

## Voluntary Group that help Keech is honoured as Sewa Pioneers Award Winner 2013

25 March 2013



OM UNITY GROUP - a volunteer group involving 107 members - helped to make Keech a brighter, cleaner and more harmonious environment for its residents and have won an award at the Sewa Pioneers Awards 2013 for their efforts.

A range of voluntary projects were among those honoured with a Sewa Pioneers Award on Wednesday 20 March at the House of Commons in London. Projects included feeding a thousand underprivileged people in Hong Kong; clearing 80 sacks of litter from the Grand Union Canal towpath in Southall and sprucing up a hospice in Luton (Keech). The awards recognised those with the spirit of selflessness who devote time to the service of others through global volunteering initiative, Sewa Day.

In October 2012, 50,000 volunteers in over 20 countries took part in Sewa Day projects that enhanced the environment, relieved poverty or brought joy to those less fortunate in their local community. Sewa Pioneers Awards recognise outstanding social action projects that create a positive impact on local communities and act as a catalyst to inspire further selfless action.

This is the third year that Sewa Day volunteers have helped the hospice bring a little joy to patients, their families and staff. 107 volunteers painted various rooms; stuffed envelopes; packed goodie bags; tidied a children's toy room; cleaned charity collection pots; tidied a path leading through to a nearby woodland area; general gardening chores and painted a 'Santa sleigh'. The project helped Keech by completing many of the time-consuming tasks that make a difference to the day-to-day running of the hospice.

Maggie Doust, Corporate Fundraiser at Keech said; 'Keech hospice Care would like to congratulate Ravi Shah, Banita Mistry and all the dedicated members of the Luton OM group for winning a Sewa Pioneer Award at the House of Commons on Wednesday 20th March. A wonderful and well deserved achievement for their volunteering project with Keech over the past 3 years.'

'The judges felt that the team who worked with us showed that it is possible to volunteer at a specific location on several occasions and still find valuable work to do. The teams varied in size from 8 to over 150 and ages ranged from 6 – 86! Each and every person dedicated their time to 'make a difference' at our hospice on one day by painting, stuffing envelopes, packing goodie bags, tidying rooms, feeding us all, cleaning, tidying the pathways, painting Smiley Sam and much much more.'

'However Sewa and the OM group's help extended far beyond that one day – Sewa is selfless service and encourages people to help support their local community. Keech is at the heart of that local community and the OM group helped our patients their families and staff, by following the 3 Sewa principles: alleviate hardship, improve the environment and bring a little joy. So from Keech a huge heartfelt thank you. You did make a difference and gave us the best and most precious gift of all, your time.'