GUJARATI ARYA ASSOCIATION LEICESTER - NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 8 - NOVEMBER 2026

UPCOMING EVENTS 2026

Sunday 29th November	Diwali Cultural Show
Sunday 13th December	GAKM Pool Competition
Thursday 31st December	New Years Eve Party



Would you like to take part in our Diwali Cultural show?

Please contact:
Arvindbhai 07710 008283
Mahendrabhai 07846 619723



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Follow our closed Instagram group where we share information on events, births, deaths & marriages. Search **@GAALeics** & request to follow us.

Find our closed Facebook group where we share information on events, births, deaths & marriages. Search **GAA Leicester** & request to follow us.

Follow our GAA Leicester Whatsapp channel. Scan the **QR code** on the contact page of this newsletter or click on **HERE**. You will need to click follow in the top right corner & **turn on notifications,** to get all the latest information.

Catch up on all our newsletters by heading to our website **www.gaaleicester.com**. Click on the 'Newsletters' page & download any of our past issues.

In this Newsletter

Upcoming Events

Commitee Update

Step Back in Time

Religious Events

Health Focus

Career Connect

Kid's Corner

Sports Update

CHAI NASTO EVENT







Thank you to everyone who came, donated, baked, and supported our charity fundraiser for GOSH - **Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity** and **Make-A-Wish Foundation.** Your generosity was overwhelming - from all the delicious cakes and savoury nasto, to every single donation, you made it so special.

While GOSH delivers world-class specialist care for children with complex and life-threatening conditions, Make-A-Wish helps create life-changing experiences that bring hope, joy and lasting memories to children living with critical illnesses. Together, they help ensure that children and families receive not only exceptional medical care but also emotional support, comfort and moments of happiness when they are needed most.

- **750 Patients are seen every day** - Every day seriously ill children andyoung people are seen at GOSH for life-changing treatment and care
- **212 Active clinical trials** - Transformational clinical trials are currently happening throughout the hospital
- **18,605 Learning opportunities delivered** - GOS Learning Academy provides multi-professional paediatric healthcare education & training

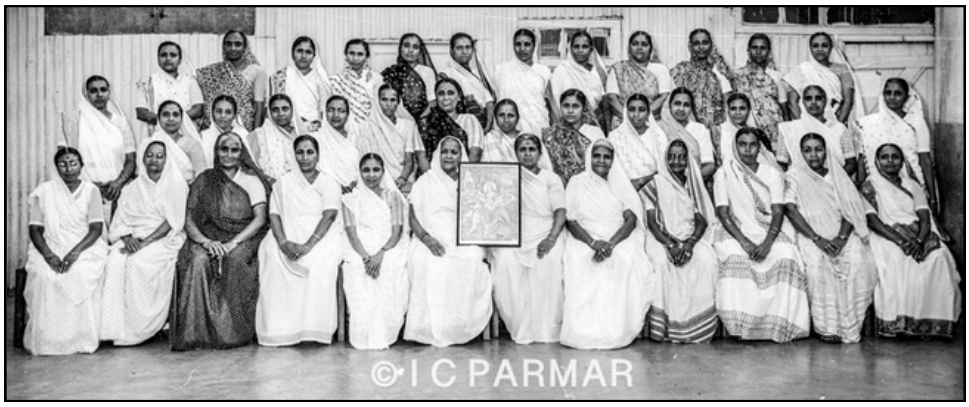
A huge heartfelt thank you to Sarah from Make-A-Wish for her inspiring speech and for giving us such a powerful insight into the incredible work they do to grant life-changing wishes for seriously ill children. Because of you all, we are able to raise funds and will continue to do so throughout Navratri and Diwali to make a real difference, which will go directly to giving children the best chance and the best childhood possible. So if you have missed out on today, you still have time to donate. The final total will be revealed at our Diwali Cultural Gathering.



STEP BACK IN TIME



Our history is made up of the people, memories and stories that came before us. In this section, we look back at the early days of Mochi community through old photographs and personal memories shared by those who moved to the U.K. and helped shape our community. These stories give us a glimpse into where we came from, the experiences of those early years, and the journey that brought us to where we are today.



Mochi Ladies in Nairobi

We will be sharing this photo on **social media**. If you recognise any members, please let us know who they are by commenting on the post.

Do you have any photos of our community in other countries? If so, please feel free to share them with us by emailing **info@gaaleicester.com**

Sharing Memories

In this issue, we speak with **Kishorbhai Haribhai Gohil and his wife Chandrikaben Gohil**. They were both born in Nairobi, Kenya and came over separately, before getting married in the UK.





What made you move to the UK?
Kishorbhai: My family decided to move to the UK in search of better opportunities & a better quality of life. My older brother had secured work in Somerset, & our hope was to build a brighter future.
Chandrikaben: I came to the UK after my marriage was arranged. Like many young women of that time, I left Kenya to begin a new chapter of life with my husband & his family.

How did you feel about the move?
Kishorbhai: I was only 13 years old when we (my older brother and I) left Kenya, so naturally I felt nervous. I had never travelled outside Nairobi before and had no idea what to expect. Everything about the journey & the move felt completely new.
Chandrikaben: I was 21 years old & felt both anxious and uncertain. My marriage had been arranged, & I didn't yet know my future husband or his family well. Moving to a new country & leaving behind everything familiar was daunting, but I trusted my parents and embraced the new journey ahead.

What do you remember about the journey?
Kishorbhai: My journey to the UK remains one of my most vivid memories. We stopped in Egypt for a couple of days on the way. It was my first time staying in a hotel & travelling abroad with my older brother, Uttambhai. We visited the pyramids, rode camels & explored the famous Tutankhamun Museum. Everything was fascinating & unlike anything I had ever experienced. The flight itself was quite frightening as it was my first time on an aeroplane. We landed at Heathrow & travelled to Bath. It felt like entering a completely different world. I worked in a garage before it was discovered that I was only 13 years old! We moved to Leicester & I went to Ellis Secondary School before qualifying as a mechanic.
Chandrikaben: I still remember saying goodbye to my family at the airport. It was my first time flying & I was travelling alone, which made the experience quite frightening. A customs officer kindly helped by contacting my brother-in-law. I will never forget the moment my mother, brother, future husband & his family arrived. I was relieved & emotional to see familiar faces. Being shy, I simply said "hello" when I was introduced to Kishor. Very soon, preparations began for our engagement and wedding, marking the beginning of a new life in England.

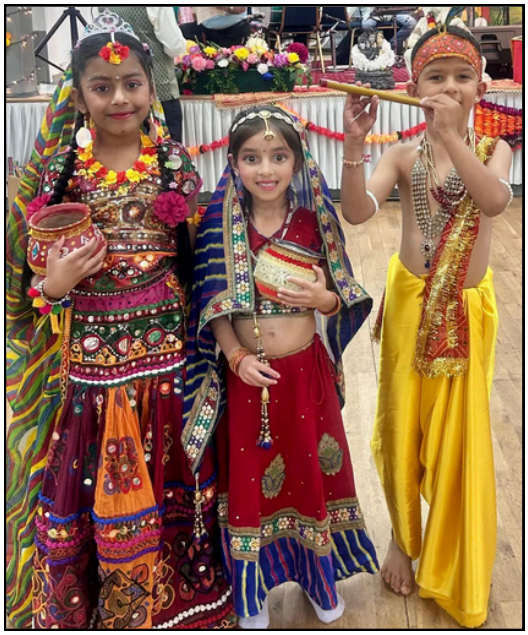
What were your first impressions of the UK?
The weather was the first thing we noticed. It was much colder than Kenya, and everything felt unfamiliar. It took time to adjust to a new culture, language and lifestyle. Everything seemed very different, especially the weather, the way people lived and the pace of life. It took some time to build confidence and become familiar with new surroundings.

What are your memories of the Mochi community during your first years in the UK?
It was very small when we first arrived but gatherings created a strong sense of belonging. The community came together through culture, faith and friendship. We shared a lot of laughter & created many happy memories together.

Thank you so much to Kishorbhai & Chandrikaben for being a part of this issue. If you have family members who would like to share their story, please contact Monica.



Thank you to our Mukhya Yajman, Babubhai & Induben Rathod for their support, generosity. We would like to extend our appreciation for your contribution this Navratri.



Children's Fancy Dress Competition

We were extremely impressed with all the children and their amazing outfits!

The winners were as follows:
1st Place: Tia Parmar
2nd Place: Avni Umesh
3rd Place: Kanaya Vyas

Thank you to all the participants and of course their parents, who helped with their outfits.



Aarti Competition

We had some amazing entries. Winners were as follows:
1st Place: Rashmikaben Jethwa,
2nd Place: Prabhaben Gopal,
3rd Place: Minaxiben Parmar

Thank you to everyone who participated.

Dhanteras - Fri 6th November

Diwali - Sun 8th November

Besta Varas - Tues 10th November

Bhai Bhij - Wed 11th November

THE STORY OF DHANTERAS



Dhanteras marks the first day of the Diwali festival and celebrates wealth, health, and prosperity on the thirteenth lunar day of the dark fortnight in the Hindu month of Kartik. 'Dhan' means wealth and 'Teras' means thirteenth day. Hindus celebrate health, wealth and prosperity.

The story begins with a crisis in the cosmos. The hot-tempered Sage Durvasa had cursed Lord Indra, the king of the gods (Devas), causing the gods to lose all their strength, radiance, and prosperity. Seizing the opportunity, the demons (Asuras) defeated the weakened gods and took control of the universe. Desperate to regain their power, the Devas pleaded with Lord Vishnu for a solution. Vishnu advised them to forge a temporary truce with the Asuras to churn the deep **Ksheera Sagar** (Ocean of Milk) to extract Amrita, the nectar of immortality.

They used the massive **Mount Mandara** as a churning rod, Lord Vishnu took the form of a giant turtle (**Kurma Avatar**) to act as a stable base so the mountain wouldn't sink, and the serpent king **Vasuki** was wrapped around the mountain to serve as the churning rope. The Devas held the tail, the Asuras held the head, and the intense, exhausting churning began. As the ocean was churned for days, many mystical objects and divine treasures gradually floated to the surface. Suddenly, out from the churning, milky waves, Goddess Lakshmi made her grand appearance.

According to ancient scriptures like the Vishnu Purana, her exit from the sea was completely breathtaking:

- The Divine Lotus: She emerged radiant and smiling, standing gracefully upon a fully blossomed, floating white lotus flower while holding another lotus in her hand.
- The Royal Bath: Four massive celestial elephants (Diggajas) stepped forward at the ocean's edge, holding golden pitchers filled with the sacred water of the Ganges river, and gently bathed her—an aspect known as Gajalakshmi.
- The Choice of Consort: The sea god himself manifested to offer her a beautiful garland of fresh lotuses. Looking across the massive assembly of gathered gods, demons, and sages, Lakshmi walked forward and placed the garland around the neck of Lord Vishnu, choosing him as her eternal consort.

The moment Lakshmi returned to the side of Vishnu, the cosmic balance shifted. The universe was immediately replenished with beauty, cosmic order, and prosperity.

On this day, Hindus around the world perform ceremonies for good luck and prosperity into the upcoming year.



Prepare for the Winter

While winter can be a wonderful time of year, the colder weather and shorter days can also have an impact on our health, energy and wellbeing. Why not adapt your routine to ensure you stay healthy and active over the coming months?

Build up your Immune Defences

It is easy to lean towards comfort foods. However, ensure you focus on a balanced diet, rich in fruit and vegetables, protein, healthy fats and wholegrains.

Top up your Vitamin D

In the UK, sunlight is limited during the winter months, making it harder to obtain adequate Vitamin D. Consider adding in a Vitamin D supplement to boost your immune system and energy levels.

Keep it Moving - even when it is cold

The darker evenings and colder weather can make it difficult to exercise. However, walking, strength training and home workouts can still fit into your routine. Studies show just 20 minutes of walking outside in fresh air can boost mood and help your immune system! If you're looking for fitness programs, consider downloading free fitness apps such as FitON for some inspiration.

Prioritise Sleep

Create a relaxing evening routine. Aim for a consistent bedtime and reduce late night screen time to ensure you are giving your body the rest it needs.

Stay Hydrated

Keeping hydrated is harder when it is cold, but still essential. If you crave warmer drinks, try herbal teas or you can even include water-rich foods such as cucumber into your diet. If you really struggle, consider adding electrolytes into your water.

Look after your Mental Wellbeing

Being inside during the winter months, can affect mood and motivation. Be proactive and plan activities with friends and family. Try a new hobby or learn a new skill or perhaps take some time to volunteer, to ensure you stay socially connected.

Don't forget your Skin & Hair

Cold air outside and central heating indoors can leave skin dry and irritated. Keep hydrated and moisturise regularly to ensure you keep your skin healthy and nourished.

Remember, always consult your GP if you are concerned and are on any medication.



Computer Science

Ever wondered what different careers are really like? Meet members of our community who are sharing their career journeys, what they do, and how they got there. In each newletter, we will explore a range of different roles and industries to introduce our younger members, to the wide range of job roles that are available.

In this issue, we speak with **Priten Chauhan,** who works as a Lead Trainer at his company Mesh Training Ltd.



What does your company do?
We help designers, engineers and creatives alike to integrate Virtual Reality into their design process through specialist training, resource supply and impartial consultation.

What inspired you to choose this career?
Whilst I was studying Product Design at Nottingham Trent University, design students like myself were unable to access workshops and studio spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic. To try and alleviate this, I looked into how Virtual Reality could help us design at 1:1 scale and collaborate remotely. This set the foundations for Mesh Training Ltd. Over the past three years, we have taught designers in both industry and education across 14 different countries.

What does a typical day look like?
My day involves a mixture of researching and developing new training content, replying to client messages, joining project meetings and managing financial and marketing strategies.

What qualifications / training did you need?
For Mesh Training, a qualification in a design-related course is hugely beneficial. Subjects like Computer Science, Art, Maths and English are also valuable, though not strictly a necessity to get started.

What skills are most important for success in this career?
Confident communication is vital because you often have to explain the possibilities of VR to people who are unfamiliar with it. I'd also say that having the curiosity to research and test new ideas is also beneficial, as there is so much change happening in the world of tech that you need to stay on top of what's coming out and know how it could benefit your customers.

What's the biggest lesson you've learnt?
Time management is key. Often you'll be spinning several plates and even more can come up at a moments notice but by taking small proactive measures, you can help your future self to mitigate some of the problems and workload that could crop up. So whether means spending some time on a Friday afternoon to plan what's happening over the next two weeks or blocking out some time on a Wednesday morning to reply to emails that you've not heard back from, those little changes can make a big impact further down the line.

Favourite piece of technology or equipment you use?
Without a doubt it would have to be Virtual Reality. It is rapidly advancing alongside AI and Augmented Reality (AR), opening up new opportunities across Footwear, Automotive and Fashion design but that's just our sector.

Any final pieces of advice?
Build your network early. Simply showing up to an event, being genuinely curious and sparking conversation will benefit you in the long run. Some of our first clients and projects came from people I spoke to during my first year at University. We didn't know they were going to be a customer at the time but once Mesh Training launched, they were a great first point of contact to get things going. Even amongst my university cohort, the students who built a presence in their industry during university often found it easier to secure their first roles.

If you would like more career advice, please contact Priten by emailing priten@meshtraining.co.uk.

If you would like to contribute to our future newsletters & offer your advice for our younger community members, please contact Monica on 07711 707551.



Can you solve these riddles?

1. I have hands but cannot clap. What am I?
2. The more you take away from me, the bigger I get. What am I?
3. What has many keys but can't open a single door?
4. I have one eye but cannot see. What am I?
5. I can run but never walk, have a month but never talk. What am I?

Find the answers at the bottom of the page and see how many you guessed correctly.

Let's Cook Together - Lotus Biscoff Burfi

With Diwali coming up, why not make some sweet treats to share with your family & friends?

Ingredients
400g Full Fat Milk Powder
70g Butter
120g Icing Sugar
220ml Full Fat Cheese
Biscoff Biscuits, crushed
Biscoff Spread
White Chocolate, melted



Method

1. Line a baking tin.
2. Heat the milk and butter in a pan until the butter melts.
3. Add in the sugar and again stir until it dissolves.
4. Add the milk powder and crushed biscoff biscuits. You might need to try a little to see how many biscuits you would like to add but **be careful as the mixture will be hot, so ask an adult to help.**
5. Cook on a low heat, stirring all the time for about 10 minutes until the mixture starts to come away from the sides of the pan.
6. Transfer the mixture to a lined baking tin and use a spatula to flatten it before it cools down.
7. Meanwhile melt your white chocolate and evenly spread it on top. Drizzle some Biscoff spread on top and use a butter knife to create twirls.

Feel free to change the toppings as you like. Why not try combinations like dark chocolate and orange or peanut butter and caramel?

Answers: 1) A clock. 2) A Hole. 3) A Piano 4) A Needle. 5) A River

GAA Leicester Snooker Tournament

We had a great turnout for our Snooker Tournament on 25th October, which was held again at Club 147. The competition was fantastic and we are very grateful to everyone who played, supported and helped on the day, ensuring the event was a success.

In particular, we would like to thank The Trophy Parlour for donating all the trophies.

The winners were as follows:
Main Tournament:
Winner - Shivum Chauhan
Runners up - Shanie Chauhan
Highest Break - Gitesh Chauhan
Fair Play Award - Rishan Parmar

















AGA
LEICESTER

DIWALI
Cultural Program

Sunday 29th November 2026

11am to 5pm | Doors open at 10.30am

£5
per person
Under 5's Free

Vegetarian Food Only

Tickets available only
Friday and Saturday between 5pm and 6.30pm at the hall.

First come first serve basis.

For more information contact:

Amratbhai
07877 594780

Arvindbhai
07710 008283

Venue:
Gujarati Arya Association
49 Hildyard Road, Leicester, LE4 5GG

MAHASABHA

SNOOKER TOURNAMENT



CLUB 147

BELGRAVE GATE
LEICESTER
LE1 3HS

13th December 2026

Start time 10.00 am prompt

Closing date for entries:
5th December 2026

Seniors 5 players in a team £25 pp
Spectators are welcome to dine £10 pp
Please State of any allergy
Includes Veg / Non Veg meal after

Contact: Vijay (vizz) Rathod - 07973102695
Contact: Gitesh Chauhan - 07801101102

ESSENTIAL CONTACT NUMBERS

HALL BOOKING CONTACT	**Email: info@gaaleicester.com** **Call: Amratbhai Chauhan on 07877 594 780 between 5pm-7pm only**
BIRTHS, DEATHS & MARRIAGES	**Call/Text: Monica on 07711 707551**
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE EVENTS	**Email: events@gaaleicester.com**
GENERAL ENQUIRIES	**Email: info@gaaleicester.com**
WHATSAPP CHANNEL	**Call/Text: Monica on 07711 707551 or scan the QR code below**

Follow all our updates on our **GAA Leicester WhatsApp**

DONATE

If you would like to support any of our events by donating money or gifts, please get in touch with our team. Your donations are very appreciated.