

# PRITHIPURA COMMUNITIES



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## WHAT WE DO

Building lives and abilities for 60 years, Prithipura Communities works from 4 locations in Sri Lanka to provide care, rehabilitation, education and work opportunities to 240 disabled children and adults with little or no family support.

## HOW TO DONATE

### Donations in Sri Lankan Rupees:

Hatton National Bank – City Office

Account number: 002010012779 SWIFT Code: HBLILKLX

Beneficiary: Prithipura Infants Home

### Online via Global Giving:

<https://goto.gg/46437>

Find out more: <https://www.prithipura.org/donate>

## THANK YOU!

From small beginnings (see page 2), **Prithipura Communities has always championed the rights of disabled people** and we continue to do this despite the challenges faced by the cost-of-living crisis in recent times. Since our last newsletter, we've faced periods of hardship – frequent power cuts, increasing costs of basic food items as well as shortages. **It's thanks to you however, our friends and supporters, that we have not only survived but thrived.**

Sustainable funding means the team at Prithipura can get on with what we do best – empowering and enabling those who live with us. A recent highlight has been a collaboration with some **Sri Lankan artists at Cotagala School** which has sparked creativity among all the children and young people who took part.

Since the pandemic, there has also been a renewed focus on increasing our **agricultural production**. Not only has this increased our sustainability and ensured fresh fruit and vegetables for everyone all the time, it has also meant that some of the disabled adults who live with us have been able to develop vocational skills and earn a living from their work.

Importantly however, it is the **daily care and support** that is often most crucial. The day-to-day activities of our carers and teachers often go unnoticed and cannot be under-estimated. Their love, kindness and skills in caring and nurturing gives those they support the stability they need, as well as important life skills for children to thrive and adults to find purpose.

**Thank you to all of you – your support allows us not only to keep innovating but also ensures that the well-being of the people who live with us is always at the forefront.**

Prithipura Communities - Prithipura Infants Home, Asokapura & Anandapura Farms and Cotagala School



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# 60 YEARS AGO

"On the evening of the 4th January 1964 I entered the Lady Ridgeway Hospital to take charge of the first residents of the Prithipura Infant Home. I passed a strange night for I had entered into a strange world. Silence and feed-time and wash-time, the night passed swiftly.

The next day's post brought a letter addressed to me, it contained Rs 200 sent anonymously. I had taken on two children with only Rs 1000 in the bank, I hardly need to tell you how much that Rs 200 helped. It arrived monthly for the first three years without fail, it bought us milk, food and paid for helpers. The helpers looked after the children - I did the washing."

**'Memories' by Dr Bryan de Kretser, Founder of Prithipura Communities**



## IMPROVING FACILITIES

We continue to develop and improve facilities at all locations. Take a look at some of our recent projects.

Thanks to **Stichting Prithipura, Prithi UK and Euroclear** who funded this work.

From this...

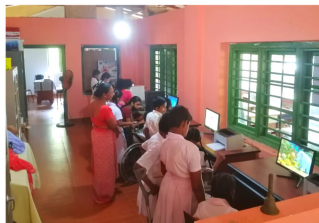
To this!



Kitchen at Neranjana - Asokapura Farm



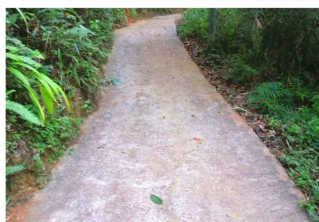
IT at Cotagala School



Ceiling - residence at Cotagala School



Road - Cotagala to Asokapura Farm



## AT ANANDAPURA FARM

**3** pigs are fed, cleaned and watered every day.

**12** acres of land are checked and tended.

**13** jackfruit trees grow producing over **200** jackfruit a year.

**16** cows are cleaned, taken out to pasture and brought back in every day.



**30** different types of fruit, vegetables and spices are grown.

**21** hot meals are cooked and served every week to

**40** people who live on the farm.

**540** coconut trees grow producing around 5,000 to 7,500 coconuts every year.

**600** cinnamon trees have been planted.



# INNOVATION

Did you know that Anandapura Farm, Asokapura Farm and Cotagala School grow more than 60 types of fruit, vegetables, plants, herbs and spices? From bananas to chilli to turmeric to rice, our growing has increased both in quantity and diversity.

Farming at Prithipura has always been 'regenerative' with farming technique evolving over time. The goal is to work with nature to grow food and not deprive the land of essential nutrients. For example, on the land at Asokapura and Cotagala, the team rotate crops as well as using the technique of inter-cropping - cultivating two or more crops in a field simultaneously. This has a beneficial effect on soil fertility and nutrient cycling. A portion of the land, on the perimeter of the site, is also allowed to grow wild in order to ensure that natural habitats are protected, and that local wildlife is not threatened.

These are one of several techniques that the team have developed over many years, learning from specialist agriculturalists and also from what has worked in previous years.

Thanks to several funders, we have been able to further develop our agricultural activities in the last year or two. This includes new plantations for cinnamon and cashew as well as development of our goat paddock and increased coffee production.



Look what we've grown! 

# CREATIVITY

Artists **Sandeepa Vithanage** and **Charith Wijesundara** spent time at Cotagala School recently helping students find their creative voice through a range of art projects. Amongst other activities, those who took part designed t-shirts, worked together to paint large canvas boards as well as learnt about digital art. The team at Cotagala would like to further develop creative activities such as these and also find a way to showcase the students' talents.



## COTAGALA SCHOOL IS NOW ON INSTAGRAM

Cotagala School is adapting its curriculum and developing its vocational training programme. You can keep up to date with this by following their dedicated Instagram account - [https://www.instagram.com/cotagala\\_special\\_school\\_82/](https://www.instagram.com/cotagala_special_school_82/)

# PEOPLE OF PRITHIPURA

**Sunil is now 72 and Ajith is 74. They are two of the oldest residents of Prithipura Communities.**

Sunil and Ajith are brothers. They came to Anandapura Farm in 1989 as adults, after the death of their parents. Their mother, worked as a teacher and then a headteacher. She taught English. Ajith and Sunil are therefore fluent in English as well as Sinhala.

Ajith likes to know the names of the various presidents and prime ministers of the World. Whereas Sunil likes to learn the names of all the countries, capital cities and, at one point, he learned the names of all the surrounding seas also.

Both Sunil and Ajit are less mobile than they used to be but with the help of walking aids or a wheelchair for longer distances, they manage to get out and about. They love chatting to others and can often be found laughing and joking.



**Yehansa is 4 years old and came to the Infants Home when she was just a few months old.**

She thrived at first, was smiley and happy and developing well. However, in early 2021, those who cared for her started to notice her health deteriorate. After being taken to hospital, she was diagnosed with leukaemia.

She spent much of 2021 at Maharagama Cancer Hospital supported by her carers at Prithipura who took it in turns to look after her there. Post discharge she continued to be monitored and remains in remission. She goes for check-ups every 3-6 months and doctors report she is doing well.

Back at home, Yehansa continues to thrive, she loves her daily 'school' sessions where she enjoys scribbling and colouring and playing with her friends.



**“I am so happy to think of the achievements of those that have been supported by us. Children who came to us, when everyone else had lost hope, now live independent and inspiring lives.”**

**Anula, head of care (all locations) and manager at Asokapura Farm**

“With support from far and wide, we have always encouraged those who live with us to be more than society expected them to be.

I would never have been able to imagine that the babies and children I cared for, all those years ago, now make such a contribution to Prithipura; for their work on the farm but also the leadership roles they have taken on and how they support others to do their best.”



**“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”**

Barack Obama

