
The Dust Project

ANNUAL REVIEW 2019

Charity Registration No. 1155728



Annual Review

The Dust Project was established as a company limited by guarantee on 20th December 2013. Ultimate responsibility for the entity rests with the Trustees. Day-to-day management is undertaken by Sarah Chisnall and Tiffany Stokely, Trustees of the charity.

TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees meets a minimum of four times per year, with further ad-hoc meetings as required.

OBJECTIVES

Our vision is to help, support, and relieve those in desperate situations of poverty, crisis or hardship, in developing countries and communities suffering the after-effects of war, natural disaster and/or economic frailty. We focus especially on the stability of family units and the safety, nourishment and education of children and vulnerable young adults by providing shelter, food, healthcare, schooling, tuition, and other such charitable services as the trustees may from time to time think fit, as need demands. We are currently focusing on communities in Colombo and Jaffna, Sri Lanka, through the physical construction and refurbishment of a children's hostel, schools, and family homes, in addition to the support of community businesses, projects and sponsored children.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2019

Website and Social Media

We are very prominent on social media (especially Facebook), with over 600 supporters. Our videos have had approximately 12,000 views. We are also on Instagram, Twitter and

Linkedin, and have found a wider reach of international support and sponsorship through these. Our website continues to be successful both in gaining new followers as well as directly enabling more children to be sponsored. The Child Sponsorship page allows potential sponsors to read the bios of children living in need in our focal communities in Sri Lanka — who either attend a Paalam International School in Colombo or Jaffna, live in the Paalam Children's Hostel in Jaffna, or are connected to a house build (or other project) which we have financed. Sponsors are given information about why the child needs support, along with details of his or her family and situation. We have found sponsorship to make a significant and lasting impact in a child's life, having seen and heard firsthand from carers and the children themselves the difference it makes. The children's basic needs of clothing, medical attention, primary education and nourishment are met, and they feel genuinely supported, encouraged and cared for. This can only make a positive impact on their futures.

The 'Donate to a Build' page speaks of those families in our communities who are currently living in completely sub-standard housing, or are currently or soon to be homeless. They are usually in serious need of a home, a well and a toilet.

Partnering with Paalam

Things are going well in our partnership with Paalam— a charity based in Sri Lanka. The charity has made a huge impact in Colombo, but even more significantly in Jaffna. Through our collaboration, they have been able to receive donations through The Dust Project's website and co-ordinate, distribute and oversee the child sponsorship program. We have had over 100 children sponsored through this program.

Since our partnership, we have been able to build or help complete 18 houses for various families living in appalling conditions. We also continue to build wells and toilets as need demands.

Fundraising

- In January, due to the generosity of our supporters and one very generous single mom (who personally donated £5,000), we were able to send nearly £10,000 to Paalam for the Wattala School's Solar Panel project. This means their electricity bills will reduce dramatically, and they will be able to reappropriate those savings to invest in much-needed classroom updates, school supplies and teachers' salaries.

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- In February, a team of 9 women raised the funds to paint Nathan & Niroshini's house and build the Community Centre toilets — which will be used not only by the community centre, but also by the Paalam school children. The children were so grateful!
 - In March, our Trustees personally funded a business grant scheme which Paalam have set up. This fund is available to help small business start-ups and entrepreneurial ideas, upon proper application and panel approval. We have been able to grant funds to enable Niome open a small shop, and Vinoth purchase a Trishaw in order to establish a taxi business.
 - We were able to send 3 separate shipments to Colombo in March, August and November. These were clothing items kindly donated by our supporters. The clothes were sold at our Dust Project Store based in Jaffna. All clothing is sold at a very affordable rate to locals, and it means we can support two salaries and use the rest of the profit to fund other projects.
 - In September, two separate teams went out to Jaffna to work on two houses — one for Grecian and his family, and one for Sharmilan and her family. They also helped paint Jegan Lee's house, which we had built the year before.
 - In October, our Trustees personally funded the purchase of a large amount of land for future building projects – enough to build 9 houses on.
 - In November, a generous family funded the build of Sindiya's house, well and toilet. We were also able to fund Luth Amma's well.
 - Also in November, we had our Christmas Ball. The goal was to raise funds for the outfitting of the school classrooms in our new school build just outside Jaffna — which is kindly being funded by our friends at Hiscox London Market. We managed to raise over £20,000 at the Ball. This will go toward the building of classroom furniture, and sourcing of computers, books, spoken English kits, a medical room, toilets, sports facilities and security/CCTV coverage.
 - In December, our friends at Bishop's Stortford Vineyard Church kindly donated £1,500 to pay for Paalam's Annual Christmas party, which feeds around 800 local villagers on Christmas day and provides presents for all the children. With this donation, we were also able to purchase 2 sewing machines for community ladies to start a small business with.
 - In December, we also received an enormous donation of £20,000 from Hiscox London Market to start the build of Paalam School in Jaffna.

Mission

- In February, Trustees Sarah Chisnall & Sarah Higgs headed up a team of 9 ladies who raised over £7,000 to build a toilet block for Paalam Community Centre and school, as well as paint Nathan and Niroshini's house (whose home we'd built the year before).
- In August, Trustees Tom and Tiffany Stokely and Fraser Higgs each took their eldest daughters, along with a small team from Hiscox London Market, to Jaffna for a build trip. While there, they worked on digging three wells, in addition to spending quality time with the Paalam Children's Home girls — doing crafts and teaching them a choreographed dance.
- In September, Trustee Roy Chisnall took a team of 10 from Hiscox London Market to Jaffna, to help build two houses. These houses were for Grecian and family and Sharmilan and family. Part of the team also painted Jegan Lee's house. So much work was done, the local builders were amazed!

Finance

As a charity, we continued to support Paalam International School, New Living Flame Church and the Paalam Project. All three organisations are under the Paalam Charity, and in total we donated over £116,000. The funds went toward purchasing land for building projects, building houses, toilets and wells, building a toilet block and starting the build on the new Jaffna school, painting houses and child sponsorship. We also helped to fund new businesses.

The Future

We are looking to continue raising funds for various projects in the year ahead. We also hope to continue to build upon the support from volunteers who have been on these life-changing trips to Sri Lanka. Many have shared their experiences with others, who have also caught the vision and are actively looking to get involved in future trips and fundraising.

We hope in the coming year to get the bulk of the Paalam School build finished and start on the internal decoration and outfitting of each classroom.