your council to ensure Hindu children are matched with Hindu carers.

Tip: Encourage more Hindu families to step forward – councils often lack faith-matched carers.

Contact Action for Harmony, if you would like to help in this area.

7. Domestic Abuse

If at risk:

- Call **999** in an emergency.
- For confidential advice, contact **HSN helpline**.
- Record incidents (dates, times, evidence).

Community Action:

Temple committees and leaders should signpost victims to HSN and mainstream support services, ensuring confidentiality.

Reporting via Hindu Support Network (HSN) www.hsnu.org

8. Grooming – Protecting Vulnerable Young Hindus

Steps if you suspect grooming:

1. Report immediately to police (101, or 999 if urgent).
2. Inform HSN UK safeguarding officers.
3. Alert the child's school safeguarding lead.
4. Do not confront suspects directly – always go through official channels.

Reporting via Hindu Support Network (HSN) www.hsnuk.org

9. Hindu Hate Crimes – Recording & Reporting

Steps:

1. Call **999** in an emergency; otherwise, dial **101**.
2. Record details: date, time, place, what was said/done, and witness details.
3. Submit reports online through **True Vision Hate Crime Reporting** or Action for Harmony Helpline.
4. Keep photographic/video evidence where safe to do so.

Tip: Accurate reporting strengthens the case for resources and government action.

Point of Contact: INSIGHT UK - info@insightuk.org

10. Security Concerns – Applying for Government Grants

Available: Home Office **Places of Worship Protective Security Fund** (annual grants up to £56,000).

Steps:

1. Register your temple with your **local council's community safety team**.
2. Check the Home Office website for the application window.
3. Apply for funding (covers CCTV, alarms, fences, training).
4. Assign a **Security Lead** in your temple to manage safety policy.

Point of Contact: Hindu Mandir Network UK - info.hmuk@gmail.com

11. Join APPG for British Hindus – Write to your MP

The APPG for British Hindus plays a crucial role in representing the interests and concerns of the British Hindu community in Parliament. It provides a platform for discussions and initiatives on issues that are important to Hindus in the UK. <https://appgbritishhindus.com/>

Request your MP's to join by submitting this campaign form online:

<https://campaign.insightuk.org/join-appg-for-british-hindus/>

Summary

Action for Harmony is equipping British Hindus to be **active, visible, and protected**. This is a live document and will be published on our website. Look out for further updates.

 For updated templates, training, and guidance : www.actionforharmony.org

Action for Harmony – Practical Guide

Event Preparation: Teacher Appreciation Day | Raksha Bandhan 2026 | Hindu Remembrance Day & Mission Marigold | UK Parliament Week

1. Teacher Appreciation Day

Theme: *Guru Devo Bhava – Teachers as Builders of Society*

Timing: Early September (aligned with UK academic calendar and Teachers' Day in India – 5th September).

Objectives:

- Recognise and honour teachers for their service.
- Strengthen ties between Hindu community and schools.
- Inspire Hindu youth to value education and respect their teachers.

Preparation Checklist:

- **May–June:**
 - Identify local schools and universities to participate.
 - Draft invitation letters to headteachers.
- **July–August:**
 - Prepare certificates of appreciation (branded Action for Harmony).
 - Arrange student speeches/performances on “The Value of Teachers.”
 - Collect short messages of gratitude from pupils to present to teachers.

- **Event Delivery (September):**

- Host event in school hall or community centre.
- Programme:
 1. Welcome & Hindu prayer for wisdom.
 2. Short talk on Guru tradition in Hindu Dharma.
 3. Presentation of certificates/gifts to teachers.
 4. Cultural performance by students.
 5. Refreshments/networking.

- **Post-Event:**

- Share success stories in the media.
- Build ongoing partnerships with schools for SACRE and RE representation.

Point of Contacts - Vishal Shah or Tushar Shah of HSS UK for further guidance - pr@hssuk.org

2. Raksha Bandhan

Theme: *Celebrating Bonds of Protection & Duty – Raksha to Society*

Timing: August 2026 (exact date aligned with Hindu calendar – full moon of Shravana month).

Objectives:

- Share the universal values of Raksha Bandhan: protection, duty, and harmony.
- Build relationships with civic, faith, and political institutions (MPs, Police, NHS, Schools).

- Showcase Hindu contribution to wider society.

Preparation Checklist:

- **March–April 2026:**
 - Identify local institutions (police stations, hospitals, councils, schools).
 - Appoint a local coordinator + 5–10 volunteers per event.
- **May–June 2026:**
 - Order/procure rakhis (can include handmade rakhis by children/women’s groups).
 - Draft letters to MPs, councillors, headteachers inviting them to join.
 - Prepare a 2–3 minute cultural explanation of Raksha Bandhan (simple script).
- **July 2026:**
 - Train volunteers on messaging: *Raksha is about duty, protection, and harmony – not just siblings but society at large.*
 - Arrange media/photography team for coverage.
- **Event Delivery (August 2026):**
 - Ceremony: Tie rakhi to dignitaries (police officers, MPs, NHS staff, teachers).
 - Short speech by Action for Harmony rep.
 - Photo session + press release drafted the same day.
- **Post-Event:**
 - Send thank-you letters to all institutions.
 - Publish coverage on social media and community newsletters.

Point of Contacts: Action for Harmony

3. Hindu Remembrance Day 2025 & 2026

Theme: *Honouring the Service & Sacrifice of Hindu Soldiers in the World Wars*

Timing: November (aligned with UK Remembrance Sunday / Armistice Day events).

Objectives:

- Recognise over 1.3 million Hindu soldiers who served in WWI & WWII.
- Ensure Hindu representation in national remembrance services.
- Educate youth about Hindu contributions to British history.

Preparation Checklist:

- **June–July 2025/26:**
 - Contact Royal British Legion, local councils, and Remembrance organisers to include Hindu representatives.
 - Order/purchase **Hindu Remembrance Wreaths** (with Aum / lamp design).
- **August–September:**
 - Prepare press material highlighting Hindu war contributions.
 - Identify local Hindu veterans or families of veterans for recognition.
- **October:**
 - Hold youth education sessions (schools, mandirs) about Hindu war history.
- **Event Delivery (November 2025 & 2026):**
 - Hindu representative lays wreath at local war memorial or cenotaph.
 - Recite universal shanti mantra (Om Shanti Shanti Shanti).

- Invite MPs/councillors to join ceremony.
- **Post-Event:**
 - Share coverage in local and national media.
 - Archive photos/videos for future use.

Tip: Use this as a springboard to campaign for official recognition of Hindu Remembrance Day in UK calendars.

Point of Contacts: <https://www.hinduremembranceday.com/> &

<https://www.missionmarigold.org/> - Honouring the contributions of Indian Soldiers' sacrifice on Armistice Day, 11th November

4. UK Parliament Week – Hindu Participation

Theme: *British Hindus Engaging with Democracy*

Timing: November 2025 (week-long programme coordinated nationally by UK Parliament).

Objectives:

- Encourage Hindus to engage with civic and political life.
- Educate youth about how Parliament works.
- Showcase British Hindu perspectives in local/national democracy.
- Actively scout for potential candidates for Youth Parliament and political engagement

Preparation Checklist:

- **August–September 2025:**



- Register your temple/community organisation on the **UK Parliament Week website** (<https://www.ukparliamentweek.org/>).
- Order free Parliament Week resource packs (badges, booklets, posters).
- **October 2025:**
 - Plan an event in your community:
 - Panel discussion on “Hindus in Public Life” or locally appropriate topic
 - Mock Parliament or debate for youth groups (a suggested list can be shared)
 - Invite local MP and/ or councillors to speak.
- **Event Delivery (November):**
 - Display Parliament Week branding and explain its purpose.
 - Host educational sessions (how laws are made, why voting matters).
 - Include a Hindu perspective – values of Dharma, civic duty, seva, responsible citizenship.
- **Post-Event:**
 - Share photos with the national Parliament Week campaign.
 - Encourage participants to stay engaged – join parties, student work experience, internships, apply for governorships, volunteer with MPs.

Tip: Use Parliament Week to link into other community priorities (e.g., SACRE, chaplaincy, security grants).

Point of Contact - Harshaben Jani of HSS UK for further guidance - pr@hssuk.org

General Notes for All Events

- **Volunteer Team:** Recruit minimum 10–20 volunteers per event. Allocate roles (protocol, media, catering, ushering, safeguarding).
- **Safeguarding:** Ensure all youth activities have DBS-checked adults present.
- **Media & Comms:** Always prepare a press release in advance; assign one media spokesperson. Get an article in the local press.
- **Follow-Up:** Thank speakers, institutions, and volunteers. Document event outcomes for annual report.

For further information go to - www.actionforharmony.org