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The Development and Management of a Transnational Tradition: The Case of Diwali in Leicester

Abstract. Many customs and traditions originating from outside of the United Kingdom are now becoming integrated within the identity of certain areas. This can be observed in Leicester, a city of 330,000 in the East Midlands of England. Leicester is one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the UK, with fifty per cent of the population now ethnic 'minority', with Indians making up the largest element, the highest rate outside of London. The culture and heritage of these groups are observed in different ways, and a notable example is Diwali. Also known as The Festival of Lights, Diwali spiritually signifies the victory of light over darkness, and is traditionally celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, and Jains. The Diwali celebrations in Leicester are some of the biggest outside of India, with up to 40,000 people attending the switch-on of lights and Diwali Day. The festival now occurs over a two-week period, with a firework display, Ferris wheel and live cultural entertainment including dance exhibitions and classes, storytelling workshops and cooking demonstrations. This paper focuses on how the Diwali celebrations in Leicester have developed over time from a small local event in 1983 with a few lights on display, to becoming a celebration of Leicester's multi-cultural heritage, and the revamp of 2015, with over fifty events. These changes are explored through an examination of Leicester City Council's Festival and Events Unit.

Keywords: tradition, transnational, Diwali, Leicester, multi-cultural

Introduction

There are many traditions and customs in the United Kingdom which have a long history, embedded in their local communities for generations. There are also traditions which have originated in a different country and have migrated to the UK as populations move and adapt. From a UNESCO perspective, traditions, also expressed as intangible cultural heritage (ICH), are defined as 'practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills [...] that communities, groups and individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage, and is transmitted

from generation to generation'.¹ How does this focus on traditions and community evolve in a multicultural country such as the United Kingdom? As UNESCO indicates 'many multicultural States do not restrict themselves to the expressions and practices of the most widespread culture but rather undertake, from the start, to consider the intangible cultural heritage of minority groups'.² According to social anthropologist Kate Fox, 'Resident immigrant minority cultures can shape the behaviour, customs, beliefs and values of the countries in which they settle'.³ An example of this can be found in the city of Leicester in the East Midlands of England. It has one of the most multicultural populations in the country, and as such for the past thirty years the heritage, traditions, and festivals of the city have transformed to include a diverse array of diasporic cultural events, such as the Mela, Caribbean Carnival, and Diwali. It is the last of these festivals on which I have focused attention. Through my research into ICH safeguarding in the East Midlands, I arranged a collaboration with Leicester City Council (LCC), whereby I took the lead in a Festivals Review for 2016 to 2020. This entailed working alongside the Festivals and Events team, which is part of the Arts and Museums Services. My position over the following months allowed me to gain privileged access to the busy activities of the LCC Festivals and Events unit, and their management of various traditional events in the city. The Festivals Review process started in the summer of 2015 and culminated with the interviews of thirteen external festival providers, including An Indian Summer, and six interviews covering the festivals directly managed by the Festivals and Events team. The largest of these were the Diwali celebrations which take place in autumn each year. Through the interviews and working alongside the council team, it became apparent that the Diwali celebrations of Leicester stand out as an example of national importance and increasing awareness from the council of the pre-eminence of the festival in promoting tourism and adding value to the council's objectives.

¹ UNESCO, Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17716&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html [accessed 16 June 2016].

² UNESCO, Drawing up Inventories (2016), <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/drawing-up-inventories-00313> [accessed 24 May 2016].

³ Kate Fox, *Watching the English: The Hidden Rules of English Behaviour* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2005), p. 17.

Immigration in Leicester

In the second half of the twentieth century huge societal and population changes occurred in Britain, transforming major cities such as Leicester. The diaspora, which according to Lowenthal 'are notably heritage-hungry', brought a richness of traditions.⁴ According to Vertovec, 'diaspora' is the term often used today to describe practically any population which is considered 'de-territorialised', or 'transnational', that is, whose cultural origins are said to have arisen in a land other than that in which they currently reside.⁵ In addition, Stuart Hall states that 'the Diaspora experience [...] is defined [...] by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of identity which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity'.⁶ Flusty argues that this 'hybridity is neither new nor distinct, but an omnipresent underpinning of cultural formation' as 'all cultures are hybrids of other culture's influences and always have been'.⁷

According to Visram, in 1932 there were 7,128 Indians living in the United Kingdom,⁸ not all of whom would have been Hindu. By the 1950s, there were approximately 70,000 Indians in Britain, again divided between Hindu, Muslim, Sikh.⁹ By 1977, there were approximately 307,000 Hindus living in Britain,¹⁰ many of whom were living in Leicester, having made the city their home in the early 1970s. The Hindu population of Leicester saw its biggest transformation after the expulsion of Asians in Uganda by Idi Amin in 1972. Leicester City Council, afraid that it could not cope with a large influx of Asians, placed advertisements in Ugandan newspapers urging the Asians to stay away from

⁴ David Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 9.

⁵ Steven Vertovec, *The Hindu Diaspora: Comparative Patterns* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 141.

⁶ Stuart Hall, Cultural Identity and Diaspora, in *Identity: Community, Culture, and Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), pp. 222-237 (p.235).

⁷ Steven Flusty, *De-Coca-Colonization: Making the Globe from the Inside Out* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), p. 122.

⁸ Rozina Visram, *Ayahs, Lascars and Princes: The Story of Indians in Britain 1700-1947* (London: Routledge, 2016) p. 190.

⁹ Burghart (ed.), *Hinduism in Great Britain*, p. 7.

¹⁰ Burghart (ed.), *Hinduism*, p. 8.

Leicester.¹¹ However, according to city mayor Sir Peter Soulsby, 'The ad was gloriously counterproductive [...] it brought Leicester to the attention of people who had never thought of coming to the city.' As a result, 5,000 Ugandan Asians moved to Leicester; nearly one in five of the 27,000 who came to Britain.¹² The Ugandan Asians were predominantly Hindus, originally from Gujrat in India. By 1978, it was estimated that approximately 42,000 Asians lived in Leicester, comprising about 15 per cent of the total population. Of these, many were East African Asians (comprising Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania – 19,500, or 46.5 per cent of the Asian population).¹³

In the forty years since,

*Leicester has become the poster city for multicultural Britain, a place where the stunning number and size of the minorities – the 55 mosques, 18 Hindu temples, nine Sikh gurudwaras, two synagogues, two Buddhist centres and one Jain centre – are seen not as a recipe for conflict or a millstone around the city's neck, but a badge of honour.*¹⁴

This multiculturalism has resulted in the 2011 Census showing Leicester with a White British minority (45 per cent). Furthermore, of the 330,000 population, Leicester now has the highest proportion of British Indians (28 per cent), compared with the rest of the East Midlands as a whole, in which Indians represent 3.7 per cent of the population.¹⁵ This high Indian population in Leicester means that the city has the third highest percentage of Hindu people in England and

¹¹ Keith Somerville, 'Ugandan Asians – Successful Refugees', *BBC News*, 8 November 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/2399549.stm> [accessed 23 December 2015].

¹² Peter Popham, 'We're all in this together: How Leicester became a model of multiculturalism (even if that was never the plan...)', *The Independent*, 26 July 2013, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/were-all-in-this-together-how-leicester-became-a-model-of-multiculturalism-even-if-that-was-never-8732691.html> [accessed 4 January 2019].

¹³ Deborah Phillips, 'The Social and Spatial Segregation of Asians in Leicester', in *Social Interaction and Ethnic Segregation*, ed. Peter Jackson (London: Academic Press, 1981), pp. 101–121 (p. 104).

¹⁴ Popham, 'We're all in this together'.

¹⁵ Palash Ghosh, 'The Golden Mile: Could Leicester, The Most Ethnically Diverse Place in Britain, Become UK's First Asian-Majority City?' *International Business Times*, 19 February 2014, <https://www.ibtimes.com/golden-mile-could-leicester-most-ethnically-diverse-place-britain-become-uks-first-asian-majority> [accessed 13 November 2015].

Wales (15 per cent). Peter Winstone talks of phases of ethnic minority involvement in Leicester, from a phase of conflict in the 1970s, to a constructive phase in the 1980s, to one of maturity and cultural aspiration at the time he was writing in the mid-1990s: 'By this we mean that second and third generations of [...] people born and growing up in Leicester want to celebrate their "dual heritage" as British people of Asian [...] descent'.¹⁶

However, Seán McLoughlin provides a detailed critique which contextualizes the complicated institutional rhetoric concerning Leicester as a successful multicultural and multi-Asian city.¹⁷ It is important to note that the lived experiences of Asians immigrating to Leicester and those growing up there, may be in direct contrast to the notion of Leicester as a 'poster city for multicultural Britain'.

What is Diwali?

Diwali is an important festival, celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains. In the sacred text Ramayana, Diwali marks the return of Rama to his kingdom after defeating Ravana, the demon king who ruled Sri Lanka and kidnapped Rama's wife, Sita.¹⁸ It also celebrates Krishna's victory over Narakasura, the demon of ignorance. Diwali is called the Festival of Lights as people light their houses to celebrate the victory of good over evil (light over darkness). The word itself is a short form of the word Deepawali, meaning 'cluster of lamps'. Similar to Easter, the date of Diwali changes each year. This is because it is determined by both the position of the moon and the Hindu lunisolar calendar and varies in the Gregorian Calendar between 17 October and 15 November every year.¹⁹

¹⁶ Peter Winstone, 'Managing a Multi-Ethnic and Multi-Cultural City in Europe: Leicester', *International Social Science Journal*, 48 (March 1996) 33–41 (p. 39).

¹⁷ Seán McLoughlin, 'Discrepant representations of multi-Asian Leicester: institutional discourse and everyday life in the "model" multicultural city', *Writing the City in British Asian Diasporas*, S. McLoughlin, W. Gould, A. J. Kabir, and E. Tomalin, E., eds (London and New York: Routledge). pp. 89–113.

¹⁸ Diwali: Celebrating the Triumph of Goodness, https://www.hinduismtoday.com/pdf_downloads/pagers/Hindu-Festival_Diwali_broadsheet-color.pdf [accessed 13 December 2015].

¹⁹ Deepavali 2020, <http://www.deepavali.net/calendar.php> [accessed 3 June 2020].

Diwali in Leicester

Described by the *Telegraph* as ‘an Indian adventure on British soil’,²⁰ the tradition of celebrating Diwali in a public sphere in Leicester started in 1982 with a stage outside the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre and a small fireworks display. In 1995, the stage was moved to the Belgrave flyover site and managed by LCC Highways Contracts Team as the road closure was considered to be the most important management element of the event for the council. This position changed in 2002 when the management of Diwali was taken over by Leicester City Council’s Festival and Events Unit. The celebrations have consisted of a Diwali light switch on event and a Diwali Day event, involving fireworks display on Cossington Recreation Ground. In 2006, LCC spent nearly £100,000 on new decorations, including 6,000 light bulbs. Leicester City Council directly delivers the Diwali celebrations with a budget of £88,000. This is aided by the Diwali Working Party, which includes representatives from Leicester Hindu Festival Council, an umbrella body for all Hindu organisations in Leicester. For both of these events the Council’s Festivals and Events team have provided payment to the Leicester Hindu Festival Council to cover the costs of organising a programme of performances on the main stage.

Leicester City Council Festivals and Events Unit

The Diwali Switch On celebrations occurred on 1 November 2015, with the switch on of 6,500 lights, the twenty-fourth year of the event between Belgrave Road and Cossington Street Recreation Ground. Attendance in 2015 was 35,000 for the Switch On, on 1 November, and 41,000 for Diwali Day. Such a large event takes many months of preparation and careful planning, and this is the responsibility of the Festivals and Events Unit, within the Arts and Museums Service of Leicester City Council. The festivals team start work on Diwali early in the year, though in 2015 the commemorations for the reburial of Richard III meant that the start of Diwali preparations was delayed. In reality,

²⁰ ‘What is Diwali and what are the best ways to celebrate the 2015 festival in the UK tonight?’ *Telegraph*, 10 November 2015, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/festivals-and-events/Diwali-festival-of-lights-what-is-it-and-when-does-it-take-place> [accessed 13 November 2015].

meetings occur immediately after the previous Diwali to discuss the outcomes and to produce action plans for the following year. In 2015 the traditional Diwali celebrations saw a shift towards a bigger show-piece, over two weeks. Leicester City Council have been aware of the need to improve the offering and make changes after years of stagnation. As Sarah Levitt, Head of Arts and Museums Service at LCC from 2006 to 2018, stated:

*Diwali at that time was very popular but very bound by its own traditions in Leicester and the way in which it was delivered. We all knew it needed to be relaxed and changed and developed, so we commissioned a piece of research into what we should do with Diwali, which pointed us in a direction where we came up with a plan for how we might change it. And we began it this year and incremental [...] but by golly it's been difficult.*²¹

The piece of work commissioned by the council to research Diwali was produced by Johal Strategic Services and the New Art Exchange, a Nottingham based arts space, the largest gallery in the UK dedicated to culturally diverse contemporary visual arts.²² They produced 'Switched On', a confidential discussion paper for the council. An audience survey was also carried out in late 2014 in the Belgrave area by the Arts and Museums Service, for which 292 completed questionnaires were returned. The results from these reports led to a Culture and Neighbourhoods Services Briefing report entitled 'Changes to the Leicester Diwali Celebrations', authored by Simon Brown, who worked as the Cultural Programme Coordinator at Leicester City Council. In early 2014, Arts Council England awarded the council £200,000 for the Sustaining the Momentum programme, in recognition of its work on the City of Culture bid. The UK City of Culture was designed to build on the success of Liverpool's year as of European Capital of Culture in 2008, which had significant social and economic benefits for the area, and is given to a city in the United Kingdom for one year. Leicester was one of four shortlisted cities which bid for the 2017 title, but it lost out to Hull. The Sustaining the Momentum funding was established in order to ensure the hard work of putting together the bid would not

²¹ Sarah Levitt, personal communication, 19 February 2016.

²² New Art Exchange, <http://www.nae.org.uk/page/who-are-we/3> [accessed 12 May 2020].

go to waste. A portion of this money was put towards a Culture Fund Project, which was a programme to enhance cultural activity across the key events in 2015. This culminated in a £20,000 grant across four projects and match funding from Arts Council England.

Four projects were chosen: Digital Sparklers; Live Rangoli Art; Constellation: Installation and Drop-In Printmaking Workshops; and Ram Lila. The Digital Sparklers occurred at the Diwali Switch On. Run by Inspirate, it was a large-scale digital art interactive installation, held in tandem with the firework display on Cossington Park. Using an object that shines light, such as a torch, phone, or glow stick, young people and families had the opportunity to draw or write a special Diwali message on a 15-foot giant screen. The second project was the Live Rangoli Art, in which international rangoli artist, Janak Chauhan demonstrated his rangoli skills by creating intricate patterns made from coloured sand on the floor. On Diwali Day, ten days after the switch on event, another project, Ram Lila, saw dancers perform on Belgrave Road. The fourth project occurred before the start of the Diwali celebrations. Constellation designed and led by artist printmaker Serena Smith, which celebrated Diwali's themes of light, friendship and festivity. She had led Light Up, a series of workshops teaching printmaking to young people at Moat Community College, Sparkenhoe Primary School, Highfields Library and St. Denys Church. The workshop participants made colourful lanterns and produced objects used by the artist to form the artwork Constellation. The final piece was installed in Leicester Print Workshop's new building in Leicester's Cultural Quarter.²³

On 1 December 2015, the final part of the Festivals Review process occurred, when Maggie Shutt, Festivals and Events Manager at LCC, was interviewed for the Diwali section of the review mentioned above. The same questions were asked about Diwali as were presented to the organisers of the other festivals and events in the review process. The first section of questions referred to funding, both from the council and in-kind support. As previously stated, the City Council has an allocated budget of £88,000 and income generated from the Wheel of Light. When questioned about in-kind support, Maggie Shutt replied that LCC receives in kind support from a variety of sources, such as

²³ Light Up: A Project to Celebrate Friendship, Festivity and Light, http://www.leicesterprintworkshop.com/exhibitions-and-projects/projects/light_up/ [accessed 13 May 2020].

BBC Radio Leicester, and the Leicester Hindu Festival Council (which produces the stage programme). Furthermore, Kumar and Pravin Mistry from the Leicester Belgrave Mela managed and coordinated two stages on the weekend in between Switch-On and Diwali Day. Furthermore, Belgrave Business Association promote and advertise the event to persuade people to attend. In the last three years there is also other funding, such as sponsorship, Western Union providing £10,000, income from advertising in the Diwali Guide (the income returns to the Council, though a different department to Festivals and Events), and free advertising in national brochures.

Another question posed to Leicester City Council related to the economic benefits of the festival to Leicester citizens. In reply, the benefits to businesses were discussed, especially on the Golden Mile. Although the actual income generated has not been officially calculated, it is likely to be a huge amount and of great importance to businesses in the area. There is also a financial knock on effect to the Greater Belgrave area, and the city centre, as people go to the city centre for shopping, eating and leisure as part of the overall experience. The Diwali Guide signposts visitors and locals to other linked activities or shopping, and there are the benefits of using the park and ride, and extra business for hotels, travel companies, restaurants, and cafes throughout Leicester.

As important as the economic benefits are, the social benefits to Leicester citizens are equally important. Maggie Shutt was keen to emphasise that the Leicester Diwali lights are renowned throughout the United Kingdom. This is a major part of the celebration and adds to the pride and prestige for Leicester and its citizens. It is also a family event, it is free for all, open and accessible, and the change to the programme has given more choice and options to participate, such as work done in schools (Rangoli, Diwali tool kits), and music and dance workshops. Diwali in Leicester meets several of the Council's aims and objectives, such as 'building a strong future' and 'teaching of the heritage of Leicester', which has been achieved through workshops in neighbourhood centres and schools and through youth programming. There is an understanding of young people's desire to enjoy Diwali in a different way which the changes in 2015 reflected.

Leicester City Council considers the efficiency and effectiveness of the festivals it delivers as very important, and this question is asked to all the organisers. For the LCC, Diwali is now attracting a new audi-

ence – lots of students, tourists and people from outside of Leicester who are staying with family members. The Diwali Lights Switch-On was recognised at the Asian Media Awards 2015 in the Best Live Event category.²⁴ This shows that Diwali is being successfully and effectively managed and the award is added prestige for Leicester City Council, and the city as a whole. Maggie Shutt emphasised that the LCC is not resting on its laurels, but is looking to expand the Diwali offer and increase its profile both nationally and internationally. It has attempted this through consultations. A revision has been the change from the Diwali Working Party to a Diwali Advisory Panel. This is chaired by Councillor Singh Clair but brings in a wider input from LCC agencies and external agencies, commercial activity, wider programming and marketing. An extended Diwali Guide brings in local businesses and advertises shops on the Golden Mile. This has also allowed for wider community business and organisations to be involved in the celebrations. The Belgrave flyover, which in the past has acted as a barrier between the city centre and Belgrave Road has been removed, and a roundabout re-landscaped. Belgrave now has better connectivity with the city centre, and it allowed in 2015 an extension of the lighting towards the city centre and offered the possibility of the successful Big Wheel for the first time.

A Diwali Leicester Plan 2015–2018 looked at marketing, programming and funding. Marketing of Leicester Diwali celebrations appears to be of paramount importance for LCC. The Diwali Plan makes clear that additional marketing opportunities are needed for raising the profile of Diwali. This includes the development of the celebrations into the city centre to expand and connect it to Belgrave Road, and also to develop city centre packages with the county. Linked to this is the desire to create a Diwali Leicester ‘brand’ and logo. The Diwali Action Plan has ambitions to extend the programming, with an exploration to possibly add to the festival lights beyond the Belgrave roundabout into the city centre. It also seeks to develop the stage programme and have a wider contribution of events over the two week programme. Finally, the development of funding opportunities saw the Festivals unit hoping to develop links with Leicester’s Re-imagine India projects with

²⁴ Asian Culture Vulture, ‘Asian Media Awards 2015: Triumph for “India’s Daughter”’, 31 October 2015, <http://asianculturevulture.com/portfolios/asian-media-awards-2015-triumph-for-indias-daughter/> [accessed 26 May 2020].

the Curve and Attenborough Arts, who had both received funding from Arts Council England.

The changes over the past few years are seen as a necessary step by the LCC to avoid complacency with the Diwali offerings from the council, but to stimulate new ideas, especially to attract younger generations and tourists to the area. However, this has occurred with occasional opposition, and according to one LCC employee, the Leicester Hindu Festival Council has been resistant to change. Nevertheless, there are other organisations linked with the Hindu community in Leicester which are keen to explore innovations. One such entity is Inspirate with their arts and culture festival, An Indian Summer.

An Indian Summer

Although the city council plays the biggest role in managing Diwali in Leicester, there are other groups and individuals who are involved in implementation, one of which is a young company called Inspirate. It was set up by Jiten Anand and Sean Carroll in 2011 to inspire, educate and challenge people through 'creativity'. This happens through events, such as An Indian Summer (AIS), and other projects, seminars, talks or workshops. According to Inspirate, An Indian Summer is a South Asian culture and arts festival, celebrating Indian culture designed to educate about culture and arts, and create a platform for people of all ages (Inspirate 2015).

I interviewed Jiten Anand and Sean Carroll at their base at Phoenix in Leicester's Cultural Quarter in December 2015, having already met them during the LCC Festivals Review process for An Indian Summer at the City Hall. During the review meeting and subsequent interview, it was apparent that the company has a good working relationship with Leicester City Council, and the individuals who work in the Festivals and Events Unit. This good working relationship has seen Inspirate play a larger role in the Diwali celebrations in Leicester, most noticeably with the Digital Sparklers event. During the interview with Jiten and Sean it became evident that they would like to see An Indian Summer become an integral part of the Diwali celebrations of Leicester for the foreseeable future. They saw that 'change is necessary, and it needs to be innovative', but also that it needs to be 'as organic as possible', which they felt had been the case with the changes in 2015.²⁵ The ques-

²⁵ Jiten Anand, personal communication, 7 December 2015.

tion arose whether the changes to the Diwali traditional event were too extreme, but the response was a perception that the 'show wasn't stolen', and that the celebrations are 'best done in collaboration'. Anand and Carroll were honest enough to admit that not all the events put on by Inspirate were as successful as others, and this self-awareness is key to their success as it helps to inspire fresh ideas and ambitions, and to be 'focusing on what's hot — and what's hot is Diwali'.²⁶ The desire to have an impact in the city has meant that Inspirate have been willing to capitalise on resources and partners. They understand the need to work with other organisations including artists, the LCC (both the Festivals Unit and the politicians with their agendas), and the Leicester Hindu Festival Council. For Anand and Carroll, it is about inspiring the next generation and getting them excited at a local level.

Conclusion

Ghosh references an article in the *Deccan Herald* in 2006 that states, 'the world has actually become a global village but what's fascinating about Indians is that wherever they go they take with them a baggage of beliefs and culture that refuses to be set aside.'²⁷ In Leicester, this has manifested itself in one of the largest celebrations of Diwali outside of India. City mayor, Sir Peter Soulsby, notes that, 'The spirit of Diwali echoes that of Leicester as a whole. Our culturally diverse city brings people together in a spirit of friendship, just as Diwali does.' Other cities in the UK are culturally diverse, so why has Leicester been successful in celebrating an adopted tradition? Firstly, it is the history of immigration in Leicester, different from so many other ethnically diverse cities in the UK, which appears to explain why 'the year in Leicester is punctuated with events that are celebrated by one community but enjoyed by all'.²⁸ Kate Fox suggests that any attempt to define Englishness, by definition, includes ethnic minorities. She observes, 'the extent to which immigrant populations adapt to, adopt and in turn influence the culture and customs of their host country, particularly over several generations, is a complex issue.'²⁹ Complex it may be, but in

²⁶ Jiten Anand, personal communication, 7 December 2015.

²⁷ Ghosh, Palash, 'The Golden Mile'.

²⁸ Winstone, 'Managing a Multi-Ethnic and Multi-Cultural City', p. 39.

²⁹ Fox, p. 16.

Leicester, the Hindu population has successfully integrated the tradition of Diwali into the wider culture of the city, and as Fox rightly suggests, this has occurred over several generations. The original migrant community brought their traditions with them, and through nostalgia and pride recreated the celebrations for themselves, their families and their community. The younger Hindu population, born and raised in Leicester, have looked to modernise the celebrations, with Inspirate an example of a young multicultural team showing entrepreneurial and business zeal, good at attaining funding and delivering original artistic content.

Lastly, although the specifics of immigration in Leicester and the changing nature of generational aspirations are important, the Diwali celebrations could not be as successful without the aligned aims and objectives of Leicester City Council. It is seen as an opportunity, motivated by financial, business and tourism gain, but also additional recognition for the city from the rest of the UK and internationally. It is seen as a unique selling point, and increasingly part of the identity of the city. Sarah Levitt asserts that,

*We must enable the whole city to enjoy it, of whatever background, that in itself is going to be challenging [...] the challenge of getting everybody to value each other's heritage and then to share it, and to share the pleasure in it, and feel that all of those heritages become a part of one heritage. That is the core of what we do. It's enabling people's identity and enabling people to feel proud of their identity, like it or not, they are part of a city of many different things.*³⁰

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