



# Our 2014 Annual Review

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Adventurers celebrate the completion of the food hall with the boys who will benefit from it everyday.

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## Introduction

### What a Year!

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The commitment of our supporters, old and new, propelled us through and gave confidence and much needed funds for the 4 projects we support.

Adventure Ashram is the adventurers' charity. Through purposeful adventure we raise funds in order to make grants to small, grass roots charities improving health and education in the places we explore.

We measure the impact of our work by regularly visiting the projects, questioning the people who benefit, observing what has changed in their communities and by identifying tangible outcomes from the improvements in health and education.

With experience, our knowledge of the systems and processes that govern charitable giving in India has grown. Understanding the complexities has led us to writing an ethical statement, which you can read in full on the back page of this review. In summary it says that we do not participate or support any form of corruption or fund money knowingly that we cannot send out to India ethically and legally.

This annual review gives details of the grants awarded, updates on the progress and sets out our plans for the coming year. The extraordinary efforts and generosity of individual supporters, groups of supporters giving regularly made 2014 outstanding. This review is dedicated to you all... *thank you*.

#### Highlights of the year

- Our first major donation towards our tuition centre building project
- Completion of the food hall at Odula boys house, thanks to Great Big South India adventurer's and the famous Bullet Boys
- Seeing the Spiti community centre's second floor and roof being built in time for the snow falls in November.

#### The Adventure Ashram Trustees

Colin Taylor (Chairman), Wendy Smith, Iain Crockart, Udesb Naidoo, Craig Jarvis, Sarah Tuckwell, Dominic Pinkney, Tony Smith, Roy Clark and Sarah Goodwin (Minutes Secretary) and Joan Pollock (Patron)

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# A huge thank you

Riding on the confidence you gave us with your commitment in 2013, we were bold this year with the adventures we planned.

Our first UK Car & Bike Rally far exceeded our expectations by attracting both past and new adventurers. Inspired by that wonderful day the 2015 UK Rally will be even bigger and better!

The spirit of adventure generated by the motorcyclists and car drivers on Great Big South India Adventure, led by the legendary Alex Pirie of Nomadic Knights, propelled us through to the end of the year. During the trip plans for some fantastic adventures for 2016 and 2017 were brainstormed.

The variety of ways adventurers may support our charity have been strengthened and a formal structure will be developed/established this coming year.

A special thanks goes to Sarah Goodwin, Marguerite Nice, Gayle Parsons, Bullet Boys (Michael Hobbs, Chris Everard, William Hill, Tim Wills, Stephen Wichtowski) Tony Smith, Ian Ordish, Charles & Caroline Wander, Nomadic Knights, Giles Robbins and Family, Appassionata, Haines Watts, Paul Mason, Ravenswood Children's Trust, Imperial Linen Services, Skyline Consulting Limited, Steve King, Watts Haines, Purewater Storage, Retail Assist, Langley Anthony, NEXT Plc. Central Laundry, Rocket Charities, Iain Crockart and Captain Fawcett.

Our supporters have given and raised an incredible £104,000. Your generosity, commitment and passion enabled us to grant a fantastic £67,000 to our projects in India.

We also thank the dedicated leaders and staff of the following Indian Charities.

**Action for Social health in Rural Areas** – Dr. Arun Kolhatkar

**Grace Charitable Trust** – Solomon Daniel

**Odanadi** – Stanly and Parashuram

**Spiti Projects Charity** – Joan Pollock

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Up to 400 children ride our buses each day, getting to and from school safely.



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# Accessible healthcare for women & children in Palani Hills, Tamil Nadu

Update from Dr. Arun Kolhatkar, written by Fritha Vincent

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<b>Charity</b>	Action for Social Health in Rural Areas (ASHRA)
<b>Project objective</b>	To run regular clinics with a doctor, health worker and a facility to purchase medicines in isolated communities.
<b>Project funding</b>	£6,000
<b>Project Commenced</b>	January 2012
<b>Funding to date</b>	£15,000

ASHRA gives regular health checks within the community and both health care and health education is improved at a grass roots level.

The partnership with Bethania Foundation, who run 3 creches, developed throughout this year, so much so they began to work with a third charity running a public health programme in the area. The Federation of the International Medical Relief of Children's (FIMRC) programme offers nutritional supplements and medicines. As a trained Doctor, Dr Kolkatar can carry out examinations on sick children and prescribe medicines as well as continuing the regular health checks up and ensuring the children thrive through their early years. Prevention and treatment of ailments are essential for early development and supports a healthy life through to old age.

Dr Kolkatar's close relationship with the local hospital continues. When a child needs urgent or more intensive treatment, they are seen quickly by hospital medical staff and at a reduced cost. Adventurers on Great Big South Indian Adventure spent an afternoon visiting the crèches and observed Dr Kolkatar examining the children. They sang songs with the children and everyone took part in the actions. The visit was followed by an introduction to a local women's group formed by this powerful charity partnership to provide a forum for the women to discuss the various options for family planning and gain a better understanding of sexual health.

## The next 12 months

Adventure Ashram's support of the project is being reviewed as ASHRA has discovered it does not meet the criteria to apply for a permission from the Indian Government to receive foreign charitable donations. All alternative methods to continue funding the project will be explored.

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For more information  
[www.bethaniakids.org](http://www.bethaniakids.org)  
[www.fimrc.org](http://www.fimrc.org)

Dr. Arun Kolhatkar giving a child their regular health check at a creche in Palani Hills.





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# Educating tribal children from Mudumalai Tiger Reserve

Update from Solomon Daniel, written by Fritha Vincent

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<b>Charity</b>	Grace Charitable Trust
<b>Project objective</b>	To enable 230 children to attend school and continue to their graduation by providing safe access and covering the cost of their education.
<b>Funding to date</b>	£65,000
<b>Project commenced</b>	June 2011

Grace Charitable Trust runs an education programme enabling child living within or on the outskirts of a protected tiger reserve get to school and back safely every day. Throughout the year the children continued to make excellent progress, with 5 children graduating high school with excellent marks in their school examinations. Everyone including Solomon and his staff team were spurred on by these outstanding achievements.

The news that 2 loyal supporters of Adventure Ashram had donated funds to build the first village tuition centre prompted much joy and excitement. Detailed planning and consultation began which included teachers, Solomon and the children.

For the whole year Solomon has been waiting impatiently for the permanent permission for his charity to receive foreign donations to be granted. It should seamlessly follow the temporary permission he received at the beginning of 2013. The activity of the general election and the subsequent change in government added to the delays and as we closed this year, the permission had still not arrived\*.

Not wanting to reduce the support given to the children Solomon made arrangements with the management of the fee-paying schools to pay in the future and focussed the remaining funds on buying diesel for the buses and paying the salary of his staff. The children all agreed to wear their existing uniforms as they started the new school term in June. Solomon remains confident that the permission will come in early 2015.

Despite the constant worry around when the permission would be granted to enable the funds to be transferred from Adventure Ashram to Grace Charitable Trust, our education project continues to improve the children's education.

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For more information  
GRG Memorial School [www.grgmhss.com](http://www.grgmhss.com)

## \*NEWS FLASH

As of May 2015, the long awaited permission was granted by the government and all waiting funds have been transferred to the project. The celebrations will continue throughout the year!

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During the Great Big South India Adventure the first Adventure Ashram Achievement Awards were run. The children were given prizes for a range of activities including attendance at the after school tuition centres, good behaviour and kindness. The awards will take place each year on International Children's Day and be given out by visiting adventurers on our annual volunteer trip.

## The next 12 months

We continue to offer our full moral support to Solomon who works tirelessly to achieve the permission. Also to push forward with our plans to establish 2 volunteer posts within the education project to be constantly filled by either gap year students or adult volunteers on a work break.







Adventure Ashram shares a belief with supporting adventurers and child sponsors that children have right to an education. For just £12.50 a month, a child can be supported to access their education and look forward to a bright future.





# The Great Big South Indian Adventure

Written by Fritha Vincent

**Event Purpose** Great Big South Indian Adventure  
To raise funds to improve health and education of 650 children.

**Funds Raised** £25,000

**Adventure Date** November 2014

Adventurers took part in Great Big South Indian Adventure on bikes and in classic cars. After a very successful fundraising campaign, the adventurers flew to India and started the adventure under the leadership of Alex Pirie of Nomadic Knights. The first visit was to Odanadi's boys house Odula. The boys welcomed the adventurers with a most delicious curry lunch they had prepared themselves. Following lunch the boys gave a tour of their new home and the orchard they take such special care of. Adventurers presented the boys with a cheque for £16,000 for the food hall to be completed.

After some fantastic days on the road, Adventurers visited the children in Masinagudi. They saw them in their villages and schools and attended the first ever, *Adventure Ashram Achievement Awards*. The children received prizes, for important attributes such as hard work, kindness and attendance at the after school tuition centres.

The final visit was to the creche supported by the activities of ASHRA. Adventurers saw how Dr. Kolhatkar carries out his regular health checks, and then joined the children for songs and afternoon tea.

The adventure was very special, due to each adventurer that took part and how they witnessed first hand what a difference their fundraising and donations make to the lives of so many children. A huge thank you to them all and a special thanks to *The Bullet Boys* for their exceptional fundraising efforts.

Stanly unveils plaque thanking Adventure Ashram for their support. The Bullet Boys, led by Michael Hobbs of Appassionata, presented the boys with a cheque for £16,000 to complete the food hall. Trustee Tony Smith, addresses the children of Mudumalai Tiger Reserve. Fritha & William Hill celebrate the support from his company Imperial Linen Services and the fantastic team of adventurers led by Alex Pirie of Nomadic Knights raised a fantastic £25,000 as a result of this immense adventure.





# Rehabilitation of children affected by human trafficking

Updated by Stanly Kv, written by Fritha Vincent

<b>Charity</b>	Odanadi
<b>Project objective</b>	To pay for 4 months running costs of the new boys' house 'Odula' in Odanadi in Mysore.
<b>Funding to date</b>	£100,000
<b>Project length</b>	4 months
<b>Project commenced</b>	January 2012

Adventure Ashram Partners continue to support by donating funds to cover 4 months running costs of the boys' house. Now 30 boys live in the house, which is loved and cared for by them all. The boys were given an extra special gift this year to choose whatever they wanted for their new home. They decided that they would like a gym. This is installed in one of the common rooms and the boys enjoy using the facilities regularly.

## The next 12 months

Adventure Ashram will continue its support in this way and will also raise funds from its UK Rally 2015 to help fund a rally run by Odanadi to raise awareness of child trafficking and human rights. This rally is called WAR.

## Special Mention

Partner of Odanadi, Michael Hobbs, went on a personal crusade to gather fellow motorcyclists to join him on the Great Big South Indian Adventure as *The Bullet Boys*. They worked tirelessly to raise funds to improve the lives of the boys from Odula and the extraordinary fundraising efforts coupled with the efforts of the rest of the adventurers enabled Adventure Ashram to make a donation of £16,000, the final money needed to complete the food hall building project. The food hall will give the boys the opportunity to cook their food in a fully working kitchen and offer the space for the charity leaders, Stanly and Parashu, to invite care professionals to come and learn about the rehabilitation programme they run so successfully.

For more information  
[www.odanadi.org](http://www.odanadi.org)

Adventure Ashram grant of £68,000 ensured the boys' house building project was completed. The house has been named 'Odula', which means 'mother embracing her son'.





# Absorbing Spiti Projects Charity and Building a 'Solar Eco' Community Centre in Kaza, Spiti Valley, Himalayas

Update from Joan Pollock, written by Fritha Vincent

## Charity Project objective

Spiti Projects Charity  
To build a community centre and showcase a building that uses modern technology to harness energy from the sun.

**Funding to date** £84,000

**Project commenced** July 2011

Great progress was made again this year and Patron, Joan Pollock's dream to raise the roof was realised. As the snow began to fall in October the centre was sealed to keep it safe during the winter.

## The 3 primary reasons for building the community centre

The first is to inspire the return to more traditional methods of building in this high altitude area, showing that to build with rammed earth and adobe bricks is cheaper than using cement. The second is to show that by building in this way the thermal qualities of adobe blocks will keep the inside warm when the temperature is -20°C to -30°C outside, and thirdly to show that by using large glass windows in the building we can harness passive solar energy as a way of heating the building. The valley has over 300 days of sunlight per year.

The dream is that the community centre will enable future generations of Spitiens to keep warm without burning wood.

## The next 12 months

The grand opening of the community centre is on track for 31 July 2015. Joan is leading a trip of supporters up to the mountains to attend this spectacular event. Join us and help us raise further funds to equip the inside of the community centre with a dental and eye clinic, handicraft centre and homestay rooms.

Joan Pollock, our Patron and the determined and inspirational founder of Spiti Projects Charity, is ready to stand back and focus on writing her book about her adventures working in the valley for over 20 years. Adventure Ashram was honoured to be asked to carry the baton forward and continue her work improving health and education in the valley. Long term supporters of the Spiti charity are being invited to join Adventure Ashram and continue supporting work in the valley.

The community centre will have a meeting hall, dentist, eye clinic, handicraft centre and rooms for visitors to the Valley to sleep in. It will be the first building of its kind in the area.

For more information  
[www.spiti.org](http://www.spiti.org)





# Contact details for further information, updates, donations or to get involved.

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