



mylahore
BRITISH ASIAN KITCHEN

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

2022



#PuttingOthersFirst

On a bright 15th January 2020, Prince William and Princess Kate visited MyLahore Bradford to celebrate togetherness and community spirit. It was an incredible occasion, and we wanted to mark the anniversary of their visit with something special...

So each year since then, we've asked for nominations to seek out everyday hidden gems who've been going above and beyond in the previous twelve months or so, and thank them in our own small way with £100 MyLahore E-Gift Cards.

After a tough selection process, we're thrilled to share in this little booklet snippets of stories of some of our wonderful 2022 Community Champions (a few wished to remain anonymous). We hope you find these tales of #PuttingOthersFirst as moving as we do.

Thank you once again to all our Champions, to all the other many people nominated, to those who took the time to make nominations, and of course to the Prince and Princess for inspiring this idea!

With love, MyLahore





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#withlove,mylahore

Sheraz, Manchester

What's been said about Sheraz:

"I believe Sheraz...is deserving of this as he has put the last 10+ years of his life into creating and running a local sports club for the blind, doing sports such as cricket, baseball etc and has built a strong community and fanbase locally. He is blind himself and has not let that stop him, actually making him more determined to make a mark on the world. His sports club has gone international and have played teams in countries such as Bulgaria."

"He is also a youth worker, helping and managing younger children with any problems. I believe this man is deserving of this gift as even with his visual impairment, he has done more than people with sight that I know and has dedicated his whole life to helping others and making children and other visually impaired people more confident. He founded and runs the Lancashire Lions VICC / Sports Club."

Thank you again from all at MyLahore – you inspire us!



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Aamna, Bradford

What's been said about Aamna:

"Aamna is one of a kind. She works relentlessly day and night to provide hope to the cancer patients at her hospital. She works for passion."

"Aamna goes over and beyond ... to ensure every patient of hers is treated with kindness and respect and she on a daily basis gives hope to many patients who are already in a very difficult situation."

"Aamna also recently set up a charity to help the children who are suffering from cancer and she, with the help of all her followers, managed to collate an amazing sum of money for these children."

"Not only does Aamna show her commitment at work, she is also a much loved member of the family. From children to adults, everyone relies on her and trusts her. Aamna at such a young age has achieved a tremendous amount. She puts a smile on everyone she meets. Her sympathetic and caring nature is infectious and we all love her."

Thank you again from all at MyLahore – you inspire us!

#withlovelahore



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Juli, Bradford

What's been said about Juli:

"Juli is a truly remarkable person and a truly unsung hero. I have known Juli for over 10 years and seen how she has transformed the way homeless shelters and food insecurity is tackled by creating new co-designed partnership models. Twelve years ago she created a new programme for homeless people in Bradford by using empty churches as a winter shelter, rotating locations for each day of the week, and providing bedding, food and toiletries free of charge."

"Starting from nothing, Juli got people enthused and involved in volunteering and donating by setting up the 'Inn Churches' charity (Inn as in hospitality hostel). She then moved on to food insecurity by taking on a huge warehouse to collect unsold food from supermarkets to distribute to foodbanks."

"...her latest venture is FoodSavers, a programme of community food pantries across the district to help people move on from foodbank dependency...by paying a small amount of money for quality food they choose. Juli partnered with Bradford District Credit Union so that £1 of this goes into a savings account to help members get into a savings habit and build financial resilience."

"Today, Juli has over 1000 volunteers involved in various schemes and is so modest that she shies from the lime light and reflects it onto her volunteers and staff."

Thank you again from all at MyLahore – you inspire us!

#withlovelyahore



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Shahid, Sheffield

What's been said about Shahid:

"Shahid Ali's journey into cricket coaching in Sheffield only began because a friend suffered a heart attack and he offered to help with Chance to Shine Street sessions. He might not have known it then, but it was the start of something incredible."

"It takes courage and conviction to deliver cricket to the communities of Nether Edge and Sharrow, [where antisocial behaviour is a significant problem]."

"Shahid Ali has grown the project by starting sessions on Saturday mornings with a handful of kids attending. It soon had over-subscribed boys sessions and additional girls-only sessions. A number of boys went to local clubs and were never picked. The issue of parents running sides and selecting their own kids is human nature but it does happen. So, Shahid launched Allama Iqbal Cricket Club and it has just grown wings and taken off...[with their U13 team winning the league and cup double last season in their third year.]"

"With Shahid aiming to encourage boys and girls across age groups from the South Asian community to try cricket, there have been barriers to overcome, [which he has done with positive parental engagement.]"

[Shahid has also been running holiday cricket camps and Winter camps for the children to make sure they remain engaged and continue to develop their cricketing skills.]

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Shaba, London

What's been said about Shaba:

"[Shaba] has volunteered his time with Help Newham, Newham community support, Newham Wellness and Newham Cares in providing hot food, medication and food parcels delivery for vulnerable or homeless people."

"His passion for helping the poor around the world was able to continue while he volunteered with charities...in helping them raise much needed funds through charity BBQs, treks, street collections, live TV appeals and online social media fundraising and going on a recent charity deployments to Lebanon twice to help Syrian and Palestinian refugees with food packs, winter aid."

"He also helps out at a local youth club based in Manor Park called Young Stars with leading games and providing mentoring to young people from [the] age of 8- 19 years old."

"He is also selected by parents to be school parent governor...since September 2020."

"His current voluntary role as a working group member with Plaistow community neighbourhood team is providing support of residents' decisions on funding of £100k and how projects for the community should be delivered. He works...on these projects like community gardens, litter picks and lunch club for the elderly."

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[#withlovemylahore](https://www.instagram.com/withlovemylahore)

Naveed, Bradford

What's been said about Naveed:

"Naveed has consistently mentored and inspired young people from disadvantaged backgrounds for numerous years. His dedication and steadfastness as a volunteer is hard to come by."

"Naveed has led and delivered successful careers workshops, FA football coaching, youth clubs and residential. The young people that we work with always find Naveed inspiring and hugely look up to him. He is a perfect role model for children who aspire to great things and instils belief and passion in the young people he works with. He is a credit to our community and we are grateful for his support."

Thank you again from all at MyLahore – you inspire us!



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Nuh, York

What's been said about Nuh:

"Nuh is the Founding Director of a non-profit organisation called Role Models Yorkshire which focuses on supporting young people from disadvantaged backgrounds into professional careers and higher education. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Nuh took Role Models Yorkshire online to create a virtual hub featuring career advice and podcasts for young students and their teachers/parents, providing a much needed service for disadvantaged students across the country. He also set up a virtual community coffee morning chat to support lonely people and homeschooled pupils during lockdowns."

"He is also president for his university's Islamic Society; he has worked hard to create a supportive and friendly environment for his community and to organise a number of events for charity."

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Taslim, Bradford

What's been said about Taslim:

"Taslim has a heart of gold and works tirelessly at every opportunity to help others in need, very often casting aside her own leisure time to do good work for the community."

"As a fundraiser for Bradford Central Lions Club (CIO) she is currently actively helping to raise £20,000 to provide numerous public access defibrilators throughout the City of Bradford."

"In 2021 she took on supporting Period Poverty Action Project and was successful in providing significant funding to provide sanitary ware for [young people] from deprived communities in Kenya."

"For two years running Taslim has worked to support the Bradford Homeless Outreach Project, this year with support of the Lions, at Christmas she was successful in handing over 20 sleeping bags to the homeless project."

"In helping others, nothing is too difficult or too hard for Taslim, we feel that she is truly a jewel in the crown..."

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Shakil, Bradford

What's been said about Shakil:

"Working for charities all year round, never stopping. Feeds the homeless, gives endlessly to food banks etc. Has charity events..., he helps everyone and does all of this without most knowing."

"In these hard time he has saved many lives, he helps people who due to pride or other situations need help and don't know where to turn. I just don't know where he finds the time – so selfless – one of if not the best human being I have ever met."

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Rehana, Bolton

What's been said about Rehana:

"Rehana's paid work sees her getting out into the community to encourage, predominantly, BME individuals, young or old, to enrol in Higher Education. For over 20 years she has been running a women's group in Bolton. Many now have gone into employment with advice and guidance from her."

"She selflessly volunteers her time as a Group Scout Leader and engages in lots of activities and character-building for young people as part of this. In the summer of 2021 she launched a summer programme for young people from under privileged backgrounds, which saw the delivery of lots of activities that kept young people engaged and involved."

"She is a volunteer for Crescent Food Bank in Bolton, and as part of this receives weekly deliveries of food produce that she distributes to the needy in Bolton. Her involvement with Crescent Food Bank meant that in the pandemic, lots of hard to reach families in the community got fresh deliveries of food and groceries to help them, hand delivering them across the borough."

"Any free time Rehana has, she spends in helping others. Rehana also sits on the Trustees Board at the Asian Elders Resource Centre. Her belief is that if we help the elderly now and spend time with them then hopefully when we're old there will be people around to do the same to us."

"This selfless woman with her many work and home commitments still finds the time to give back to the community."

Thank you again from all at MyLahore – you inspire us!



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Azeem, Bradford

What's been said about Azeem:

"Azeem has been working with at risk young people for the last 15 years both in the statutory and voluntary sector. He has numerous roles supporting young people in Bradford College, Bradford Youth Service and at A&E at Bradford Royal Infirmary."

"Azeem always goes above and beyond to keep young people safe and give them positive outcomes. He has real energy and passion to advocate for young people supporting them to overcome adversity.... He really is a hidden gem in our city."

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Mussarat, Bradford

What's been said about Mussarat:

"As well as being a huge support for her family and children, she has supported the women in her community through her selfless work. She has been organising charity sales, running weekly classes at the two local mosques, and online classes throughout the pandemic. She is always picking and dropping women to these classes and educating them how to be better citizens to their community."

"She has been there to wash the deceased even when it was considered a risk at the peak of the pandemic. Overall, she is a very positive person who seems to have advice and a solution for everything!"

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Akhlaq, Bradford

What's been said about Akhlaq:

"Akhlaq [is] a leading pioneer voice for BME Dementia, [running a community interest company called 'Meri Yaadain', meaning My Memories, that supports people living with or caring for a relative living with dementia]".

"However, he does so much work in the community, from being a parent governor [for 18 years], ... one of the main members of the volunteer team at Girdlington community centre who provided free daily meals to vulnerable members of the community, to being a representative of the local community at various NHS, Council and other statutory and non-statutory organisations."

"I admire his continuous giving and support to the community, nothing is ever too much - he is such a kind and supportive person."

"Being a single dad of three teenagers, he does a remarkable job of bringing up his children...and doing so much voluntarily for the local community. He is also [pursuing] a PhD too [in how South Asian family carers cope with advanced dementia care]."

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Mani, Bradford

What's been said about Mani:

"Mani and his team have been running a grassroots football club for last 5 years giving opportunities for the local kids in the Bradford areas to keep them involved in sports and off the streets. They have teams for all age groups and also opportunities for girls too. They even cater for the over 35s too."

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Saif, Rotherham

What's been said about Saif:

"Saif has made great strides in the local community, getting kids off the streets and into the gym. The community was in great need for something like this and he has well and truly fulfilled this. With so many classes, he caters for all age groups. Being a fairly young adult himself, and having a small family of his own, he still dedicates so much time and effort to the youngsters in the gym."

"I have seen, even after the timed classes, he has the youngsters in the gym, playing console games, his reason being, as long as they in a safe environment having fun and off the streets he is happy."

Thank you again from all at MyLahore – you inspire us!

Ismail, Batley

What's been said about Ismail:

"Ismail had a brain haemorrhage in 2009, which left him paralysed and was told he would never walk and talk again."

"Ismail never gave up, went onto getting himself better. [He] started work with his former employer within 8 months of his recovery. He joined the gym, got himself stronger and...started taking part in marathon races."

"An inspiration to the community with a 'never give up' attitude."

"He never complains. He's always filled with enthusiasm. He inspires everyone he meets. His love is marathons, meeting people and making a huge difference by giving his time and inspiring others, by raising money, but most of all spending time with people lifting their spirits with his positivity."

Thank you again from all at MyLahore – you inspire us!

A VERY BRITISH ASIAN STORY...



Although MyLahore opened its doors in 2002, the truth is that its foundations were laid many decades earlier.

In 1964, two men, like many other first generation British Asians, migrated to these wonderful shores with little formal education and a mere five pounds in their pockets. What they did possess was a hunger and willingness to improve their lives and the lives of their families.

Farman Ali (pictured top left) and Mohammed Farooq (pictured bottom left) embarked respectively on a journey of twelve hour shifts in the textile mills of Yorkshire, and seven days a week driving buses around the streets of Bradford. Their hard work and dedication started to pay off, and eventually they plucked up the courage to buy a sweet shop that they started to run with the help of their families.

Confidence and momentum grew, and in 1984 they took the bold step of buying a restaurant. Fuelled by the support of other family members and their own young children, they soon began to enjoy the fruits of their entrepreneurial spirit.



One of the most fundamental lessons they taught was:

‘Treat others the way you would like to be treated yourself...’

A philosophy that MyLahore holds onto to this day.

Their strong values, unified spirit and togetherness created a culture that allowed their families to excel both in practical business experience and education.

The children developed aspirations to follow in the footsteps of their fathers and decided to open a restaurant too, though with a difference and their own fresh thinking.

MyLahore was born.

“We at MyLahore say a heartfelt ‘Thank You’ to our parents and all those pioneering first generation migrants who lived by strong family values and worked tirelessly to lay the foundations for future generations to flourish and prosper.

We know that we are standing on the shoulders of giants.

We hope we can always make you proud...”





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