



# BHAKTI YOGA INSTITUTE



*A Decade  
in  
Review*

# BHAKTI YOGA INSTITUTE

UK Registered Charity Number: 1080466



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in  
Review*

## Contents

Introduction	3
Our Team	4
Building Development	6
Plan of the Property	8
Anniversary Festivals	10
Visual Identity	12
<i>Curriculum:</i> Bhakti Yoga & Kirtan	14
<i>Curriculum:</i> Conscious Cooking & Art Classes	16
<i>Curriculum:</i> Retreats & Counseling	18
<i>Curriculum:</i> The Challenge Programme & Gardening	20
<i>Curriculum:</i> Children's Programme	22
Publications	23
Feed Them All	24
Nectar Foods	26
Vision for the Future	28
Fundraising Appeal	29
Our Community	30
Contact Details	32



### Our Inspiration

Swami B.S. Govinda is a modern representative of the teachings of Bhakti Yoga in the tradition of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Both definitive and progressive, his exemplary life, practice, and teachings brilliantly illuminate the path of divine love. Known for his deeply affectionate and loving nature, Swami B.S. Govinda spread the teachings of his beloved teacher, Swami B.R. Sridhar, worldwide, and today his legacy shines brightly in the hearts of thousands across the globe. It was his emphatic desire to establish the Bhakti Yoga Institute in West London in service of his teachers and he is the inspiration behind the mission, vision, and educational curriculum of the Bhakti Yoga Institute. This presentation is dedicated to him and his current-acharyas, headed by his appointed successor acharya Swami B.N. Acharya – all of whom our community holds very dear.



## *Introduction*

Situated amidst the cultural diversity of West London, the Bhakti Yoga Institute is a non sectarian organisation that aims to help individuals of all ages, ethnicities, and faiths lead a more fulfilled life through the principles and practices of Bhakti Yoga.

An initiative of the international Bhakti Yoga community Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math, the Bhakti Yoga Institute is a dynamic charitable educational project which sets forth a holistic and edifying curriculum that includes: meditation, philosophy, kirtan, language classes, art classes, yogasana classes, gardening, and vegetarian cooking classes all of which cater to individuals at all ages and levels of experience. Feed Them All is a second initiative based at the same premises and focuses solely on our food distribution relief programme.

This new year's publication reviews the past decade and outlines some of the projects undertaken by the Bhakti Yoga Institute since the acquisition of the Greville House building in 2010. It reviews some of the objectives achieved in the past 10 years, while it also looks to the future, pointing towards the next decade ahead.

### *Our Vision*

To awaken, empower, and educate all with the non-sectarian principles and practices of Bhakti Yoga.

### *Our Mission*

Through community engagement, outreach, and education, we make Bhakti Yoga as accessible to as many people as possible in order to enrich and inspire them, and ultimately enable them to lead more fulfilled lives.

## Our Board of Trustees

Our board of trustees is a group of qualified individuals, each with a specific yet diverse set of skills and expertise ranging from education to business, from management to fundraising, and from academia to publishing. Together, they form an inspired group committed to the service of the Bhakti Yoga Institute and its community.



**David Ewins**  
(Devashis Prabhu)

David was born and raised in England and is the secretary of both the East and West London branches of our charity. A practitioner of Bhakti Yoga for over 40 years, David is a highly respected advisor and spiritual leader of the BYI. He is a deep thinker, eloquent speaker, father-of-two, and an authority within the international Bhakti Yoga community. He offers the BYI a wealth of knowledge and gives talks. David balances his time and support between the BYI and our East London branch.



**Alexander Dragilev**  
(Sripad Bharati Maharaj)

Alexander is a deeply committed, experienced practitioner, and a prominent educator to the international Bhakti Yoga community. Alexander has a great analytical and philosophical mind and is a much-valued spiritual mentor to many in our organisation. He has just released several publications making ancient Sanskrit texts available and accessible in Russian. He has extensive business experience and has offered strategic advice to the BYI over the years. Alexander contributed substantially to the search and acquisition of the Greville House building in 2010.



**Robert Lindberg**  
(Sripad Nyasi Maharaj)

Born and raised in the United States, Robert spent many years in the UK with his family while managing his family business. He is a paternal figure on our Board of Trustees, holds a Masters degree in Theology from Harvard University, and is an experienced academic, teacher, and writer. Robert has been a practitioner of the Bhakti Yoga practice for over 40 years and also played a key role in the coordination of the purchase of Greville House. He is a senior figure and offers valuable spiritual support to our residents and community, both on a one-to-one basis and to groups. Dividing his time between the USA and the UK, Robert leads many of the daily workshops, talks, and events while at the BYI.



**Lucian Wong**  
(Lalita Madhava Prabhu)

Lucian was born in Singapore and moved to England during the later part of his youth. Always inquisitive and eager to read and study, he is currently a PhD candidate in the study of Theology at Oxford University and specialises in the languages of Sanskrit and Bengali. He lead the campaign in the search for an appropriate new building for this charity, managed many of the legal aspects of the acquisition processes, and also made a substantial financial contribution towards the purchase of Greville House. Lucian has been a practitioner of Bhakti Yoga for most of his life and is a valued advisor of the BYI.



**Pandita Geary**  
(Rasa Mayi Pandita Dasi)

Pandita was born in Amsterdam and grew up within the Bhakti Yoga tradition. She moved to London to attend University and to become a volunteer at the East London branch of the charity. She holds a Bachelor degree from the University of London and a Masters in South Asian Studies from the University of Oxford. Pandita also assisted with the search and acquisition of Greville House. She currently works in publishing as an editor and is a keen artist and illustrator. Pandita is a sisterly figure to all who come to her for friendship and advice and she is a core member of our office team, offering administrative and editorial support.



**Zulay Cederberg**  
(Saraswati Didi)

Zulay has been the executive manager of the BYI since 2010 and oversees all aspects of the day-to-day smooth running of the charity. In the course of the past decade, she has been highly influential in the manifesting and blossoming of the BYI and its community. She has a breadth of project management skills, coordinates the volunteer recruitment processes for the charity, is known for unwavering dedication to the practice of Bhakti Yoga, is one of the best cooks at the BYI, and combines all of this with her role as a mother and grandmother.



**Elisabeth Clifford**  
(Lavanya Mayi Didi)

Elisabeth leads all fundraising initiatives at the BYI and has over three decades of experience in community collections for this charity. She manages and coordinates a variety of fundraising initiatives. For over 15 years, Elisabeth was the executive manager of the East London branch of our charity and therefore brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the BYI. Elisabeth is an invaluable, inspired, and absolutely indispensable member of the board and of the team. Elisabeth is a full-time resident at the BYI.

## Our Regular Teachers

Srila Acharya Maharaj  
Srila Janardan Maharaj  
Srila Ashram Maharaj  
Srila Madhusudan Maharaj  
Sripad Bharati Maharaj  
Sripad Tridandi Maharaj  
Bhakti Lalita Devi  
Sripad Nyasi Maharaj  
Sripad Tyagi Maharaj  
Vishakha Devi  
Devashis Prabhu



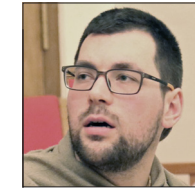
## Our Core Team

We are blessed to have a talented, inspired, and experienced staff of educators and volunteers from a variety of backgrounds, well suited to meet the needs of persons from all walks of life. All of the Core and Support team members listed below are mostly full-time, resident volunteers and are wholly dedicated to the cause.



**Sachidevi Didi**

Originally from Holland, Sachi has been practising Bhakti Yoga for over thirty-five years. She is fully devoted to our Bhakti Yoga mission and is known for her patience, compassion, and motherly affection for all. Due to her steadfast dedication and commitment to the BYI, expressed in a multitude of ways including but not limited to her offering of financial support for over 15 years, she is one of the much-valued pillars of our community. Sachi teaches regularly and is available to the community for informal counselling.



**Ramananda Prabhu**

At the start of the decade, Ramananda very quickly became an integral member of the team and joined the BYI team as a full-time resident of the BYI in 2015. Ramananda is a competent, responsible, and hard-working individual who brings a set of vital skills to the team with a specific focus on IT – a department that he manages. In 2018, he was appointed assistant manager to Saraswati Didi, a position he had in practice already very naturally acquired through his unwavering dedication and commitment. He is a core member of the BYI office team.



**Krishna Mohini Didi**

Originally from Venezuela, Mohini's practice of Bhakti Yoga has caused her to travel all over the world and serve at many of our international bhakti yoga centres. Mohini is currently a full-time resident and volunteer at the BYI and will stay at the BYI for a total duration of 2 years. Mohini is an exemplary individual with a wealth of good qualities and capacities – anything she does, she does well. She is incredibly steady, hard-working, and she is particularly valued for her scrumptious cooking in support of the daily food-distribution at our centre as part of our Feed Them All initiative.

## Our Support Team

(since September 2020)



Ananta Govinda Prabhu  
Krishna Vinodini Didi  
Satish  
Vishnupriya  
Ananda Bhakti  
Gadadhar  
Gaurahari  
Krishna Lalana  
Ananda Swarupini  
Dauji



# Building Development

Since 1996, all aspects of our charity work had been based out of our East London branch in Upton Park, where many significant events took place over the years – a beautiful and cherished centre our community holds very close to heart. After some time, however, it became clear that our community had outgrown the premises and that a larger, more suitable building was required for the blossoming and expansion of the mission and vision of our charity, to host the community and visiting teachers, to engage in increased outreach and charity-work, and to hold more sizable events and festivals. In 2010, after over a decade-long search for an appropriate new, second home for our charity, a gorgeous Grade II listed building known as “Greville House” was found and purchased – the building met all of the previously set out requirements. After a concerted effort, a new building was acquired with the help of many dignitaries, friends, and volunteers of the charity.

The Greville House building was established in 1847 and has a history of education going back centuries. Originally a school run by the local church, the striking, classical architecture of the interior and exterior of the building are reminiscent of a peaceful sanctuary of learning and makes Greville House stand out in beauty within the pleasant setting of the Greater Feltham area. The large extension adjacent to the earlier part of the property was built in the 1980s.

After the outright purchase of the building in Spring 2010, specific building regulations set out by the council needed to be met in order to be able to officially open our doors to the public as a residential educational facility. Building work to be completed included the installation of solar panels, the creation of a disabled toilet and bathroom, the expansion of the main kitchen, the renovation of the smaller kitchen, the creation of en-suite bathrooms for all of the bedrooms, the building of a bicycle shed, and multiple other renovation projects.

2010      2011      2012      2013      2014      2015      2016      2017      2018      2019      2020



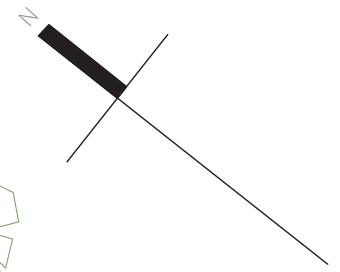
Due to the enthusiastic help of a many professionals, friends, and volunteers, and under the tireless management and supervision of Saraswati Didi, all of the building requirements were met and our premises officially opened to the general public in the Summer of 2014 with a grand opening festival.



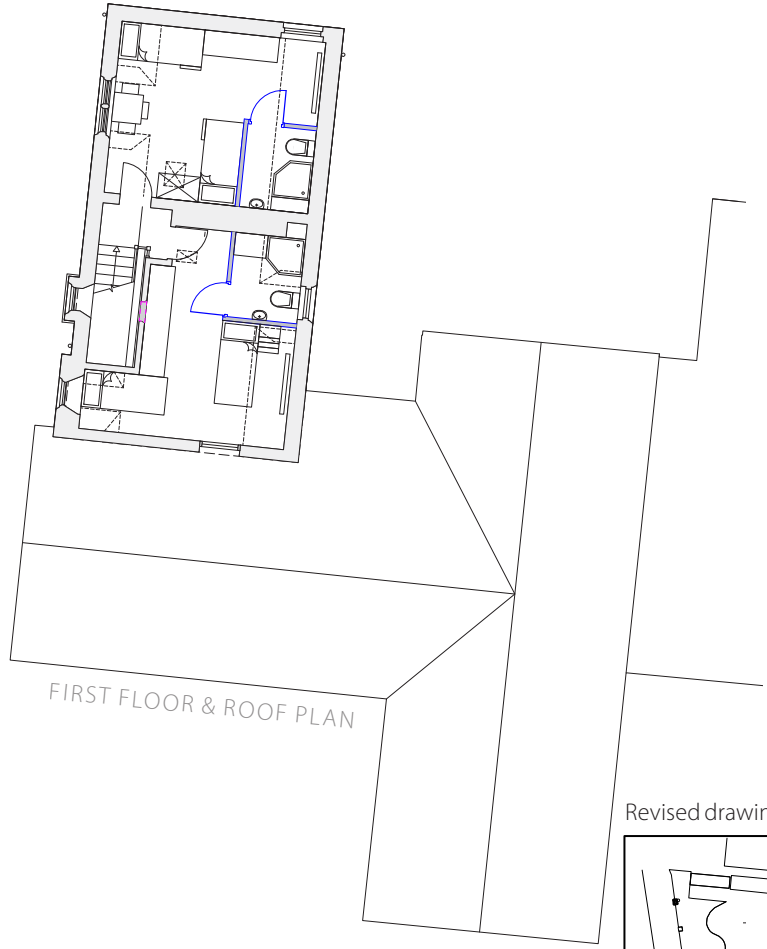
# Plan of the Property

Please see below the floor plans of the building along with a breakdown of the facilities.

- Reception
- Grand room (capacity up to 90 people)
- Large hall (capacity 200 people)
- Large commercial kitchen
- Public kitchen
- Office
- Kids & yoga room
- VIP quarters: 2 bedrooms, living room, kitchen, and en suite bathroom (incl. disabled toilet)
- 2 public ladies toilets
- 1 public gents toilet + shower
- Upstairs bedroom 1 + en suite bathroom
- Upstairs bedroom 2 + en suite bathroom
- Downstairs bedroom 3 + en suite bathroom
- Downstairs bedroom 4 + en suite bathroom (single guestroom)
- Downstairs bedroom 5 + en suite bathroom (family guestroom)
- Garden
- Green house
- Bicycle shed
- Parking (10 spaces)

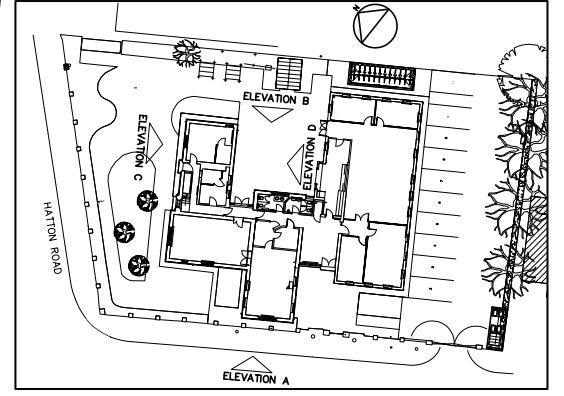


Original drawing of property, dated May 2010



FIRST FLOOR & ROOF PLAN

Revised drawing of property, dated May 2012



ELEVATION A



ELEVATION B



ELEVATION C

# Annual Anniversary Festivals

Our annual anniversary festival is celebrated every year on the last Saturday of the month of August. This day tends to be one of the busiest, most joyful, and most beautiful days of the year. Attended by many senior Bhakti Yoga teachers of our international community, it is a day not to be missed! It is often a moment in the year to reflect on all the hard work and dedication that has gone into trying to fulfill the desire of our spiritual teacher, Swami B.S. Govinda (affectionately addressed as Srila Gurudev) in terms of the acquisition of the Greville House

building, all the necessary renovation work, current projects, and any future objectives. That our London community was at long last able to fulfill the long-cherished wish of our Srila Gurudev has been one of our biggest joys and is the fuel and inspiration behind wanting to continue to work hard on fulfilling all of the Bhakti Yoga Institute's most glorious objectives. Our teachers always encourage us to take stock, 'to go deeper,' and reflect on the passed day, month, or year – to review what has been done and how and in what way it has been done, what was good, and what needs to be improved. The Anniversary Festival, therefore, is a moment in the year when we

reflect on the past 12 months – when we present to the community an overview of our past, present, and future projects, along with specific aims, objectives, and desired improvement for the next year ahead. It is also an opportunity for the BYI's core team to share more information about upcoming projects to get involved with. Needless to say, this happy day is filled with celebration, a variety of activities, beautiful story-telling and talks by senior members, a play performed by the kids (and some adults), and delicious, blessed vegetarian food (prasadam) generously distributed to all.



In the Summer of 2020, we celebrated the 6th Anniversary since the official opening of the BYI in a humble fashion, adopting social distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 2020 is also the year in which we are reviewing the past decade since the Greville House building was purchased in Spring 2010. In light of these momentous occasions, the BYI has published this Decade in Review publication to keep our community updated on the past decade's service projects and achievements with an eye towards service opportunities in the next decade ahead.



Please see below the list of respected individuals that were invaluable in the acquisition of this new home for our charity and to whom we feel deeply indebted:

- Sripad Bharati Maharaj (Alexander Dragilev)
- Sripad Nyasi Maharaj (Robert Lindberg)
- Lalita Madhava Prabhu (Lucian Wong) and the Wong Family
- Lavanya Mayi Didi (Elisabeth Clifford)
- Aditinandana Prabhu
- Sachidevi Didi
- Jaya Shree Didi
- Uddharan Prabhu

## Visual Identity

In 2016, we refreshed our visual identity in print, online, and at specific locations on and around the building. First, we updated the “Greville House” street sign to include “Bhakti Yoga Institute” in the lettering. An important consideration was that we wanted to honour the history and name of the building, thereby creating a sign that was in harmony with the past, present, and future purpose of the building.

What followed was the creation of the BYI logo, along with its corresponding typography and colour schemes. The Bhakti Yoga Institute is a dynamic educational initiative of the international headquarters of the Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math whose logo also forms the basis of the conceptualisation and symbolism of the BYI’s logo. Featured is a blooming lotus flower, surrounded by the nourishing element of water – the lotus is symbolic for the aspirant student in pursuit of absolute truth, i.e. the soul, while the deep, supportive waters represent the teacher, i.e. the Guru. The latter nourishes and protects the flower, without whom, the flower is burnt by the brilliance and heat of the sun, i.e. Krishna. Conceptually, this is one of the foundational elements upon which our curriculum is based, namely, that the spiritual success of the student depends on their readiness to learn from and accept the guidance of the genuine, qualified teacher.



Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math’s Logo, designed by Swami B.S. Govinda.



### Colour Palette



### Main Typography

**BYI, 2019**  
*Educational initiative*  
**Bembo Std**

### Secondary Typography

BYI, 2019  
Educational initiatives  
**Myriad Pro**



[www.bhaktiyogainstitute.com](http://www.bhaktiyogainstitute.com)  
[info@bhaktiyogainstitute.com](mailto:info@bhaktiyogainstitute.com)

Bhakti Yoga Institute,  
Greville House, Hazelmere Close,  
Feltham, U.K. TW14 9PX

+44 (0) 20 8890 9525  
+44 (0) 7554 446739

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Bhakti Yoga Institute, Greville House, Hazelmere Close, Feltham, West London, TW14 9PX.

This logo has been used in the creation of a stationary range including contact cards, a letterhead, and pamphlets, and it was incorporated into a beautiful window design, detailing the BYI’s name, activities, and opening times. Subsequently, the BYI website (<https://bhaktiyogainstitute.com/>) and the rest of our social media profiles were updated and re-launched, incorporating all elements related to the BYI’s visual identity.



**BHAKTI YOGA INSTITUTE**

*Weekly kirtan & discussion. All are welcome.*

**Wednesdays 18.30 – 20.00**

**Fridays 18.30 – 20.00**

**Saturdays 11.30 – 15.30**

[www.bhaktiyogainstitute.com](http://www.bhaktiyogainstitute.com)

[info@bhaktiyogainstitute.com](mailto:info@bhaktiyogainstitute.com)

+44 (0) 20 8890 9525

Bhakti Yoga Institute,  
Greville House, Hazelmere Close,  
Feltham, U.K. TW14 9PX

UK Charity No: 1080466

All BYI Visual Identity designs have been created and developed by designer and photographer, Mahamantra Das.

## Curriculum: The Teachings, Principles, and Practice of Bhakti Yoga

The Bhagavad-gita, literally the 'song of God', is a text that has played a central role in the lives of practitioners of yoga for millennia. The Gita outlines different types of yoga and their progressive development and culmination in Bhakti Yoga; the yoga of love and devotion, which in spite of being the highest form of yoga, is also the most accessible and natural to practice.

While other forms of yoga require some previous knowledge, experience, or physical ability, Bhakti Yoga can be practiced by anyone who has a heart and an aspiration for a higher way of life. Simply by dovetailing our daily action with a conscious desire to connect with and satisfy our supreme source, we will naturally attain purification of body and mind and also realise our divine potential. Thus, through the practice of Bhakti Yoga, the most simple day-to-day duties like cooking, cleaning, driving, gardening, working, and so on can become most joyful, profound, and meaningful.

At the Bhakti Yoga Institute, we are committed to awaken, empower, and educate all with the non-sectarian principles and practices of Bhakti Yoga, aiming to enrich and inspire as many people as possible, with the objective of helping ourselves and each other to ultimately lead more fulfilled lives. One way in which this is taught as part of our curriculum is through the twice-daily morning and evening programmes that include kirtan and a class on a particular topic. These programmes take place on-site and are often streamed online, along with regular festival days on specific auspicious days, and day and weekend retreats.



“The innermost hankering of every living soul is for beauty, love, affection, and harmony; not for power, knowledge, or anything else. This is the diagnosis of the whole creation in time and space: their common cause is one.”  
— Swami B.R. Sridhar



## Curriculum: Kirtan

Kirtan is an ancient Vedic tradition which is a natural expression of praise and loving appreciation for our divine source, from which all the beauty, wonder, and glory of this world has manifest. Sankirtan, also known as the congregational chanting of the Holy Name of Krishna, was inaugurated by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and is unique in that it transcends race, class, culture, or any limited societal designations. This can bring persons of vastly differing backgrounds together in expressing their mutual appreciation for the divine.

When engaged in kirtan, here at the Bhakti Yoga Institute we put emphasis on simplicity, substance, and pure expression of heart in joyful, loving company. Of the nine practices described as being the most helpful to the cultivation of bhakti, kirtan is considered to be supreme. Thus kirtan holds a very central place in our curriculum, and is something we practice throughout the day. In particular the 'mahamantra' or supreme mantra expressing a sincere prayer for devotional service is of utmost importance to our practice.



“Sound vibration can work miracles; sound has the highest capturing potency. Sound can make or mar. It can do anything; it has such intrinsic capacity. It comes from the subtle-most plane, beyond the ether.”  
— Swami B.R. Sridhar

## Curriculum: Conscious Cooking Courses

The Conscious Cooking Course is the Bhakti Yoga Institute's very own cooking course and introduces vegan and vegetarian cooking by exploring various cuisines from different parts of the world.

This course has been running for several seasons and is always very well-attended and in high-demand. Taught by some of the best cooks of our community, the tutors offer step-by-step guidance on the preparation of a complete well-balanced meal, after which all attendants prepare their own individual version of the preparation. At the end of each session, everyone ends up trying and sharing their own culinary creation.

This Conscious Cooking Course caters to those wanting to familiarise themselves with vegan and vegetarian cooking, anyone wanting to perfect a particular type of preparation, individuals wanting to learn more about healthy living and how to improve on their diet, and those wanting to learn how the process of veggie cooking can in fact become part of one's conscious spiritual practice.



## Curriculum: Art Classes

In many ways, creativity is an important component to the services that we offer at the BYI.

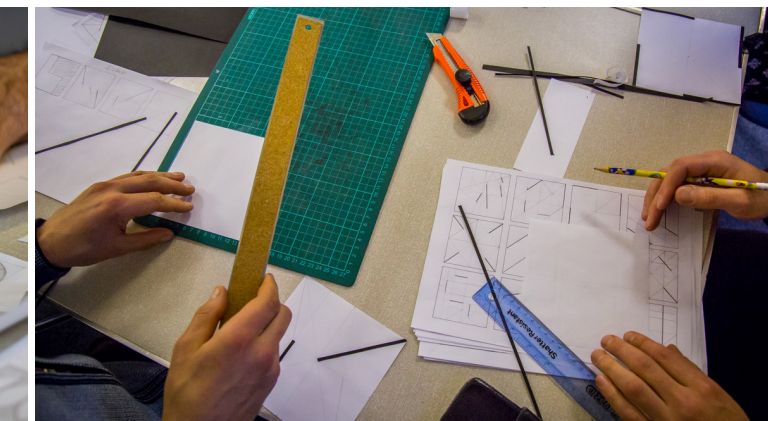
Developing oneself artistically is not only a lovely way towards general wellbeing, but it is a useful skill to develop and offer in service to the BYI and its community.

In Winter 2018, the BYI launched its first art class series, entitled "Introduction to Visual Communication." The series offered graphic design classes that guide the student's perception in the study of the image and help train the eye to observe the visual world that surrounds us.

All of our art classes have been taught by established artists and have been a great success amongst our community – they will continue to feature prominently in the BYI's educational curriculum into the future.



Beauty is the controlling principle.  
Beauty is controlling everything."  
— Swami B.S. Govinda



The following course series in our art programme was the "Introduction to Drawing" course that took place during the following winter of 2019. This series pursued a selection of different mediums with the aim of developing skill and confidence and ultimately a personal approach to drawing. A third follow-up series had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic but is now scheduled to recommence in January 2021.



## 2018 Workshops

### Introduction to Visual Communication

Every Sunday from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

www.bhaktiyogainstitute.com  
info@bhaktiyogainstitute.com  
Bhakti Yoga Institute, Greville House,  
Hazelmere Close, Feltham, TW14 9PX.  
020 8890 9525 / 0 755 444 6739  
@bhaktiyogainstitute  
@bhaktiyogainstitute.london  
@bhaktiyogainstitute

Comprehensive graphic design classes that aim at guiding the student's perception in the study of the image. This is done through theoretical and practical exercises that will help train the eye to observe the visual world that surrounds us differently.



**BHAKTI YOGA INSTITUTE**

All educational classes at the BYI are presented to the community with the aim of empowering people to develop their skills while seeking to nourish and inspire them with the spiritual principles of Bhakti Yoga.

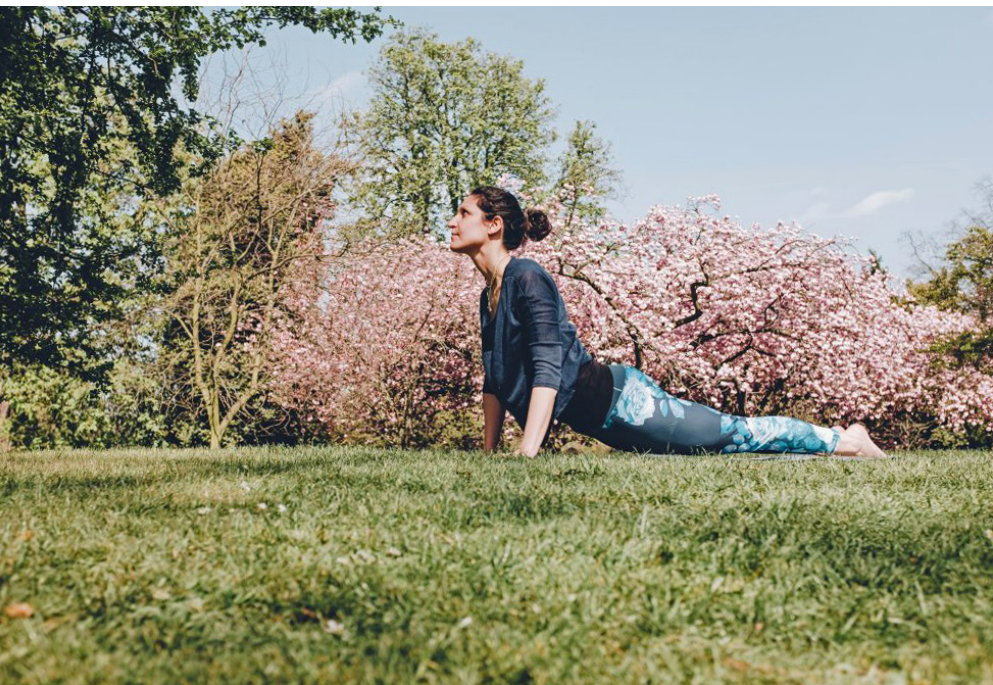
**Dates (every last Sunday of the month):**  
**Sunday, 25 October 2020**  
 Landscape: Applying Chinese Brush  
**Sunday, 29 November 2020**  
 Portraiture: Exploring Pencil & Charcoal  
**Sunday, 31 January 2021**  
 Illustration I: Developing Your Design  
**Sunday, 28 February 2021**  
 Illustration II: Exploring Different Media

Requirements/Materials: None    Cost: £12 in-house class / £10 online class  
 Time: 10 AM - 1 PM (including lunch)    Registration: pandita@bhaktiyogainstitute.com  
 Bhakti Yoga Institute, Greville House, Hazelmere Close, Feltham, TW14 9PX, 0208 8909525

## Curriculum: Hatha Yoga

While at the Bhakti Yoga Institute the main focus is placed on sadhana (daily devotional practice) in the form of kirtan, mantra meditation, and service, the curriculum also offers a yogasana counterpart which promotes physical and mental wellbeing of the practitioner. In our attempt to unify mind, body, and soul through devotional practice, the physical component through the practice of physical postures and breath work ideally isn't ignored and can be very helpful towards general good health.

Every Tuesday we offer yogasana classes to the community in the BYI's yoga room. All classes are taught by yoga certified and insured teachers who have a host of experience, skill, and expertise.



## Curriculum: Wellness Retreats

Over the course of the past five years, the BYI has run a few immersive weekend and day retreats focusing specifically on presenting the practice of Bhakti Yoga at introductory level. Many within the BYI's community have decades of experience when it comes to their practice and therefore have a wealth of insight and wisdom to share to all levels of practitioners. Nevertheless, it is our aim at the BYI to make Bhakti Yoga as accessible to as many people as possible, with a specific focus on those as of yet unfamiliar with its depth and profundity. The retreats are a perfect opportunity for the BYI to share its teachings, practice, and objectives, and for new friends to be presented with a comprehensive overview of Bhakti Yoga at introductory level. Weekend retreats include philosophy classes, kirtan, yoga classes, informal counseling, and nature walks. In light of much positive feedback received during these retreats, the BYI aims to organize more day and weekend retreats in the future, possibly focusing at times on specific themes or aspects of the teachings.



## Curriculum: Counseling

Informal counseling is another one of the services we offer to the community. The BYI is blessed to have some highly caring and compassionate members of its community. Without the need for any prompting, those in need of a confidential chat about anything that's on their mind or going on in their lives, will find themselves automatically gravitating to these kind-hearted individuals. At the BYI, we welcome the increased awareness around mental health and wellbeing and want to do our bit to help support the general health and wellbeing of everyone at or involved with the Bhakti Yoga Institute. Spiritual practice is a very internal process that encourages awareness of one's true self in relation to the environment and the supreme – something that must be done in a healthy and wholesome way and with proper affectionate guidance.

Starting in January 2021, we will be running one-to-one wisdom coach sessions led by professional certified mBIT coach, Kanu Priya Didi. Please contact us for more information about this personal development programme or to schedule a session. Zoom sessions can take place throughout the week while in-person meetings are available on Sundays between 8:30 AM and 12:30 PM.



## Curriculum: The Challenge Programme

The Challenge Programme is part of the government National Citizen Service (NCS) which encourages 16 and 17 year olds to take part in social action projects in order to build skills for work and life. NCS brings together young people from different backgrounds and helps them develop greater confidence, self-awareness, and responsibility. It encourages personal and social development by working on skills like leadership, teamwork, and communication.

In collaboration with the Bhakti Yoga Institute, the programme runs in spring, summer and autumn and since 2015, the BYI has seen many groups come and help out with various projects related to our charity. Participants develop a social action project to deal with a local issue that they're passionate about, and spend 30 hours putting the project into action in their community. In so doing, they have raised funds for- and painted the BYI's fence that runs all around the building, distributed food to homeless shelters, produced and directed a BYI movie, baked some delicious preparations for distribution, and they have participated in our gardening projects. Whenever the challenge group visits the BYI, the building is buzzing with excitement and activity and always something beautiful tends to come from the collaboration.



All year round, the garden requires careful upkeep and attention – maintenance that is offered by the BYI crew and many volunteers as well. Helping out in the garden is lovely way to volunteer as there is always something to do!

## Curriculum: Gardening

The BYI's Greville House building is surrounded by a gorgeous, fragrant garden filled with chrysanthemums, rose bushes, lavender bushes, and kiwi plants, along with fruit trees like cherry, peach, pear, and apple trees. During the summer months the garden also grows seasonal flowers like marigolds and dahlias. The entrance of the BYI is furthermore flanked by three grand, tall, and gorgeous sycamore trees and all of this flora attracts fauna of all sorts, especially a variety of birds that sing sweet tunes throughout the day. The garden is one of the most peaceful and beautiful places of the BYI and a lovely place to meditate, reflect, and connect with friends.

The Tulasi plant (Latin: *Ocimum sanctum*) also grows in abundance at the BYI and is carefully nourished and cared for under the management and supervision of Satish Maher. Tulasi is a sacred plant, revered and worshipped for millennia as the giver of devotion or bhakti and Tulasi leaves are used for devotional offerings of many sorts on a daily basis. The construction of a greenhouse for the cultivation of the Tulasi plant was also included on the BYI's development plan and while the development work has taken longer than expected, the BYI team will soon complete the project after lots of hard work and team effort. In this brand-new greenhouse, the Tulasi plants will flourish in perfect conditions because of the adoption of a sophisticated system of temperature, humidity, and light control.



# Curriculum: Children's Programme

Not all yoga centers are the most child-friendly of places but when it comes to the Bhakti Yoga Institute that could not be further from the truth. Many in our community have children themselves and so there'll always be someone to play with at the BYI! Directed by Saraswati Didi, the BYI considers it to be its responsibility to properly care for and nurture its children with the aim of empowering them in life with the beautiful, time-less principles of bhakti yoga. This commitment is reflected in the BYI kids curriculum, which includes:

- Summer camps for kids and young adults
- European bus tours for young adults
- Kids days and Christmas days
- Arts & Crafts activities
- Kirtan for kids
- The production and performance of plays, performed on festival days



Our kids programmes are curated to try to encourage community cohesion by fueling the kids' inspiration through empowering, educational, fun, and devotional activities, either through kids days or more immersive 1- or 2-week camps or trip away. The very first Kids and Young Adult Camp was organized in 2006 and took place in Devon. Subsequent camps in the Lake District and in Northern Italy were increasingly well-attended and a big success amongst many of its attendants who cherish fond memories of these educational trips.

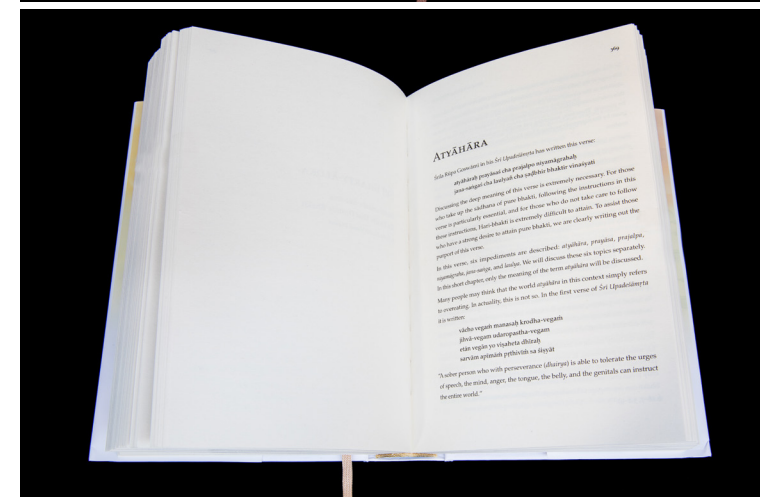
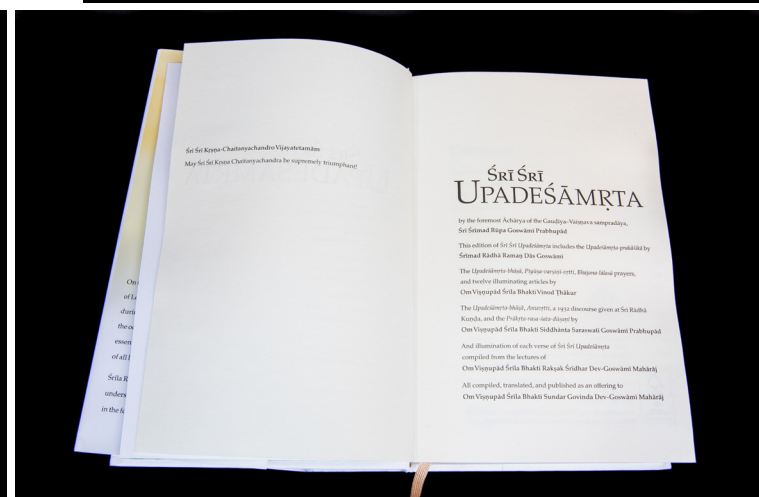
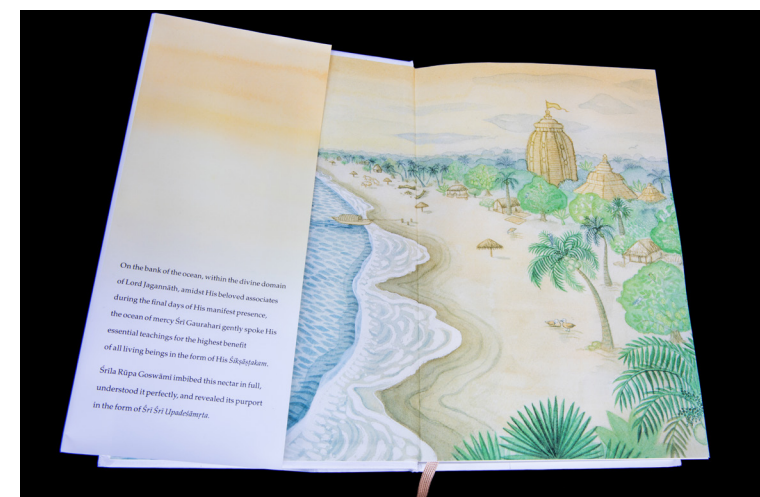
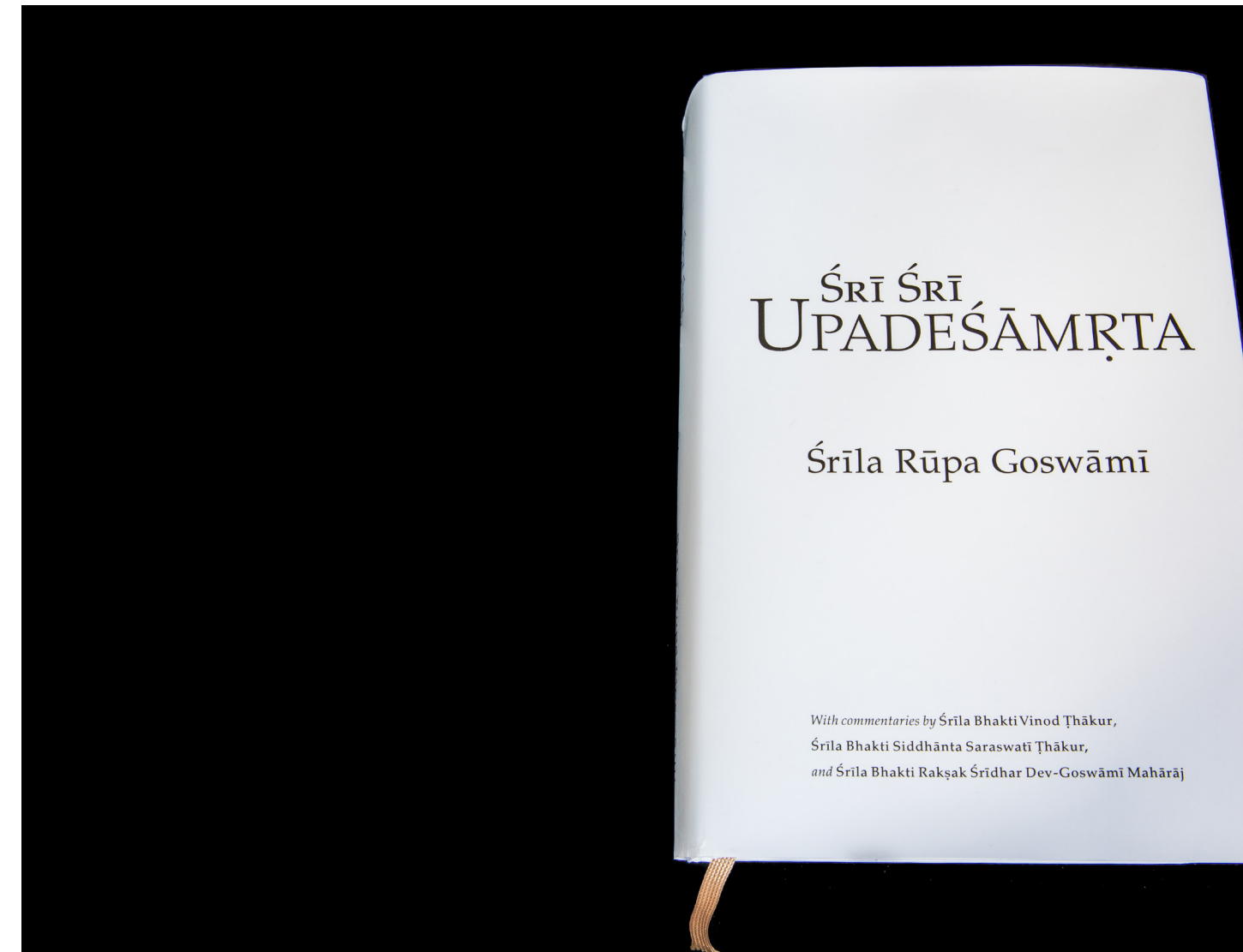
Annually, the BYI also tries to organise Kids Days that are fully focused on and dedicated to the little ones. These fun-filled days are saturated with games and activities along with kirtan for kids, story-telling, and a play at the end of the day. Naturally, pizza and pasta are on the menu. These days are also of course a lovely way for the parents to collaborate and forge new friendships.

While the Kids Days tend to take place in spring or summer, the BYI also tries to organise a family day around Christmas time. While Christmas is not actively celebrated as part of our festival calendar, the BYI team will quite happily make any excuse to come together as a community to try to serve each other with care and affection. Christmas therefore is quite a nice opportunity to give and receive gifts, to share a delicious Christmas dinner, and to reconnect with each other. All of these activities are open to all.



## BYI Publications: Sri Sri Upadesamrta

In 2019, the newly published, *Sri Sri Upadesamrta*, was released. Compiled, translated, and published through the Bhakti Yoga Institute with the help of a team of editors, designers, and artists. This publication is a gem in book form, comprising of 672 pages and containing a comprehensive offering of commentaries by our great line of teachers including, Srila Bhakti Vinod Thakur, Srila Saraswati Thakur, and Srila Sridhar Maharaj. *Sri Sri Upadesamrta* had been a work in progress since 2014 and is now readily available to all to read, study, share, and take to heart. This beautiful, illustrated, hardcover edition of *Sri Sri Upadesamrta* is intended for the serious practitioner, with some exposure to the Bhakti Yoga teachings. This and many other publications are available for sale at the BYI bookshop.



*Sri Sri Upadesamrta* is the first official publication released by the Bhakti Yoga Institute publishing team, and is available in hardcover, paperback, and ebook. Future publications are schedule for release in 2021/2022.

## *Feed Them All*

Another initiative connected to our charity is the Feed Them All food distribution project. Starting initially at our East London centre, our charity has been involved with providing freshly prepared nutritious meals to vulnerable groups of people across the UK for over 30 years.

Consciously preparing, offering, and serving food to as many as possible is an objective inextricably linked to our charitable identity and one of our policies is that no one within a 100-meter radius from our charity should go hungry.

Through the support of the very generous donations of FareShare (Tesco, Asda, and Waitrose supermarkets), and the equally generous support of our friends at the Western International Market, the Covent Garden Market and Choice Organic, who provide fresh produce that would otherwise go to waste, our devoted volunteers prepare delicious, nutritious, vegetarian meals that we distribute to homeless shelters such as Cherry Tree House, care homes like Apple Tree Cottage, Instant Care Solutions, and other food distribution partners such as The Open Kitchen and others that wish to remain anonymous. Feed Them All also offers meals to anyone who comes to our East and West London distribution points.

Our non-profit charity is staffed entirely by non-paid volunteers who are highly motivated to serving the community and helping those in need. All money raised is spent directly for helping those in need within the UK. Our services are required more than ever, as more and more people find it difficult to make ends meet, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.





The new Nectar Foods logo was launched in December 2020 and was designed and developed by illustrator Syamasundari Didi.

## Nectar Foods

As part of our fundraising initiatives headed by Elisabeth Clifford, there are a few times a year that our team attends various different fairs that cater to the yoga and the Mind, Body, and Spirit community as part of our Nectar Foods catering service. In preparation for these fairs, a hard-working group of volunteers gets involved with all the necessary preparations and in support of this fundraising initiative to help finance all of our charity work.

At this point, after having attended dozens of fairs, the Nectar Foods preparations are famous amongst our yoga friends, who tend to come back for our preps again and again. All of the food preparations that are on sale are vegan, gluten-free, occasionally raw, always absolutely delicious, and of course consciously prepared with love and devotion. The vegan, gluten-free lasagna is a favourite along with the wholesome wraps, and a selection of raw tarts and chocolate cakes, to name just a few.



Our Nectar Food catering services are also available to anyone within the London area at any time throughout the year. Nectar Foods caters to small or large groups and offers a lovely menu, including large cakes for parties, various types of breads, and all kinds of savories. 100% of the proceeds will go towards financing the BYT's expenses. Please find the contact details on the last page of this presentation for further information.





### Objectives for the next decade:

- Second Floor above large hall
- Further developing the educational curriculum online, including the creation of a comprehensive “Introduction to Bhakti Yoga”
- Increased audio/video outreach online
- More cooking, art, gardening, and language courses
- Additional book publications
- Improved mental health support
- More international, educational tours for kids, youth, and adults
- Recruiting more volunteers to help with our food distribution programme and other activities
- More kids days
- More educational courses for children
- Regular Open Days

### Vision for the Future

Our team has some exciting plans for the future and we'd love for you to get involved! In order to better facilitate our community outreach, our food distribution, and the development of our educational curriculum, we have set out some objectives that we will be actively working towards. The first and biggest project, is the building of a second floor above what is now the large, lunch/dinner hall. Along with more residential facilities for students and teachers, the plans include a large workshop room with increased capacity to host larger groups of people for events, an extensive library, and a counseling/therapy room. Smaller projects include curating an online educational programme of the Bhakti Yoga Institute, more international educational trips for kids and adults, and additional in-house cooking, art, and language courses etc.



Please let us know if there are any courses you'd like to attend or if there is any way in which you'd like to be involved with our community and projects.



### Fundraising Appeal

It is our aim that the Bhakti Yoga Institute remain a spiritual home to the community, facilitating the growth and nourishment for generations to come. Working towards this goal, the BYI team is at present working on ways to maintain a financially stable situation, especially in light of the present pandemic.

For many years, the BYI depended mostly on funding that was brought in by weekly collections at public events. Due to COVID-19, however, we have had to revise some aspects of our fundraising strategy, and with the generous help of the community along with several grants, we have been able to continue with our programme during the year 2020.

In March, we launched a fundraiser, to which many national and international friends of the charity responded most generously with financial contributions. Throughout this year, we have also made several successful grant applications because of which we received funding towards a kitchen refurbishment project, general running costs, a minibus, and specific appliances. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone that has helped the charity financially including our partners noted below, who have consistently offered donations to our Feed Them All food distribution project over the course of the past years.

Moving towards our vision of the future, any regular or one-off contributions in the form of financial donations or offerings of ones time and energy are of much help and will be greatly appreciated. Every little bit really does makes a difference and when many come together in support of a beautiful objective of service, a lot of good will happen all around.

To make a financial offering, please see details below:

Account name: Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math  
 Bank: HSBC  
 Sort code: 40-06-30  
 Account number: 02466589  
 IBAN: GB21 HBUK40063002466589  
 BIC: HBUKGB4142R  
 Paypal: londonmath.chapter@gmail.com



In partnership with  
**THE NATIONAL LOTTERY  
 COMMUNITY FUND**



# Our Community

Nothing would have been possible without the help, support, and blessings from the BYI's community of friends, family, and supporters. We offer our sincere and heartfelt gratitude to each and everyone who has helped establish | the BYI, made financial contributions, offered their energy, and helped it to blossom and flourish. We look forward to continuing to collaborate together in the decades to come to try to fulfill the Bhakti Yoga Institute's highest potential in service of our teachers and the community.



Here is a selection of images of some of our wonderful community members. Please note that it isn't comprehensive as there are many more to whom we feel indebted!

## Contact Details

### ***Bhakti Yoga Institute / Feed Them All***

Greville House

Hazelmere Close

Feltham, TW14 9PX

United Kingdom

Website: <https://bhaktiyogainstitute.com>

Contact: Zulay Cederberg (Executive Manager)

Email: [info@bhaktiyogainstitute.com](mailto:info@bhaktiyogainstitute.com)

Phone: +44 (0)7 554 446 739

### ***East London Branch***

466 Green Street

Upton Park

London, E13 9DB

United Kingdom

Contact: David Ewins (Secretary)

Email: [info@sevaeastlondon.org.uk](mailto:info@sevaeastlondon.org.uk)

### **Nectar Foods**

Contact: Elisabeth Clifford

Email: [elisabeth.clifford@nectarfoods.uk](mailto:elisabeth.clifford@nectarfoods.uk)

### **BYI Curriculum & Publications**

Contact: Pandita Geary

Email: [pandita@bhaktiyogainstitute.com](mailto:pandita@bhaktiyogainstitute.com)

To join in and volunteer please contact:

[info@bhaktiyogainstitute.com](mailto:info@bhaktiyogainstitute.com)

### **Opening times**

We are open seven days a week from 6 am to 8.30 pm.

In addition to our Saturday noon time festival and regular special events and retreats, we hold two programmes a day from 6 am to 8 am and 6 pm to 8 pm which consist of mantra meditation, reading from sacred texts, and philosophical discussion.

### ***Free vegetarian meals***

We serve two free vegetarian meals a day, 12.30 to 1.30 pm and 8 to 8.30 pm. Feel free to join us for lunch or dinner if you are passing by. If you are coming in a group, please contact us in advance.



“

Knowledge is above power, and  
above knowledge is beauty, charm,  
love. That is the supreme.”

— Swami B.R. Sridhar

