

A PROMISE TO SAFEGUARD OUR STANMORE

A PLAN OF ACTION FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

BY SAKALAIN MEGHJEE

A PERSONAL MESSAGE

Dear Fellow Members, Salaam Alaykum WRWB.

Like many of you, Stanmore has been woven into the fabric of my life. It is where I first learnt the values of faith, service and community. It is where I stood shoulder to shoulder with my elders in prayer. It is where we celebrated moments of joy and sought comfort during moments of sorrow. It is where our children take their first steps into the life of our Jamaat and where we accompany our loved ones on their final journey. Stanmore is not simply a collection of buildings; it is our spiritual home.

Recent events have challenged us as a community. They have raised difficult questions. They have caused uncertainty, concern and, at times, division. However, I believe that difficult moments also present opportunities to reflect, to learn and to emerge stronger. This document is therefore not a manifesto. It is not about personalities. It is not about assigning blame. It is a Promise.

A promise to place transparency before secrecy. A promise to place stewardship before politics. A promise to place future generations before short-term expediency. Above all, it is a promise to safeguard our Stanmore. I place these commitments before you with humility and sincerity. Judge me by them.

With salaams and duas,

Sakalain Meghjee

*"We inherited Stanmore from those before us.
We hold it in trust for those yet to come."*

WHY THIS PROMISE?

There are moments in the life of every institution when it must pause and ask itself difficult questions. Who are we? What do we stand for? What are we prepared to protect? What legacy do we wish to leave behind? For our Jamaat, this is one of those moments.

Generations before us sacrificed their time, their energy and their resources to build what we now call Stanmore. They did not do so for themselves. They did so for us. And they did so trusting that one day we, too, would become guardians of that trust. We have inherited a duty. A duty not merely to maintain buildings, but to preserve the values that those buildings represent. A duty to ensure that decisions affecting our community are made openly, honestly and wisely. A duty to ensure that future generations inherit a Jamaat stronger than the one we inherited.

This Promise is therefore built upon four simple principles:

Truth. Stewardship. Protection. Hope.

Truth requires that we seek facts before conclusions. **Stewardship** reminds us that we are caretakers rather than owners. **Protection** requires us to place safeguards around what generations before us sacrificed to build. **Hope** reminds us that our responsibility extends beyond today's challenges to tomorrow's opportunities.

These principles form the foundation of this Plan of Action. This is not a document rooted in fear. It is rooted in faith. It is rooted in gratitude. It is rooted in responsibility. Above all, it is rooted in love for our Jamaat and our Stanmore.

MY PLEDGE

As I bring this Promise to a close, I do so with humility and a deep sense of responsibility. I make no claim to have all the answers, nor do I underestimate the effort, patience and wisdom required to overcome our challenges. I recognise and remain grateful for the devoted individuals who have served this Jamaat before us. Yet every generation is called upon to respond to the circumstances of its own time.

I believe our generation has been entrusted with a sacred duty: to learn from the past without becoming prisoners of it, to confront difficult truths without fear, to protect what generations before us built with sacrifice, and to hand over to our children a Jamaat stronger and safer than the one we inherited.

I cannot promise perfection, but **I can promise honesty**. I cannot promise that difficult decisions will never arise, but **I can promise that members will never again be asked to make those decisions in the dark**. I cannot promise that everyone will always agree. I can promise that every member will be treated with respect and that differing views will be listened to with sincerity and dignity. I cannot promise that mistakes will never be made, but **I can promise openness, accountability and a willingness to learn**.

I cannot change the past. But, with Allah's help and your trust, I will do everything within my ability to safeguard our Stanmore for those who will inherit it after us.

This is not a promise to seek office or win an election. It is a promise born out of love for our Jamaat, gratitude to those who came before us, and hope for those who will come after us. It is simply:

A Promise to Safeguard Our Stanmore.

May Allah (SWT) guide us to what is right, unite our hearts, bless our intentions and grant success to all those who sincerely seek to serve this community.

With humility, sincerity and prayers,
Sakalain Meghjee

GOVERNANCE BUILT ON TRUST

Communities flourish when trust flourishes, and trust is earned through honesty, accountability, and openness. Good governance is a spiritual responsibility. I shall encourage transparency by providing members with relevant information in a timely and accessible manner, and ensure that those entrusted to serve remain answerable to the membership.

**All EC meetings will be open for all to attend.
EC minutes will be published every month.**

We will foster respectful engagement, timely responses to questions, and independent oversight to strengthen our institutions. Every member should feel they have a voice and a place within the life of our Jamaat. Differences of opinion need not lead to division; a community united in purpose can accommodate diversity of thought whilst remaining bound together by faith and shared values.

A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

A great community is judged by how it supports those most in need. We shall seek to expand programmes for our seniors that combat loneliness and promote wellbeing. Women, who have always played an indispensable role within our community, deserve the support and resources necessary to shape the future of our Jamaat. For our youth, we shall nurture leadership and create pathways for meaningful participation in community life.

We shall also continue to strengthen welfare support for families facing hardship, bereavement, illness and personal challenges, ensuring confidential counselling is available without stigma. The spirit of volunteerism has long been one of Stanmore's greatest strengths. We must cultivate a culture where service is regarded not as a burden, but as a privilege, guided by the principle:

*Dedication is Sacrifice. Sacrifice is Service.
Service is Unity. Unity is Strength.*

THE STANMORE WE DESERVE

Safeguarding Stanmore is not an end in itself; it is the foundation upon which we build a stronger, more compassionate and spiritually vibrant Jamaat. The true strength of our community lies not in bricks and mortar, but in faith, service and belonging. We should strive to create a Stanmore where every member feels welcomed, valued and connected.

I shall seek to strengthen the spiritual life of our Jamaat by encouraging the establishment and continuity of daily congregational prayers, and by providing both English and Urdu programmes to meet the diverse needs of our membership. We must ensure that Azadari, Masaab and our devotional practices remain at the heart of our identity, whilst creating opportunities for families to worship and learn together. Stanmore must remain a sanctuary where members can find peace, guidance and spiritual nourishment. A Jamaat that prays together remains together.

THE STANMORE CHARTER

There are moments in the life of a community when lessons learnt through difficulty must be transformed into lasting safeguards. The events of recent years have reminded us that good intentions alone are not enough; institutions are protected by structures that endure beyond any one administration. Stanmore is more than land and buildings—it is our spiritual sanctuary. We inherited it from those before us, and we hold it in trust for those yet to come. Accordingly, I believe it is our duty to adopt a Stanmore Charter built upon three commitments:

SAVE STANMORE • SECURE STANMORE • PROTECT STANMORE

SAVE STANMORE

To save Stanmore, I commit that it shall never again be exposed to unnecessary financial jeopardy. Stanmore shall not be used as collateral or security for future borrowing, and any previous resolutions intended to protect it shall be fully implemented. Members shall never again be asked to vote on major decisions without the relevant information necessary to make informed choices. Transparency shall replace uncertainty.

SECURE STANMORE

To secure Stanmore, independent legal advice shall be obtained to explore measures designed to strengthen its long-term security. These may include the legal separation of Stanmore from unrelated assets, ring-fencing arrangements, separate charitable trust structures, and robust financial planning to ensure it remains sustainable and resilient. Stanmore should stand securely in its own right.

PROTECT STANMORE

To protect Stanmore, we must acknowledge that good governance outlasts personalities. I shall seek independent advice on measures to ensure future administrations cannot easily place Stanmore at material risk. This includes constitutional safeguards requiring enhanced member approval for significant decisions, restrictive covenants, and independent oversight of major transactions. Good governance does not imply mistrust; it reflects wisdom.

HAREFIELD: FACTS BEFORE DECISIONS

The Harefield project has become one of the most significant and challenging issues faced by our Jamaat in recent times. Members hold differing views. Some believe the original vision should continue, while others believe the project should be reconsidered. Many simply want answers. I believe the community deserves something better than division. I believe members deserve the truth.

We should neither abandon Harefield blindly nor proceed blindly. We should proceed based upon independent advice, full disclosure and informed community decision-making. The future of Harefield should not be determined by personalities, factions or predetermined conclusions, nor should members ever again be asked to make decisions without being provided with the information necessary to do so responsibly. Whatever the future of Harefield may be, it must be shaped by transparency, wisdom and community ownership.

For this reason, I make the following commitment:

We are not promising the answer; we are promising the truth.

Our duty is not to defend previous positions or criticise those who came before us. Our duty is to ensure that decisions of this magnitude are made openly, honestly and in the best interests of the Jamaat. We owe it to our past generations, ourselves and those who will inherit this community after us to ensure that decisions are made on the basis of facts rather than fear, and wisdom rather than haste.

THE INDEPENDENT HAREFIELD COMMISSIONER

The events surrounding Harefield have demonstrated the importance of independent scrutiny, transparent governance and informed decision-making. The community deserves better than being presented with predetermined outcomes. Accordingly, within the first thirty days of taking office, I shall seek the appointment of an Independent Harefield Commissioner of recognised integrity, standing and professional competence.

The Commissioner shall be entirely independent of both the current and previous administrations. They shall be given unrestricted access to all relevant documentation, including valuations and appraisal reports, loan agreements, legal advice, development plans, financial information, and correspondence relating to the project. The Commissioner shall report not to individuals, but to the membership through the appropriate governance structures of our Jamaat.

*Transparency strengthens confidence.
Independent scrutiny builds trust.
And truth must never fear examination.*

AUTHORITY TO APPOINT EXPERTS

The Harefield project is complex, and no one individual can possess expertise in every required discipline. For this reason, the Commissioner shall have the authority to appoint independent experts and advisers, including specialists in property development, charity governance, finance, insolvency, planning, and constitutional matters.

Submissions from members of the Jamaat who wish to put forward alternative ideas will be actively invited. No realistic option shall be excluded simply because it challenges previously held assumptions. The purpose of the

review is not to justify a predetermined outcome, but to discover the most responsible way forward.

EVERY OPTION ON THE TABLE

I believe the community deserves confidence that every realistic option has been explored before any final decision is made. The Commissioner shall consider all avenues, including:

- Proceeding with current proposals or scaling down the development.
- Phased implementation or alternative uses of the site.
- Refinancing options or partnership arrangements.
- Partial or full disposal of the asset.

This process is not intended to revisit the past for the sake of criticism, but to ensure that future decisions are based upon facts, evidence and informed judgement.

A COMMUNITY DECISION WITHIN 90 DAYS

Within ninety days of taking office, the Independent Harefield Commissioner shall complete the review and prepare a detailed report setting out the advantages, disadvantages, risks, and opportunities of each option. This report shall be circulated to members in sufficient time to allow proper consideration before a properly convened General Meeting is held. At that meeting, members shall debate the findings openly and respectfully. The final decision regarding Harefield shall belong to the membership, not personalities, not factions, and not incomplete information.