



AN INVITATION TO FOUNDING BENEFACTORS

A Permanent Home for Watford's Hindu Community

Securing the Watford Velmurugan Temple site at 453 St Albans Road, and building a lasting eco temple and community hub for Watford and Hertfordshire.

£2.0m

Phase 1: secure the site

22 Oct 2026

Council bid deadline

£5.0m

Total project, Phases 1 and 2



Watford's first consecrated Hindu temple



“The first temple consecrated in Watford, following Shaivite traditions of pujas, agamas and worship.”



Deities

Shiva, Parvati (Amman), Vel Murugan, Devasena, Valli, Ganapati, Venkatesh Balaji, Sridevi, Padmavati, Durga Mata, Ayyappa Swami, Hanuman Balaji, Kaal Bhairava, Navagrahas and Sai Baba



Age and journey

16+ years serving Watford community.

Started from Exchange Road, then shifted to Woodside (2019 to 2022), now at 453 St Albans Road from 2022.



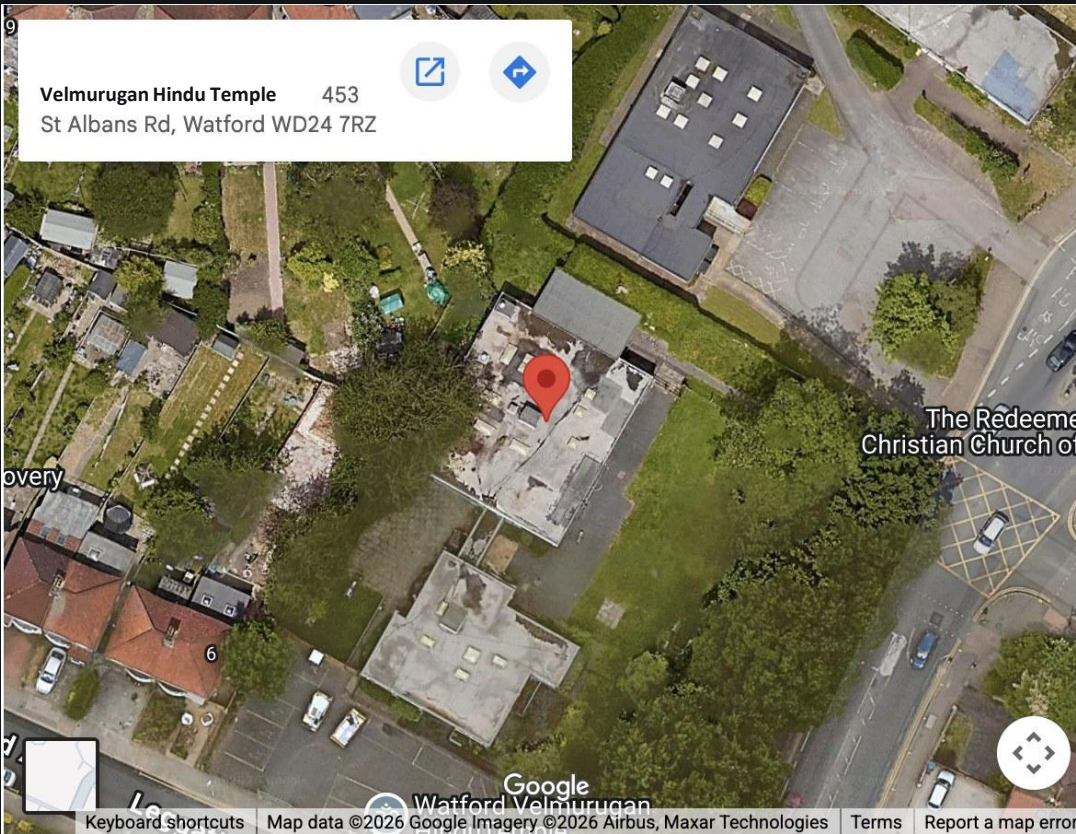
Community Services

Daily puja and prayer, major festivals, language classes, music & dance classes,

Volunteers supporting vulnerable families, senior citizens and people in need

Sources: watfordvelmurugan.org; Charity Commission register (no. 1174203); HertsLive (2021); temple appeal deck and donor brochure 2026 (16+ years, deities, services).

The temple's home is being sold by open bid



Aerial view of the site. Map data and imagery ©2026 Google, Airbus, Maxar Technologies.

SITE	453 St Albans Road, WD24 7RZ
LAND	0.70 acre; existing 5,450 sq ft building with 15 parking bays
OWNER	Hertfordshire County Council
SALE	Open competitive bid, closing 22 October 2026
TENURE	<i>Lease length and terms: to be supplied</i>

THE CHALLENGE
Moved by councils in 2019 and again in 2022, the community faces a third displacement in seven years unless it wins this bid.

Sources: temple donor brochure 2026 (site, land, building, bid date); HertsLive (2021) on the Exchange Road and Owls Bowls Club moves.

Who decides, and the lesson from Peterborough

Name	Role	Why it matters
Cllr Steve Jarvis	Leader, Hertfordshire County Council	Leads the council that owns and is selling the site
Cllr Chris Lucas	Executive Member, Resources and Performance	Portfolio likely to cover property disposals (to verify)
Local county councillor	North Watford (Cllr Richard Short) or Woodside Stanborough (Cllr Tim Williams)	Local voice in the decision; confirm which division covers the site
Peter Taylor	Elected Mayor of Watford	Borough leadership; the 2021 petition was addressed to him
Matt Turmaine MP	Member of Parliament for Watford	Can write to the County Council in support

Council roles as appointed in May 2025; verify before any outreach.



PETERBOROUGH, 2025 TO 2026

A 40-year-old temple lost an open bid for its council-owned site to a bidder who pledged to beat any offer by up to 5%. The sale is frozen pending a High Court ruling.

The lesson: bid with certain funds, and make the social-value case on the record.

Sources: [hertford.org.uk](https://www.hertford.org.uk) (25 May 2025) cabinet list; Wikipedia, 2025 Hertfordshire County Council election; ITV Anglia (11 Feb 2026), PA, East Anglia Bylines on Bharat Hindu Samaj v Peterborough City Council.

A fast-growing community at the heart of Watford

8.2%

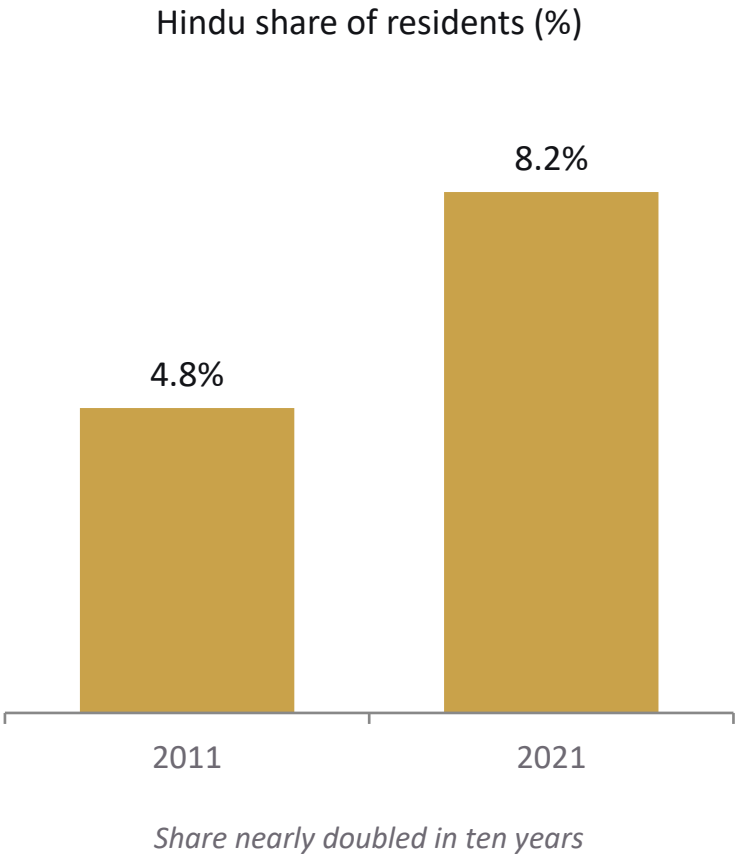
of Watford residents are Hindu (Census 2021)

≈8,400

Hindu residents, of about 102,200 people

1 in 4

residents are of Asian heritage (24.5%)



CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL LIFE

Nearly 20,300 Hindus depend on the temple across Watford and the surrounding area (temple figure)

13,000+ signatures on the 2021 petition to keep the temple

Open to all festivals, prasadam meals, wellbeing and youth programmes

TO BE SUPPLIED

Economic and civic contribution
e.g. local businesses, NHS and volunteer roles

Sources: ONS, How life has changed in Watford: Census 2021; HertsLive (2021) petition coverage; 20,300 figure from the temple donor brochure 2026.

More than a building: a thriving community centre

“The human body is a shrine; our Watford temple is the powerhouse that rejuvenates our hearts.”

THE PHILOSOPHICAL LENS



Darshan

To see the divine and be seen by it: the heart of worship



A consecrated presence

Agamic rites make the murti a living presence, not a symbol



Samskaras

Life's 16 milestones, from naming ceremonies to last rites



Dharma lived daily

A place to learn and practise enduring values

THE SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY LENS



Community Asset

Work with Watford Council to provide facilities during Emergency Evacuation, Extreme Weather, Public Health crisis, Operating Kitchen



Networks

Bring people together from different backgrounds and use the convening power to offer conversational space



Leadership

Not just faith leadership but also encouraging and nurturing young community members to lead



Volunteering

Providing but also helping co-ordinate volunteers and events in communities.

“Do not live in a town without a temple.” Tamil proverb attributed to Avvaiyar

An all-inclusive community hub for Watford

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: *“the world is one family”, our time-tested philosophy of peace and harmony*

WHO RELIES ON US TODAY



Senior citizens
company and emotional support



Families and young people
belonging and identity



Vulnerable residents
facing isolation or depression

Losing the temple would harm community wellbeing.

WHAT WE CAN OFFER WATFORD



Inter-faith centre

Open to all faiths and none, with space for local groups



Health awareness

Mental health, depression, isolation and diabetes



Food support

Food distribution for the most vulnerable residents



Youth enablement

Education, culture, volunteering and leadership



Unpaid carers

Recognition and links to local services

Diversity and inclusion
Community-led, for peace and harmony



OUR QUESTION FOR THE COUNCIL

How will you help community organisations like ours continue and expand this work in Watford, through access to space, small grants or partnership on local wellbeing plans?

A temple and community centre for all of Watford



Concept 3D view by the temple team. Indicative only, not a planning design.

0.70

acre site

12,000

sq ft ground floor

9,000

sq ft temple floor



FIRST FLOOR · TEMPLE

Vel Murugan main shrine, with shrines for Shiva, Ganesha, Balaji and Durga Mata, and a Navagraha hall



GROUND FLOOR · COMMUNITY

Community hall, dining hall and kitchen for annadanam



GROUND FLOOR · LEARNING AND CULTURE

Two language classrooms, a music and dance studio



GROUND FLOOR · WELLBEING

Social and events space for elders, families and food support



SITE · PARKING AND LANDSCAPE

0.2 acre of car parking, landscaped grounds around the building

Source: temple donor brochure 2026, concept plans and 3D view (areas approximate).



Temple and prayer hall on the first floor; hall, dining, classes and elders' space on the ground floor

Vel Murugan at the centre, with Shiva, Ganesha, Balaji, Durga Mata and the Navagrahas

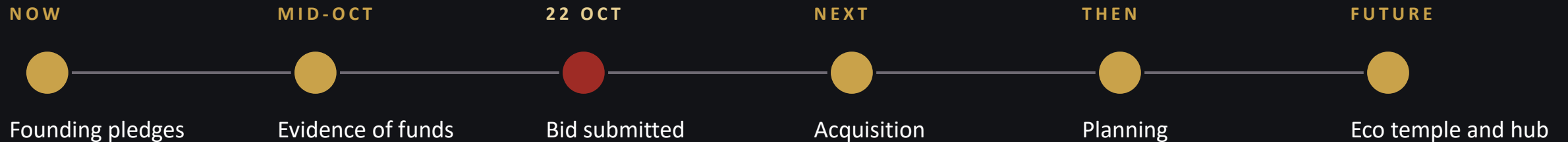
Community hall, dining hall and kitchen for free meals and events

0.2 acre of on-site parking off the main road

9

THE NEXT 19 DAYS

Secure the site by 22 October 2026. Then build a legacy for generations.



What we are raising, and where every pound goes

Cause	What it funds	Amount	Phase
Phase 1: secure the site		~£2.0m	By 22 Oct 2026
Site acquisition	Freehold of 453 St Albans Road via the council's open bid	£1.8m	1
Stamp Duty Land Tax	Not in the brochure; nil if charities relief applies	£80k	1
Professional and legal	Solicitor, valuation, surveys, planning	£80k	1 and 2
Phase 2: secure the site		~£3.0m	By 14 th Jan 2027
Building and development	Temple floor, community hall, classrooms, kitchen, parking	£2.5m	2
Contingency	Reserve against cost and programme risk	£0.5m	2
Total project	Both phases	~£5.0m	

BEFORE 22 OCTOBER

£100k

RAISED BY LOCAL COMMUNITY

£1.9m

CURRENT GAP – PHASE 1

£4.9m

TOTAL GAP - PHASE 1 and 2

+25p Gift Aid on every £1 from a UK taxpayer. Higher-rate donors reclaim the difference; gifts of shares or land qualify for income tax relief.

Sources: temple donor brochure 2026 (all project figures). SDLT at standard non-residential rates on a £1.7m price (0% to £150k, 2% to £250k, 5% above). Gift Aid: HMRC.

Accountable stewardship of every pound

Watford Velmurugan Trust (WVMT UK) · Registered charity 1174203 · 453 St Albans Road, Watford WD24 7RZ



TRUSTEE & CHAIRMAN
Dharmaraj Vencataswamy



TRUSTEE & VICE CHAIRMAN
Senthuren Sathiyabalasingam



TRUSTEE & SECRETARY
Nisanthan Shanmugaratnam



TRUSTEE & ASSISTANT
SECRETARY
Vinusha Ravanam



TRUSTEE & TREASURER
Vimalaraj Markandu



HEAD PRIEST
Yogarasa Thanansayan

Trustee names will be checked against the Charity Commission register before circulation. No names are shown until supplied by the trust.

Sponsorship that gives back for years

Your family's name, nakshatra and gotra are invoked in the temple's sacred rituals for the full term of your sponsorship.

SANKALPA PATRON

£15,000

10 years

- Sankalpam in your family's name for 3 main pujas of your choice each month
- Annual mahaprasadam box
- Name on the donor appreciation roster

SANKALPA PATRON

£20,000

15 years

- Sankalpam in your family's name for 3 main pujas of your choice each month
- Annual mahaprasadam box
- Name engraved on the donor recognition wall

DHARMA SPONSOR

£25,000

12 years (or 5 years daily)

- Sankalpam for every monthly puja (one Pushkaram cycle), or daily nitya archana
- One major abhishekam a year on a date you choose
- Name engraved on the donor wall

MAHA PATRON

£50,000

25 years, lifelong

- Monthly puja sankalpam for 25 years, and daily archana for 5 years
- Lead sponsor (mukhya yajaman) at one major festival a year
- Custom plaque on the main donor wall

RITUALS IN THE SPONSORSHIP CALENDAR

Pradosham

Purnima

Amavasya

Ekadashi

Sankatahara Chaturthi

Monthly Deva Abhishekams

Daily Nitya Puja

-  **Monthly reminders** for every ritual
-  **Prasadam delivered** if you cannot attend
-  **Gift Aid** +25% for UK taxpayers

How to contribute

GIVE ONLINE

watfordvelmurugan.org/donate
Scan the code or visit the page



BANK TRANSFER *for major gifts*

Account name	Watford Velmurugan Trust
Sort code	40-13-33
Account number	21480510
Reference	Your Full Name

After transferring, please email on *temple@watfordvelmurugan.org*



Charity no. 1174203. Please complete a Gift Aid declaration with your gift. Temple: 01923 229564 · temple@watfordvelmurugan.org. Contacts and donate page from the temple donor brochure 2026.



WITH GRATITUDE

Thank you

Together, we can give Watford's Hindu community a permanent home,
for worship, service and the generations to come.



watfordvelmurugan.org/donate



01923 229564 · temple@watfordvelmurugan.org



Registered charity 1174203



Sources

- Office for National Statistics, How life has changed in Watford: Census 2021 (ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000103)
- Watford Velmurugan Temple website (watfordvelmurugan.org)
- Charity Commission, Watford Velmurugan Trust (WVMT UK), charity no. 1174203
- HertsLive / Hertfordshire Mercury (2021), Watford's Hindu community upset after being told to leave temple building
- hertford.org.uk (25 May 2025), New council cabinet formed after election; Wikipedia, 2025 Hertfordshire County Council election; Wikipedia, Watford
- ITV Anglia (11 Feb 2026); PA via Rayo; East Anglia Bylines; Judiciary.uk: Bharat Hindu Samaj v Peterborough City Council
- HMRC guidance on Gift Aid and Stamp Duty Land Tax (non-residential rates and charities relief)
- Temple appeal deck, Fundraising_Watford_Velmurugan_Temple.pptx (site, bid date, history, services)
- Temple donor brochure, New_Watford_Velmurugan_Temple_Donor_Brochure_2026.pptx (site size, project costs, 20,300 figure, concept plans, contacts)
- Aerial imagery: Google Maps, ©2026 Airbus, Maxar Technologies