

*Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*

**Meetings:**

8th September South Regional consultation meeting took place at Singh Sabha Gurdwara Sahib Barking, consultation was well attended and consulted on various topics including: Mixed Marriages, Caste Legislation and Same Sex Marriages

8th September Representatives of the Sikh Council attended the British Sikh Council Conference at Willenhall and a Panthic conference at Guru Arjan Dev Gurdwara Sahib, Derby.

14th September the Operations Team Meeting took place at Guru Nanak Gurdwara Wednesfield

14th September the Executive Committee Meeting took place at Guru Nanak Gurdwara Wednesfield during this meeting members also met with Sikhs for Justice who have been working internationally for the last several years to have the events during the first week of November 1984 recognized as genocide. They have been directed by the Sri Akal Takhat Sahib to petition the United Nations to recognize November 1984 as genocide. The Khalsa Panth has been directed to collect at least one million signatures on the petition before it is presented.

19th September 2013 Representatives of the Sikh Council UK met with S. Manjit Singh, G.K. the President of Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) and his colleagues. Present at the meeting were members of the Board of Jathedars and Executive Committee as well as other representatives of Sikh Council UK Affiliated Member organisations. The meeting was also opened up to members of the Sangat as observers. Approximately one hundred people attended and took part in the discussions.

In September Member of Board of Jathedar and Secretary General of Sikh Council met with Guru Nanak Gurdwara Sahib Committee about a local issue

22nd September the media and communications committee met in Coventry to progress work on the new website, e-mail addresses and the branding of the Sikh Council

28th September A Minister of the Victoria state, Australia met with representatives of the Sikh Council UK at Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Havelock Road, Southall; the meeting was arranged by the Australian Minister as part of his educational tour in understanding and networking with different faith communities. Following a guided tour of the Gurdwara Sahib discussions took place around the issues affecting Sikhs living in the state and developments in UK.

28th September Sikh Womens' Alliance supported by Sikh Council held a conference addressing issues of vulnerability and exploitation of women. This event was attended by around 150 people.

29th September 2013 a number of the members of the Board of Jathedars and Executive Committee of the Sikh Council UK met with Giani Gurbachan Singh the Jathedar Sri Akaal Takht Sahib Ji at Ramgharia Sabha, Southall.

A very wide range of issues were discussed in the one hour long meeting that proved extremely positive. A separate Press release has been issued reporting on the details of this meeting.

The Council is continuing dialogue to correct the anomaly in the legislation to secure the right to wear a Dastaar in non construction environments

The Council is engaged in various discussions to ensure that the issue of grooming of Sikh females is recognised and dealt with by the responsible agencies.

Ongoing work is taking place to increase the engagement of Sikhs in the political and civic structures of UK.

**Media:**

19th September 2013: A representative and Secretary General of Sikh Council attended Sangat Tv along with the President of Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee and a colleague to share with Sangat the contents of the meeting held earlier on that evening.

**Casework/Campaigns:**

Sikh Council UK provided a letter of support towards the application of Nanaksar Academy in Slough

The 4th draft version of the Mixed Marriage guidelines were provided at request to a Gurdwara Sahib in Huddersfield, Nottingham and Birmingham

Sikh Council provided follow up information to previous email sent to Care home relating to a query about the care of individuals of opposite gender as a Sikh. The clarifying response was as follows:

'Generally speaking, in the Asian communities for cultural and religious reasons many people prefer for the carer and clients to be of the same gender, particularly where intimate caring duties are involved. The Sikh religion teaches that there are five cardinal sins which individuals are to work to avoid and eradicate from their lives for spiritual salvation to be attained. One of these is 'Lust'. In order to eradicate this sin from ones life an individual will be expected to follow two approaches - exercise self-control / self-discipline and by practicing a lifestyle of modesty.

In practice this is accomplished by contact and relationships with members of the opposite gender being characterised by personal restraint and modesty in ones dress, mannerisms, conversations etc. The cultural manifestation of this is that individuals who are unknown to each other will therefore behave in a reserved manner with a level of distance that is often interpreted as detachment, diffidence, aloofness or even timidity and will be conservative in their dress and actions. This cultural practice is further amplified when there is a significant age difference between the individuals where the older person is considered akin to ones own parent or grand-parent.

Sikh Council was contacted by the National Union of Students for information to be included in their information document. The following information was provided to them based on the conceptual framework of developing the National Sikh Students Alliance (NSSA).

'Since April of this year (2013) informal discussions have taken place to develop a democratically constituted and accountable body to support the Sikh Students with built in sustainability. The purpose of this body is to focus on high level and strategic activity to improve the experiences and contributions of the Sikh students during their period of study and later as alumni.

During the autumn term there will be opportunities for all Sikh students to contribute towards developing a structure and agreeing priorities. The Sikh Council UK is providing support during the formative stages.'

### **New members:**

Nanaksar Gurdwara Sahib Coventry  
Singh Sabha Gurdwara Sahib Southall  
Sikh Heritage and Religious Education (SHARE) Coventry