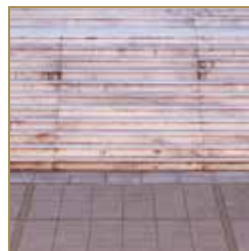


BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, UK





BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha

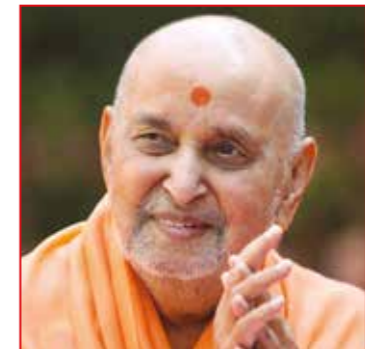
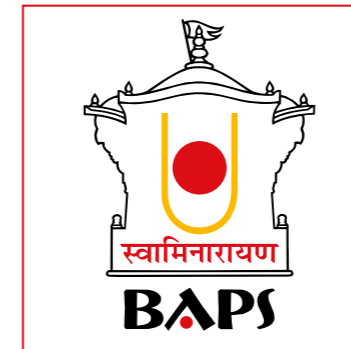
BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS) is a worldwide Hindu organisation dedicated to the spiritual and social progress of our society.

Revealed by Bhagwan Swaminarayan in the early 19th century and formally established in 1907, BAPS strives to serve communities, families and individuals by:

- CARING for their spiritual, cultural, social, physical, emotional and educational needs
- INSPIRING all towards a pure and peaceful way of life
 - filled with character, love, respect and harmony
 - free from addictions and vices
 - rooted in the values of coexistence and service
- SUSTAINING the universal values of Hindu culture
- FOSTERING faith and devotion in God through Satsang

In the UK, BAPS is respected as one of the largest and most active Hindu organisations in the country. It is also the creator of the internationally acclaimed BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Neasden, London.

BAPS is guided and inspired by its leader His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj, who teaches:
“In the joy of others lies our own.”





Child & Youth Development

BAPS believes the true prosperity of our world lies in our children and youth. The values we instil in our children and youth today will allow them to mould their lives for a better future for us all. BAPS promotes personal development of our children and youth through an emphasis on spiritual, family and cultural activities.

BAPS Children's and Youth Activities have helped our young become responsible and contributing members of society. These character-building and inspiring activities include the following:

- Assemblies for Children
- Assemblies for Campus Students
- Conventions
- Summer and Winter Camps
- Parenting Seminars
- Substance Abuse Awareness
- 'Experience India' Trips
- Outings and Educational Retreats
- Educational Mentoring
- Educational Tutoring
- Revision Workshops
- Careers Fairs
- Language Classes
- Art Classes
- Music Classes
- Yoga Classes
- Cooking Classes
- Folk Dances
- Musical Performances
- Festival Celebrations
- Sports Events and Tournaments





Care for the Elderly

Too often, old age is a time associated with neglect and loneliness. BAPS strives to provide meaningful and enjoyable activities for the elderly, making them feel valued, loved and respected.

Specially tailored programmes cater to the specific needs of the elderly, including their physical, financial, emotional and spiritual welfare.

Importantly, group activities and volunteering at BAPS mandirs and centres provide the elderly with a vital sense of companionship and purpose in life. This helps ensure they grow old not only with grace and dignity, but with joy and fulfilment.

Some of these activities include:

- Sabhas (Assemblies)
- Shibirs (Conventions)
- Goshthis (Discussion Forums)
- Festival Celebrations
- Musical Performances
- Dinners with Entertainment
- Outings and Retreats
- Care Home Visits
- Health Workshops
- Seminars for Elderly Living
- Medical Screenings
- Seva (Volunteering)





Family Unity

Emphasising the value of families, BAPS encourages parents and children to regularly hold ghar sabha – a gathering of family members in the home that provides a platform for spiritual development and mutual understanding.

During the 15 to 30 minutes of ghar sabha, family members pray, read and discuss religious and inspiring literature. They also discuss issues facing one another or the family to foster open communication.

BAPS also stresses the importance of samuh bhojan – family meals in which all members put aside other obligations and spend time together eating, talking, and enjoying each other's company.

BAPS also organises parents' meetings and family conventions which emphasise the need for communication, love and understanding and which teach important ways to enhance relationships and strengthen family harmony across generations.





BAPS CHARITIES: Serving Society

BAPS Charities is an independent international charitable organisation that has partnered with BAPS to inspire individuals across the UK to serve their neighbours and communities.

For our volunteers, the concept of seva, or selfless service, means not just volunteering time or donating money, but being motivated by a spirit of service to sacrifice for the greater good of the community and the world.

This spirit of service, as exemplified in the life of Pramukh Swami Maharaj, inspires our volunteers to donate millions of hours annually in the service of our communities.

- Free Screening Clinics
- Health Awareness Lectures
- Health & Safety for the Elderly
- Blood Donation Drive
- Bone Marrow Drive
- Organ Donation Awareness
- Food Drives
- Care Home Visits
- Careers Fairs
- Scholarships
- Tree-Planting Campaigns
- Energy Awareness
- Recycling Projects
- Community Clean-Up
- Annual Sponsored Walks

For over 30 years, BAPS Charities has reached out during times of urgent need, with volunteers on the ground or through financial and relief support.

- 2013 – Hurricane Haiyan (Philippines)
- 2012 – Hurricane Sandy (USA)
- 2011 – Japan Earthquake
- 2010 – Haiti Earthquake
- 2008 – Hurricane Ike (USA)
- 2006 & 2007 – Gujarat Floods
- 2005 – Hurricane Katrina (USA)
- 2005 – Hurricane Rita (USA)
- 2004 – Southeast Asia Tsunami
- 2001 – Gujarat Earthquake
- 1999 – Orissa Cyclone





Coexistence & Harmony

Guided by the Hindu tradition of celebrating unity in diversity, BAPS values living in harmony with others. Worshippers and visitors are welcomed with warmth and respect at all BAPS mandirs, where we strive to learn from and work together with others for the common good. This helps enrich and empower our society with understanding and trust, mutual respect and peaceful cooperation.

BAPS members, young and old, live harmoniously with their neighbours and proactively contribute to their community through a variety of service activities.

Believing that dialogue among societal and religious leaders is essential for peaceful coexistence, Pramukh Swami Maharaj has worked to foster communication with leaders of other cultures, faiths and civic bodies. This effort has also led to BAPS's participation in various interfaith activities.

Thus, members of BAPS strive to be responsible and contributing members of their local communities, comfortable as both Hindus and Britons. They value their own cultural and spiritual heritage while respecting the beliefs and values of others.



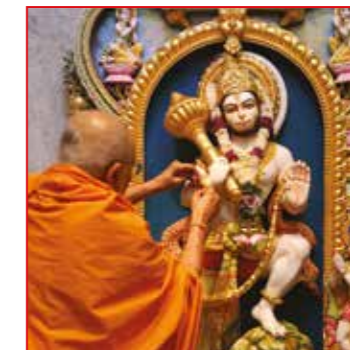


Cultural Heritage

Hindu culture is a beautiful mosaic of art, music, dance, cuisine and festivals with roots dating back thousands of years. BAPS celebrates Hindu culture through various cultural events and educational programmes, including through all the major festivals of the Hindu calendar: Shivaratri, Holi, Rama Navmi, Swaminarayan Jayanti, Ratha Yatra, Guru Purnima, Rakshabandhan, Krishna Janmashtami, Diwali, and the Hindu New Year Annakut.

Through various activities, BAPS encourages younger generations to experience the beauty and richness of Hindu culture and to develop a sense of appreciation for their heritage.

BAPS is also an integral part of the British Hindu community in the UK in celebrating our shared values and culture.





Satsang: Spiritual Guidance

Satsang is association with the Satpurush (God-realised Guru), bhakta (devotee) or Bhagwan (God). It is practiced through devotion to God, the study of scriptures, and observance of dharma (code of conduct).

Satsang provides deeper knowledge of the atma (soul) and God. Through this knowledge, one develops the patience, courage and understanding to face the ups and downs of life with stability and peace of mind.

This same transformative power helps to free individuals from addictions and remove inner vices such as lust, ego, anger, envy and greed.

One of the primary means for strengthening one's personal satsang is weekly Satsang Sabha (religious assembly), organised in every BAPS centre around the world. Here devotees come together and enjoy spiritual discourses, scriptural readings, and devotional singing.

Morning Puja

An essential personal practice for strengthening one's personal satsang is daily morning puja (worship). Every BAPS Swaminarayan devotee begins his or her day by performing the morning puja, which involves mansi (meditation), introspection, mantra-jaap (spiritual chanting), prayer, and scriptural reading. Regular practice of morning puja strengthens spiritual values and devotion to God.



Satsang Programmes

- Sabha
- Festivals
- Cultural Programmes
- Shibirs (Conventions)
- Samuh Puja (Group Worship)
- Seva (Volunteer Services)
- Goshthi (Group Discussions)
- Group Outings



Mandirs & Cultural Centres

To cater to the needs of the individual, family and community, Hindu scriptures and traditions have prescribed the following three types of mandirs: shikharbaddh mandir, hari mandir, and ghar mandir.

Shikharbaddh mandirs are built according to the ancient texts of Hindu architecture. These magnificent structures, made from hand-carved stones, are masterpieces of ancient art and architecture.

BAPS shikharbaddh mandirs are also typically adjoined by Satsang Activity Centres, which provide facilities for various cultural, social and religious activities. These centres include: Prayer & Assembly Hall, Children's and Youth Activity Areas, Classrooms, Exhibition, Dining Area, Gardens, and Gift Shop.

Hari mandirs, although not made from stone like traditional shikharbaddh mandirs, also provide similar facilities for spiritual, cultural and social activities.

Ghar mandirs are small shrines in devotees' homes, where family members gather for puja, morning and evening arti (prayer) and thal (offering of food).



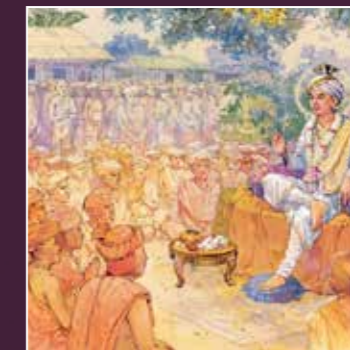
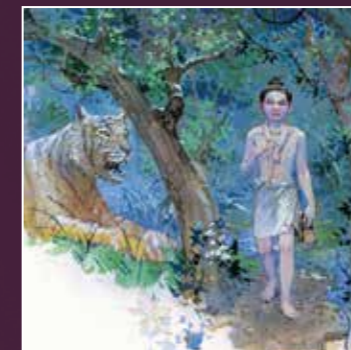


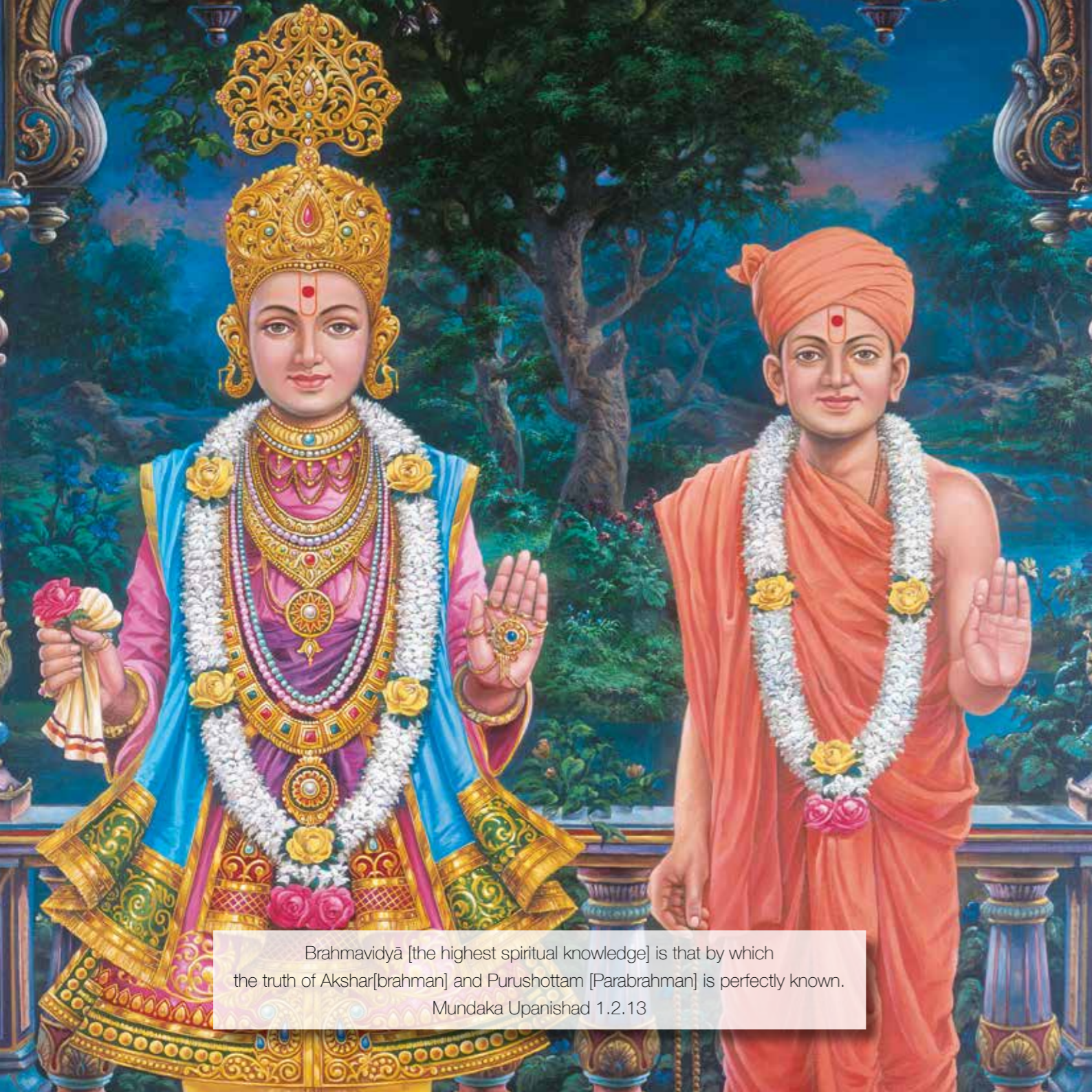
Bhagwan Swaminarayan

Born in 1781 in northern India, Bhagwan Swaminarayan brought about a social and spiritual renewal to a society plagued by corruption and immorality. He revitalised the values of Sanatan Hindu Dharma and established the Swaminarayan Sampradaya. He inspired devotees to live moral and spiritual lives by observing five basic principles: addiction-free living, vegetarianism, refraining from stealing, abstaining from committing adultery, and maintaining purity of the mind, body and soul. Even during his own lifetime, he was recognised and worshipped as God.

This is his life in brief:

AGE	EVENT
At 7	Mastered the Vedas, Upanishads, and other Hindu scriptures
At 11	Renounced home and began a 7-year, 8,000-mile, journey around the Indian subcontinent
At 14	Mastered Ashtanga Yoga, the pinnacle of yogic endeavours
At 18	Completed his journey and settled in Gujarat, western India
At 20	Anointed as spiritual head; founded the Swaminarayan Sampradaya
At 25	Initiated 500 sadhus (ordained monks) into the holy order of Paramhansa
At 29	Began social reforms for the uplift of women, children and the underprivileged
At 39	Spiritual discourses began to be compiled into what became known as the Vachanamrut
At 41	Began establishing mandirs
At 45	Gave the Shikshapatri, a code of moral discipline
At 49	Left for Akshardham, his divine abode, promising to remain present on Earth through a succession of enlightened gurus





Brahmavidyā [the highest spiritual knowledge] is that by which the truth of Akshar[brahman] and Purushottam [Parabrahman] is perfectly known.
Mundaka Upanishad 1.2.13

Theology

The members of BAPS are part of the Swaminarayan Sampradaya (Swaminarayan Faith) – the Hindu bhakti tradition revealed by Bhagwan Swaminarayan.

PRINCIPAL HINDU BELIEFS

Swaminarayan followers believe in core Hindu principles including: accepting the authority of the Vedas, the belief in Parabrahman (one supreme God), avatarvad (incarnations of God), karma, punar-janma (reincarnation), moksha (liberation), guru, and ahimsa (non-violence).

THE SWAMINARAYAN HINDU THEOLOGY

Bhagwan Swaminarayan revealed that there are five eternal entities: jiva, ishwar, maya, Brahman and Parabrahman. He explained that Parabrahman, the supreme entity, has a human-like form, is the all-doer, and remains ever-present on Earth through his eternal abode, Aksharbrahman (also called Brahman).

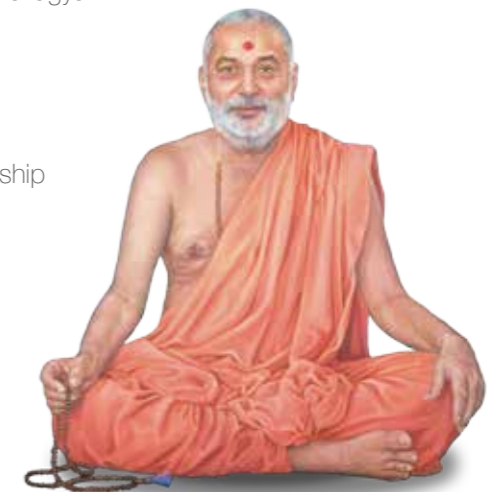
MOKSHA (LIBERATION)

Bhagwan Swaminarayan explained that jivas (souls) transcend maya and realise Ekantik Dharma through association with Aksharbrahman – the living God-realised Guru.

Ekantik Dharma comprises dharma (righteousness), gnan (knowledge), vairagya (detachment) and bhakti (devotion) to God, which leads one to moksha (ultimate liberation).

In the state of moksha, jivas transcend maya and are freed from the incessant cycle of death and rebirth. They are able to offer pure worship to Parabrahman and enjoy his supreme bliss, both here on earth and in Akshardham, the divine abode of Bhagwan Swaminarayan

He who offers the highest devotion to the Guru as he does to God, to such a great soul, the wisdom of the scriptures is illuminated.
Shvetashvatara Upanishad 6.23





Pramukh Swami Maharaj

His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj is the fifth spiritual successor of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and the present leader of BAPS. He leads an ascetic life of lifetime celibacy without personal wealth. His compassion for humanity and caring nature have touched and inspired countless people.

His inspiring call, "In the joy of others lies our own", reflects the spirit of his life and work. Pramukh Swami Maharaj has travelled from large cities to remote villages to foster love, peace, harmony, spirituality, and faith within individuals – irrespective of race, class, creed or colour. His unique combination of spirituality and leadership inspires hundreds of thousands of devotees around the world.

LIFE & WORK

- Born in 1921
- Initiated as a sadhu in 1940
- Travelled to over 17,000 villages, towns and cities in 50 countries
- Visited more than 250,000 homes
- Personally written more than 700,000 letters to comfort and guide individuals
- Delivered more than 25,000 discourses spreading the message of love, spirituality and faith
- Built more than 1,100 mandirs and cultural centres worldwide to uphold the values and beliefs of Hinduism
- Initiated over 900 young individuals into a life of renunciation, spirituality and the service of others
- Created Swaminarayan Akshardham in New Delhi and Gandhinagar, Gujarat
- Created grand traditional mandirs in London, Nairobi, Houston, Chicago, Toronto, Atlanta, Los Angeles and Robbinsville, New Jersey

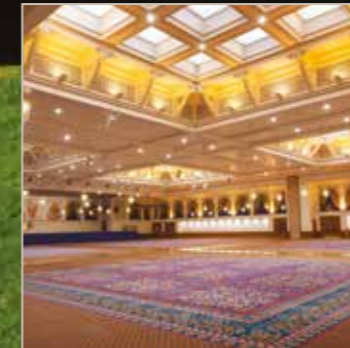
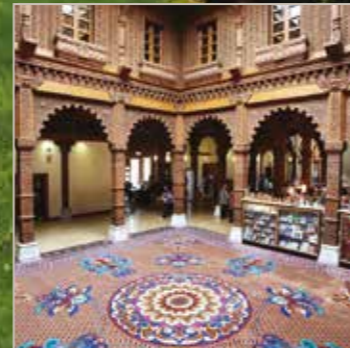
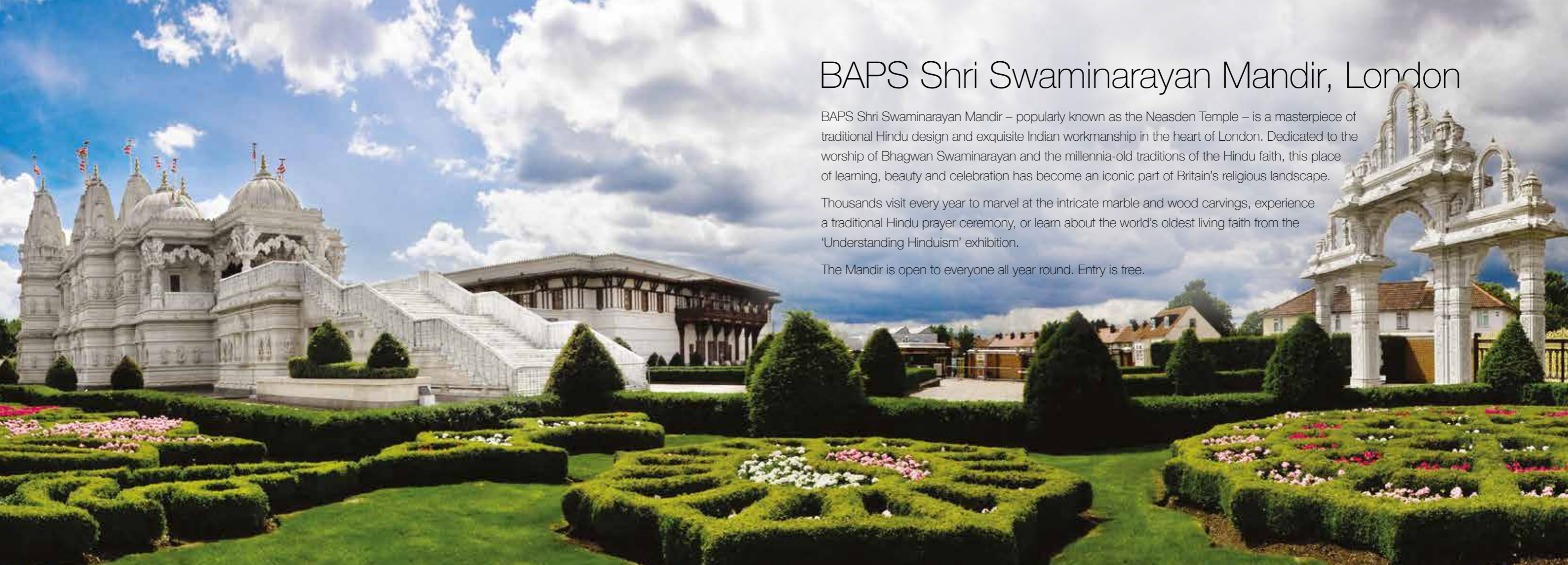


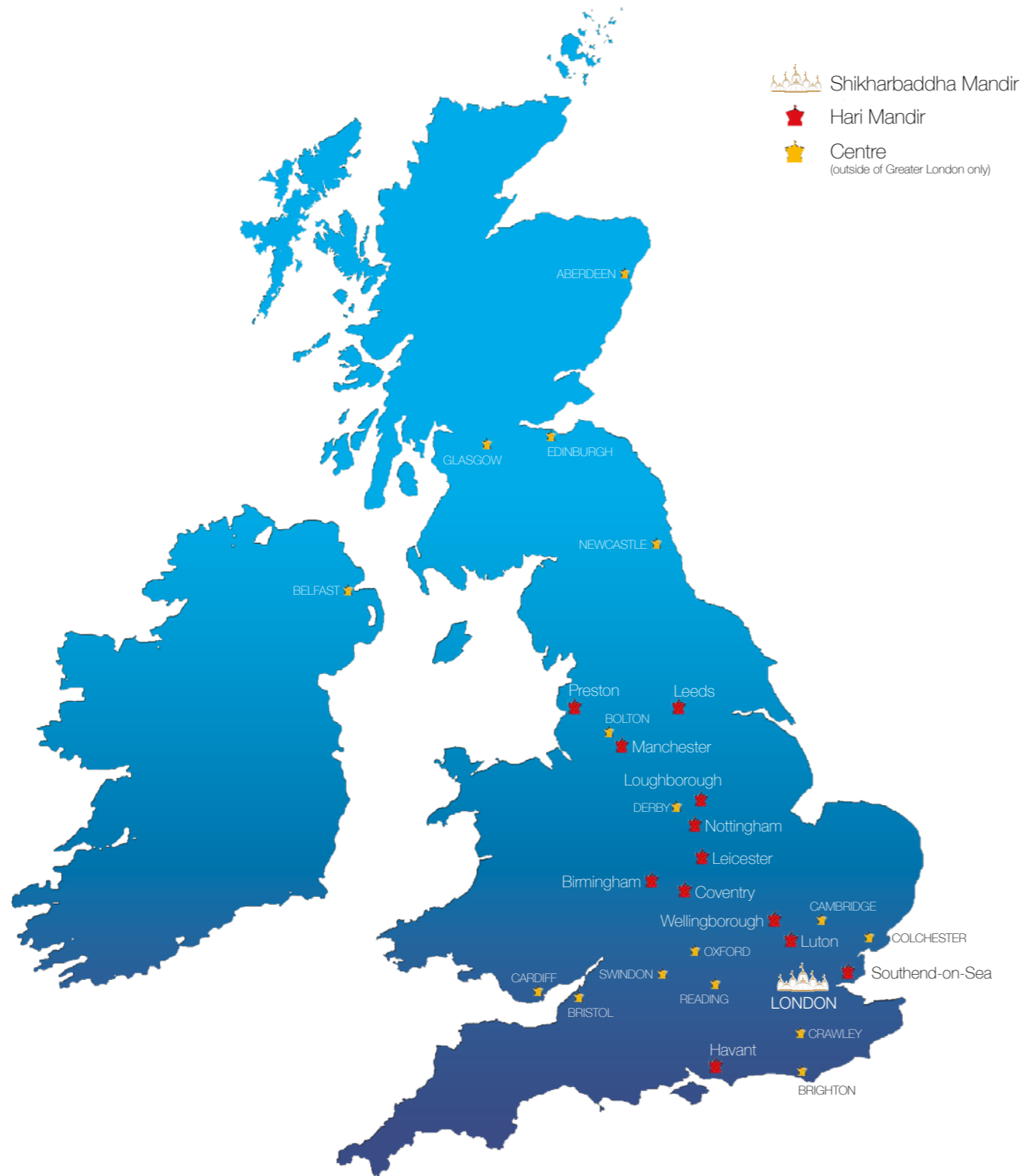
BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, London

BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir – popularly known as the Neasden Temple – is a masterpiece of traditional Hindu design and exquisite Indian workmanship in the heart of London. Dedicated to the worship of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and the millennia-old traditions of the Hindu faith, this place of learning, beauty and celebration has become an iconic part of Britain's religious landscape.

Thousands visit every year to marvel at the intricate marble and wood carvings, experience a traditional Hindu prayer ceremony, or learn about the world's oldest living faith from the 'Understanding Hinduism' exhibition.

The Mandir is open to everyone all year round. Entry is free.





BAPS UK

For over six decades, BAPS has been serving families and individuals across the UK through various spiritual and cultural activities. Its more than 40 centres, including 13 mandirs, form the hub of its various initiatives. With over 18 dedicated sadhus giving spiritual guidance, BAPS hosts over 210 weekly satsang assemblies for children, youth and adults.

Other major activities include:

- Weekly Assemblies
- Festival Celebrations
- Cultural Programmes
- Youth & Volunteer Conventions
- Family Conventions
- Volunteer Training Seminars
- Parenting Seminars
- Parayans
- Children's & Youth Summer Outings
- Children's Summer & Winter Camps
- Family Fun Days
- Children's Sports Days
- Youth Sports Tournaments
- Language Classes
- Music Classes
- Vegetarian Catering
- Educational & Career Guidance
- 'Experience India' Trips for Youths
- Community Open Days

For a full directory of BAPS mandirs and centres in the UK, please visit uk.baps.org.





Swaminarayan Akshardham
New Delhi

BAPS Worldwide

Outside of the UK, BAPS has been serving in over 50 countries, including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, the UAE, Uganda, the United States, and Zambia. Its global activities include:

SPIRITUAL & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

- Over 950 sadhus (Hindu monks)
- Over 1,100 BAPS mandirs and 3,850 centres
- 10,400 weekly assemblies for men and women, youths and teenagers
- 6,600 weekly assemblies for children

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

- Thousands of tonnes of paper recycled annually
- Thousands of water conservation projects in hundreds of villages
- Millions of trees planted in thousands of villages in India

HEALTH SERVICES

- 10 charitable hospitals and healthcare clinics treating over 615,000 patients annually
- Over 3.2 million tribal villagers treated free of charge by mobile medical clinics
- Over 2 million people inspired to quit addictions
- 165 diagnostic and specialised health camps treating over 150,000 people annually
- Over 7,000 pints of blood collected in blood donation camps annually

VOLUNTEERS

- 55,000 volunteers worldwide
- 12,000,000 hours of service annually

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

- 38 permanent facilities annually provide 12,000 students with value-based education
- 55 schools built in disaster-hit regions
- Over 5,000 scholarships awarded annually
- Established the award-winning The Swaminarayan School in London in 1992, the first independent Hindu school in Europe

HUMANITARIAN SERVICES

- Managed over 40 disaster relief operations
- More than 1,800,000 hot meals served in the 2001 Gujarat Earthquake
- 4,190 homes constructed following the 2001 Gujarat Earthquake
- 51 villages served after the South Asia Tsunami in 2004



“In the joy of others lies our own.” – His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha is pleased to have supported and worked with several charity organisations over the years in the UK, including:



BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha
UK & European Headquarters

BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir
105-119 Brentfield Road, Neasden, London NW10 8LD

Registered Charity 1143083 | Company Limited by Guarantee 7313272

International Headquarters: Dharma Sadan, Shahibaug, Ahmedabad 380 004, India. Tel: (+91 79) 2562 1580

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha also serves as a non-governmental organisation in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

Inspirer: Pramukh Swami Maharaj | www.baps.org