



# THE SKY PROJECT NEWSLETTER 2021

*Tackling the issue of Forced Marriage and 'Honour' Based Abuse.*

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## **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all The Sky Project Team!**



Thank you to the entire Sky Project Team, Trustees and all their supporters. Particular thanks to:

Sabeena Pirooz (Director)

Farook Sarfraz (Trustee and Founder)

Zara Liedl (Volunteer and Fundraising Co-ordinator)

Charlotte Gage (Trainer) and

Sagufta Kasour (Trustee)

What another exciting year for us! Again, a huge credit to all the above people for their commitment and effort in fighting this fight to reduce forced marriage and 'honour' based abuse. This year, it has been incredibly tough to continue to work voluntarily around our existing jobs and family but our passion prevails.

We would like to thank all our supporters, individual donors and funders who have ensured that we can continue this important work.

Covid and lockdown measures are once again upon us which is likely to increase calls/reporting from Forced Marriage and 'Honour' Based abuse victims. We **must** remain vigilant and more aware of those around us. Please ask questions; don't forget those who may be struggling and reach out/connect as you may save a life.

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# 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

## 1. Sky Project Conference



The Sky Project organised an absolutely fantastic conference in November celebrating our ten year anniversary. We received such wonderful feedback from those who attended. A huge thank you to our brilliant speakers, Nazir Afzal, Caroline Goode, Gabriella Gillespie, Maz Idriss and Larisa Hunt from Avon and Somerset police. Also, a huge thank you to all those who attended to support us.

## 2. Training



We have continued our training sessions throughout the year to a range of groups. This year, we have delivered training to approximately 400 people, that's 400 extra people who now have the basic knowledge of how to help Forced Marriage and 'Honour' Based Abuse victims. With the help of Larisa Hunt, we now have bespoke training for police which we successfully rolled out this year. The feedback has been incredibly positive and we will continue to provide this onto the following year.

### 3. Awards



It was another great year for awards when The Sky Project were finalists as 'Charity of the Year' at the South West Business & Community awards. It wasn't a win but we are so proud of getting to the final stages.



### 4. Radio



The Sky Project were honored to be invited to speak with Laura Rawlings on BBC radio Bristol. Sabeena Pirooz and Zara Liedl, our volunteer spoke about the work of the Sky Project over a 50 minute session which gave an insight into what work we do, with some fantastic tunes to go with it!

### 5. International Women's Day



On International Women's Day The Sky Project wore purple and made a stand for women and girls – THEIR BASIC HUMAN RIGHT TO MARRY ON THEIR OWN TERMS. Due to the pandemic, it was estimated that there could be an additional 13 million child marriages between 2020-2030. A shocking statistic.

## 6. National Day of Remembrance for victims of 'Honour' Based Abuse

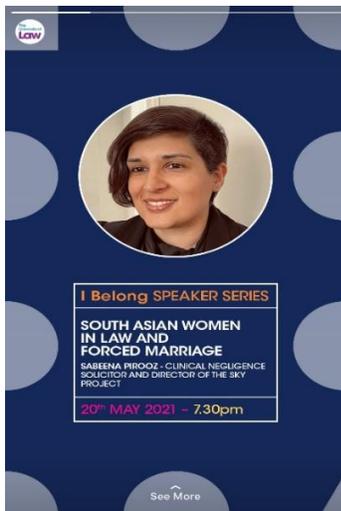


This year, we chose to highlight some important points to remember leading up to the National Day of Remembrance:

1. 'Honour' Based Abuse and Forced Marriage happens to men as well as women.
2. That it is not just an Asian issue and to say so denies a voice to others to seek help.
3. We remember the LGBT community who have been victims of Forced Marriage and 'Honour' Based Abuse.

Finally, we honoured those victims in the right way.

## 7. Invitations



Sabeena Pirooz was invited by Katie Reid, Tutor from University of Law, Bristol, to talk to her students about her route into law as well as an insight into Forced Marriage.

## 8. Collaboration



We joined Nextlink in #16 days of activism, fighting to raise awareness of gender based abuse and lighting a candle in honour of those who have lost their lives.

## 9. Forced Marriage Working Group



We continue to be grateful to all those who have attended the Forced Marriage Working Group this year. As we have always said, multi-agency working and collaboration is key to reduce the number of forced marriages and 'honour' based abuse cases in the South West. Although, our time is limited, those who have collaborated have really made an impact into putting this at the forefront of their professions and 'keeping that conversation going'.

## 10. Thank you – behind the scenes



This is Gavin Wilshen. Gavin is a Visual Designer and revamped our website a couple of years ago and has continued to upload content onto our website without charging us a penny. We are truly grateful Gavin, thank you!

## 11. Other News



A huge congratulations to our very own Farook Sarfraz who went on NHS Strictly. He did an amazing job and we are so proud!

Thank you to everyone involved, particularly those mentioned. Our project relies on donations, so we would welcome any donation to continue our work. We value every sum given. Thank you and Happy New Year!

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

[www.skyproject.org.uk](http://www.skyproject.org.uk)

