

Sikh Helpline Charity Bike Ride - Press Release

Local community get on their bikes to help launch charity fundraiser with the Sikh Helpline - winner of **The Sikh Awards 2014 Charity Award**.

Following on from last year's successful charity bike ride, members of the local community are using pedal power to raise money for the Sikh Helpline charity fundraising campaign "Every Call Matters".

Last year a total of 50 cyclists including priests, police officers, local business owners and teachers cycled across the West Midlands to take part in the charity bike ride. A further 50 stewards volunteered from the community to help set-up and make this event successful. The ride raised £11,700 which allowed the Sikh Helpline to employ a full time member of staff, move to new premises and open up a new branch in Yorkshire.

This year the team are hoping to double the number of participants to 100. The cyclists will set off on their 24 mile bike ride journey, stopping at 10 local Sikh Gurdwaras who are also engaging in this worthy cause. Hundreds of community members are expected to congregate at their local Gurdwaras to show their support. The bike ride not only raises awareness and funding for the Sikh Helpline charity, but also promotes a healthy and active lifestyle.

The Sikh Helpline is receiving high volumes of calls and its demand has become nationwide. This bike ride marks the first of many planned fundraising events to help support The Sikh Helpline to continue the vital services they provide. The cyclists are expected to cross the finish line at the final Gurdwara in Wolverhampton after pedalling 24 miles and are aiming to raise money towards the £30,000 target of the "Every Call Matters" campaign.

Giani Sukha Singh, The C.E.O of The Sikh Helpline, said,

"We need the support of the local communities to help us keep up with the increasing demand of calls. Every call matters and a missed call may be the only attempt someone makes for help. It is crucial that every call is answered."

"The Sikh Helpline handles hundreds of calls each month on issues ranging from grooming, domestic abuse through to racism and substance addiction. Due to cultural barriers and protection of 'honour' within the local community, such victims suffer in silence. With an understanding of these cultural issues and barriers, the Sikh Helpline offers a support network for these victims."

H S Rai of the West Midlands Police Sikh Association said,

"The Sikh Helpline has been working with the West Midlands Police Sikh Association for several months. The work has centred specifically around Child Sex Exploitation, however we are looking towards further collaborations around Domestic Abuse."

"The Sikh Helpline has been invaluable in reaching out to the local Community and we anticipate further projects and I welcome their efforts to secure funding to pursue their good work."

Barrister **Baljit Singh** who supports and volunteers for the Sikh Helpline said,

"Taboo subjects within the Asian community very rarely see victims speaking out; this service needs to ensure they continue their amazing work."

2014 bike ride participant, **Sukhwinder Kaur Muttoo**, said,

"The Sikh Helpline bike ride was the first time I experienced cycling on the busy Birmingham roads. It was a very well organised ride and the ride marshals helped me feel safe and confident throughout the journey. As well as raising money for this great cause I was also inspired to take up cycling as a hobby and I recently cycled from Birmingham to London for charity. This is something I wouldn't have dreamed of doing a year ago and it's all thanks to the Sikh Helpline."

Award nominee, **Gurpreet Singh** (CEO and Founder of talklocal, Washington, USA) met the Sikh Helpline at the The Sikh Awards and said,

"Learning about this charity and its work has touched my heart. I cannot believe that, with such little funding, this charity has managed to not just sustain itself but has also become a national service. To manage like this for a period of 19 years shows sheer determination and passion."

"I urge people to join me in supporting this worthwhile cause."

Visit the Sikh Helpline website at www.sikhhelpline.com to make a donation or to take part in the bike ride.

You can also Text GURU13 £10 to 70070 to donate.

To donate via cheque, please post donations to:

Sikh Helpline
86 Birmingham St,
Oldbury,
West Midlands,
B69 4EB

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