

Two Homeless Feeds a Week for the HNCO Manchester Charity

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A spoonful of hope: HNCO helps the NW?s most vulnerable.

How a one-off meeting with a Manchester charity led to two homeless feeds a week for HNCO?s team of volunteers.

HNCO (Hajjah Naziha Charitable Organisation) is probably best known for its overseas initiatives such as fighting poverty, installing water pumps and building schools in some of the most remote areas of Pakistan, India and Africa. Despite its global reach however, the UK team of volunteers have been lending a hand much closer to home recently with regular homeless feeds in Manchester and Burnley.

HNCO?s Gulshan Rehman explains: ?When we use words such as ?poverty?, ?homeless?, and ?hungry?, the usual reaction is to imagine the ?Comic Relief? pictures of the 1980s and 90s that showed starving men, women and children in Asia and Africa. At HNCO we campaign and fundraise tirelessly to provide food

packages and other aid to these areas - including emergency relief when it is required - but the truth of the matter is that there are people living on the streets of the UK who also need our help.

?Homelessness is an epidemic in this country and people, not just in cities, but towns such as Burnley, Accrington and Blackburn are becoming invisible to those who just walk by. For this reason, we organised a homeless feed in Burnley at the beginning of June, and such was the response that we decided to make it a weekly event; taking hot food, snack packs, hygiene kits and offering additional services, such as free haircuts to anyone who comes to the Thompson Centre car park on a Wednesday evening.?

The idea was spawned after a meeting in May with Manchester charity Organic Soul, who have held a Friday-night feed in Piccadilly Gardens every week for over a month. During Ramadan however the organisation hosts a 30-day initiative where the homeless and hungry can come every night for a hot meal, cup of Chai, fresh fruit, cold drinks and more. HNCO met up with Organic Soul initially to see if they could donate some supplies, but the volunteers soon decided they wanted to help in a more regular capacity and now head to Manchester once a fortnight to help out.

HNCO?s own Ramadan Food Drive for 2019 saw money raised through traditional donations of Zakat, Fidya, Kaffarah and through the sales of Medina Ajwa dates fund the ?Feed a Village? project of 30 villages in 30 days across Pakistan and India. Food parcels of meat, flour, rice and more were handed out to some of the most remote and poverty-stricken areas to men, women and children who need so little but have even less. With a mission statement of ?help where it?s needed most, HNCO is committed to bringing communities together, sharing food and offering a helping hand whether at home or abroad.?

Gulshan continued: ?Lots of us take for granted the fact that we have a full fridge and food cupboard at home but for too many the time in between meals is unacceptably long. Knowing that they get a hot meal and some other food to take away even just once a week is a life line for men and women living on the streets of our local towns and cities. We are also hoping to take this campaign to Birmingham in the near future and maybe even further afield after that.

?It?s not just for the homeless however, and there are no questions asked at the feed; it is not for us to judge why someone would come and use the service. We know of people that have a roof over their head but not enough funds to pay for fuel to cook; others are just lonely and want to come and have a nice chat over a cup of tea. We welcome everyone.?

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Hajjah Naziha Charity

HNCO Muslim Charity is dedicated to preserving the legacy of Shaykh Muhammad Nazim Adil. His daughter, Hajjah Naziha Adil Kabbani is a descendant of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), through both her maternal and paternal lineages.

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