

# Young Zoroastrians Retreat in the Forest of Dean



The eight young Mobeds who performed the Jashan

A very successful weekend for 60 young UK Zoroastrians was held at the ASHA Centre, founded by Zerbanoo Gifford, in the lush and verdant Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire, the county where King Charles lives.

It was the first of hopefully many more such future collaborations between the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (ZTFE) and the World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO). Both organisations wished to ensure that the young were able to experience time together, enjoy the beautiful ASHA gardens, forest walks and bathing in St Anthony's well. In this, their hopes and wishes were amply fulfilled.

Participants commented on their ASHA experience as: "Best ever, amazing

food", "Outstanding venue and accommodation", "An incredible place of calm and nature".

Also, the young Zoroastrians were able to discuss their issues and concerns in a safe and responsive environment where everyone would be heard and respected.

The games and listening exercises built trust and helped bring about a meaningful engagement with people who previously they only had surface conversations with. It was incredible fun to be with other young Zoroastrians and enjoy a bonfire and dancing led by Er. Jimmy Madon of the WZO Centre in London.

Many young Zoroastrians who attended wished it had been longer than a weekend as they were making lifelong friends. Many loved the early

morning yoga with Nayomi Davar and also thanked Mark Gifford and Adrian Locher for being such incredibly brilliant facilitators.

But for most the outstanding highlight was when, for the first time ever, eight young priests prayed together in the ASHA auditorium. It was magical! Praying together made the participants feel connected to a dynamic and shared future.

On the feedback forms many hoped that the committees of ZTFE and WZO will continue to invest in the welfare and progress of the young. As one participant wrote in the feedback form: "There is divinity present at the ASHA Centre that you rarely get a chance to witness in day-to-day life otherwise. It is clear that God loves ASHA!"



The group of young Zoroastrians at the retreat at Asha Centre