

Company Registration No: 02967577

Charity No: 1050142

**TRUSTEES
REPORT
Sahara Project
(Preston) Limited**

Accounts 22-23

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED
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Trustees' report.

The financial report is contained in a separate document

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SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED
CHARITY INFORMATION

Directors/Trustees	Shamim Rehman	Chair
	Minakshi Raithatha	
	Riaz Begum	
	Riffat Batool	Company Secretary
	Linda Kenyon	
	Jackie Flynn	Treasurer
Manager	Zafar Coupland	
Registered office	48 Fishwick Parade Preston PR1 4XQ	
Company number	02967577	
Registered Charity number	1050142	
Independent examiner	Bina Shukla ACPA BBS4Tax Limited 37 Hesketh Rd Southport Merseyside PR9 9PB	
Bankers	Virgin Money 44 Fishergate Preston PR1 8BH	
Solicitors	Napthens LLP 7 Winckley Square Preston PR1 3JD	

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED
TRUSTEES REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The financial statements, have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in the notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published on 16 July 2014.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The company was incorporated on 14 September 1994 and is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Status

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission and is also a Company Limited by Guarantee but does not have a share capital. The liability of the members is limited. Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company if it is wound up whilst she is a member or within one year after she ceased to be a member, such as amounts as may be required not exceeding one pound.

Organisation of the charity

All the directors of the company are also trustees of the charity and form the Management Board. The day-to-day management is carried out by the Sahara Manager. The short-term nature of funding for the voluntary sector means that some staff appointments have to be on a temporary basis, with contract periods of one to three years.

Directors/trustees

The directors and trustees listed on page 1 served during the year. The existing trustees accept the obligation to fully inform a new trustee of the duties and responsibilities of the charity trustees by providing the new trustee with copies of the governing instrument, minutes of previous meetings of the trustees, recent annual accounts of the charity and the relevant charity commission publication relating to the responsibilities of trustees.

Public benefit

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning future objectives.

Objectives and activities

The main aims and objectives of Sahara are to:

- To preserve and protect the health and well-being of minority ethnic women in Preston, in particular those of Asian, Arabic, African and Caribbean heritage.
- To support and alleviate the social and economic problems created by high levels of unemployment, poverty, poor housing and social deprivation by offering a secure and comfortable place to turn to for help and advice
- To promote equality of opportunity and to oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, religion, culture, and disability.

Sahara is a women's only organisation which supports and assists women in culturally and linguistically sensitive way. Sahara is proud to be able to provide targeted support to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Women. We are unique in that we take an holistic approach and help women to overcome a wide range of interlinked problems. For example, mental health problems and a lack of confidence, may be rooted in a woman having been the victim of domestic violence for over 20 years. Many of our users need months of dedicated support to be able to 'move on' and overcome their difficulties.

Our work with other Agencies allows specialist advice about immigration, employment, education, domestic abuse and discrimination to be provided. We believe that the quality of society is rooted in the knowledge, attitudes, skills and abilities of those who are members of communities. With appropriate support, we enable our service users to overcome the many difficulties they face and become positive members of cohesive and sustainable communities.

We seek to achieve our objectives, by, offering a free confidential support service for women, providing advice, information, counselling, and advocacy covering a wide range of problems and issues; provide support to those wishing to enter the job market, by working with DWP, Employers and other voluntary organisation, provide volunteering opportunities; social activities run Netball and Football classes for Asian young women, hold conferences and seminars on health and other issues; and in conjunction with education and learning providers, offer a wide range of vocational and non-vocational courses.

We are also a designated centre for the reporting of Hate Crime.

Review of the charity's activities

Sahara continued to provide core activities for minority ethnic women to develop skills and experiences to enable them to move towards active citizenship within the Preston area. We also assisted women from Lancaster, Blackpool, Leyland and Chorley, where organisations like Sahara, do not exist. In recent times the challenges we have faced are a substantial increase in the women needing help because of the rise in the incidents of domestic violence and the cost of living crisis which has particularly affected women living in areas of high social deprivation.

Services provided

Sahara runs a number of Projects to support BME women and help them overcome problems they are facing. We employ bilingual staff to ensure we provide effective support to all our beneficiaries regardless of their language skills. Feedback from women indicates that the ability of our staff to communicate with them in their mother tongue is an invaluable support.

We provide advice on a wide range of issues, especially related to domestic abuse in all its forms. Our work with victims of abuse include advice on immigration status, housing, benefits, and a woman's rights in relation to children and family property. A self-help group meets regularly for women to come together and support each other. Counselling is provided to help women overcome the trauma of the abuse they have suffered. Women are also encouraged to make use of our employment services, so that over time they can become financially independent and have control over their lives. Other areas we frequently provide advice on are debt management, school places and appeals process, and dealing with formal letters from statutory organisations. Since 2021, we have been involved in distributing food parcels for those living in extreme poverty. This work is increasingly becoming a vital service for our beneficiaries and their families. We work closely with other service providers and in particular the NHS promoting their health and well-being initiatives.

We run a Job Club where women can learn how to search for jobs, complete online application forms, prepare CVs, prepare for interviews and understand the requirements of employers. Local employers kindly support the Job Club, by attending on a two weekly basis to explain the type of jobs found in their organisations .

Job Fairs are held at regular intervals with local employers in attendance and these gave over two hundred women the opportunity to find out about the range of jobs and volunteering opportunities in the City. By the end of March 2023, one hundred and sixty one women had obtained jobs as the result of the support provided by Sahara. They now have financial independence and increased status and influence within their families and community and provide a role model for other women. The Job Fairs also provide opportunities for employers to directly meet with job seekers and explain the types of jobs available within their organisations and talk through their current vacancies. We also work with statutory and other voluntary organisations to promote paid and volunteering opportunities to our beneficiaries. We provide confidence building training when needed and where women lack the necessary skills for the job market we encourage them to attend English, Math and Computer classes run at Sahara. Volunteering opportunities are offered so that women can develop valuable transferrable skills. These are within Sahara itself and in partnership with other voluntary organisations.

For many BME women Covid resulted in fear, isolation, anxiety and depression often exacerbating existing conditions. The effects of Covid will take years for some women to fully recover from. We run support groups on a weekly basis, which enable women to come together in a relaxed atmosphere and undertake activities geared to helping them improve their mental health. Women are encouraged and supported to seek medical help, and counselling is provided where a woman feels it would be of help to her.

Our weekly sports activities are very popular with young Asian Girls as well as playing, keeping fit and meeting other teams, such as the Police Cadets they have broken down cultural stereotypes, been role models to other girls, and been able to develop valuable social, confidence, communication leadership, time management and team building skills and self –esteem.

During the period April 2022 to March 2023 over one thousand and nine hundred BME women accessed various services from Sahara Centre based on Fishwick Parade with majority of the users coming from Ribblesdale, St Mathews, Deepdale, Fishwick and Avenham. These are areas of high social deprivation, which according to government statistics are amongst some of the worst in the Country coming within the top 10% of deprived areas nationally. As indicated earlier, we also worked with women from other towns and cities including, Chorley, Leyland, Blackpool and Lancaster.

Our work with BME women since 1991, has shown, that in addition to facing this level of deprivation and disadvantage, our service users have to deal with other issues including lack of power and influence in their personal lives often leading to mental health problems.

A number of women faced problems because of their immigration status they had no access to public funds

Sahara provides a bespoke service for BME women who are either victims of domestic abuse from their partners/extended family members, or forced marriages. It provides emotional support together with information and guidance, and encourages and assists victims to report incidents of domestic violence and forced marriages. Where victims wish to leave the family home, we help them obtain housing or a place at local Women's Refuge and enable them to access relevant benefits and school places for their children. Where they do not wish to leave the family home, we work to help them to develop the confidence and personal strategies to keep themselves safe as well as inform the perpetrators that their behaviour is unacceptable. Our support to women who are victims of domestic abuse and forced marriage has enabled those, who are reluctant to seek help because of culture and honour, to disclose their situation and begin the process of rebuilding their lives. During 2022-23 we saw an increase in the number of women seeking help and advice in relation to domestic violence caused in some cases by the cost of living crisis with women being the 'scape goats' for debt and financial difficulties

Sahara staff have also supported a number of women who needed advice in relation to Child Protection Orders. In many cases, they did not understand the process and were in danger of exacerbating the situation.

Our 'one stop shop' facility enabled over 105 BME women, each week, to raise problems affecting their lives, thus allowing them to 'have a voice' and preventing their marginalization and isolation from within the wider society. Depending on the complexity of the issues, it can take between 2 hours to 72 hours to resolve problems. Sahara actively encouraged women to engage in their local communities, volunteering in local schools and play schemes and working with other partners to improve local neighbourhoods.

Our partnerships with Lancashire Adult Learning, WEA, and other training organisations enabled BME women to take advantage of a wide range of courses, many delivered weekly, through the year. Many of the courses are accredited and provide a progression route for women who wish to gain higher-level qualifications and employment.

At the request of women and the BME community and in conjunction with Lancashire County Council, we opened a Saturday morning Maths Study Centre for Primary and Secondary School children from across the Preston area. These have provided additional support, helped improve confidence, improved the standard of homework submitted and provided advice about examination preparation. Again, at the request of women Lancashire County Council has run Education information sessions where women have been able to find out about applying for school places, submitting appeals, transport, school uniforms and free school meals.

During this period, in addition to on-going activities, Sahara ran specific projects on: domestic abuse and forced marriage; social isolation, mental health; digital inclusion, financial inclusion; literacy, employment support, sport activities, weekly job clubs, and health awareness programmes. Many projects were delivered through partnership working with a range of public and voluntary sector organisations. Including, NHS, Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Lancashire County Council, and Preston North End Community Education Trust

We worked on a day-to-day basis with partner organisations, supporting each other by sharing knowledge and experience to improve services for vulnerable BME women. Our partner organisations include NHS, South Ribble Primary Care Trust, and Preston City Council. Preston Domestic Violence Service, Department of Work and Pensions, Active Lancashire, Lancashire County Council, REC, Refugee and Asylum Seeker services, Immigration services, Local Primary and Secondary Schools, Preston Vocational Centre. Safe Net. Childs Play. Housing Associations, Friends of Fishwick and St Matthews, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Lancashire Constabulary, Macmillan Cancer Support Charity, DWP, MIND, Preston North End Community Education Trust and Local County and Preston Community Network. All of these relationships contributed to the support services we offered our beneficiaries during 2022-23.

Sahara held four Open Days and Consultation events to identify the needs of women and to help them empower themselves. Conferences were held with representatives of statutory and other voluntary organisations, including Lancashire County Council, NHS, Health Visitor and Midwifery Services, Clinic Commissioning Group, Preston City Council, Police, DWP, HMRC, CAB and Refugees, to improve women's knowledge about the role and responsibilities of these service providers. Numbers of participants were kept small to encourage a robust dialogue and discussion. These events have given women the confidence and the knowhow to approach statutory and service providers to report problems.

The Sahara Manager is actively involved in working at a strategic level with the Police, NHS, Police and Crime Commissioner, Preston City Council, Lancashire County Council and the wider voluntary sector to represent the needs of BME women.

Furthermore, the Manager sits on a number of strategic bodies. She continued as the Chair of the Preston BME Forum, which works strategically to increase representation, influence, and engagement of all local BME organisations and the communities they serve, in the decisions and policies that affect them. She chairs meetings of the City Council's Inclusion Reference Group, which acts as a critical friend in relation to Preston City Council's Equality and Diversity policies and is Chair of the Preston Community Network, which supports voluntary organisations in the Preston area.

Sahara is also a member of the Managing Committee for the Friends of Fishwick and St Matthews, which is overseeing a lottery grant to improve facilities in the area.

Sahara has been recognised as a Community Asset in the Friends of Fishwick and St Matthews Community Plan.

Future Plans

Sahara is committed to continuing its work to support vulnerable BME women in Preston and surrounding areas by seeking funding to deliver services to this group. With over thirty two years' experience of supporting and working with BME women, there is now a recognition amongst public, private and third sector organisations about Sahara's unique position in Preston and the vital contribution we make to community cohesion and social inclusion.

Going Concern

The Board has secured funding for the 2023-24 financial year from the Big Lottery, Preston City Council, Lancashire County Council, Lloyds Foundation, Active Lancashire, Sport England, Ministry of Justice and Home Office and Local Member Grants from County Councillor Mein and County Councillor De Molfetta. It is also intended to submit a further funding bid to the Big Lottery.

Financial Information

Financial review

The SOFA for the period is set out in the financial statements.

During 2022-23 period Sahara raised project funding from statutory organisations and charitable trusts and foundations, including, Big Lottery, Lancashire County Council, Friends of Fishwick and St Matthews, Preston City Council. Lloyds Foundation, Caring Families Foundation, South Ribble Primary Care Trust, NHS and Local Member Grants from County Councillors, details of which are given below.

The National Lottery Community Fund; Big Lottery Moving Forward Grant; RC North West Region

The 22-23 period saw the second year of the three year Big Lottery Grant, which provided a contribution towards running, costs and the cost of staff working to address the following issues;

- Poverty, unemployment and dependency on the welfare benefit system;
- Health and well-being;
- Social isolation;
- Discrimination and abuse – e.g. domestic abuse, hate crime, child sexual abuse, and the impact of Child Care legislation on women and their families.
- BME women not accessing statutory and other services to meet their needs and not participating in decision making processes.

Caring Families Foundation Grant

This enabled Sahara to provide enhanced advocacy services to the victims of domestic violence

Preston City Council Financial Inclusion Grant

This enabled Sahara to help women improve their financial management skills and make best use of their limited resources.

Preston City Council Digital Inclusion Grant

This enabled Sahara to help women improve their IT skills and search for jobs and information on a range of subjects.

Preston City Council Health Inequalities Grant

This enabled Sahara to improve the physical and mental health of BME women, particularly those who reside in the five areas of high social deprivation in the City

Health Improvement Project with South Ribble Primary Care Trust.

This allowed the appointment of Health Care Champions who promoted the use of vaccinations and knowledge of cancer within the BME communities

Bowel Cancer Project Grant

This enabled Sahara to provide information on the symptoms of Bowel Cancer and how to use the testing kit. As the result of this grant, five women who felt they had some of the symptoms went to see their GPs and three women received treatment for Stage one Bowel Cancer

Food Poverty Grants from Lancashire County Council. Preston City Council and the Friends of Fishwick and St Matthews.

These enabled Sahara to provided culturally sensitive food parcels to women living in extreme poverty

Preston City Council Health Care Assistant Grant.

This enabled Sahara along with NHS Staff, to teach women about the jobs available in the NHS and how to apply for them

Lancashire County Council, Local Member Grants enabled Sahara to support women with mental health issues and provide information on healthy eating.

Lloyds Foundation.

Provided an unrestricted grant to contribute towards day to day running costs

Additionally, Sahara raised funds through hiring rooms to training providers, statutory organisations, commercial organisations and private individuals, in both the main Sahara building and the Community Centre, which opened in early 2019, providing increased classroom and meeting room space.

Financial Review

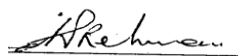
The Charities income during 22-23 totalled £287436. Of this £203497 related to grant funding. The surplus of unrestricted funds at the 31/3/23 totalled £ 160286` and the surplus on restricted funds which are related to specific projects, which run over more than one year, was £201479 Expenditure on specific projects and core costs totalled £229570

Reserves Policy

It is the policy of Sahara, to only run projects, once funding is in place and staff are only employed for the life of a project.

Due to careful management, control of expenditure, and income generation activities, the unrestricted reserves at the end of the 2022-23 financial year stood of £160286, which will cover running costs for nine months. Some of the unrestricted funds will also be used to finance the running of small local projects, which it would not be possible to obtain grant funding for and to run educational class for BME women, who would not meet the criteria for course run by training providers.

We are very grateful to all those organisations who have given their support to Sahara.



Shamim Rehman. Chair of the Sahara Board

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Company limited by guarantee

**Company Registration Number:
02967577 (England and Wales)**

Unaudited statutory accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

Period of accounts

Start date: 1 April 2022

End date: 31 March 2023

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

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for the Period Ended 31 March 2023

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Balance sheet notes

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Profit And Loss Account for the Period Ended 31 March 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
Turnover:	287,436	217,229
Cost of sales:	(229,570)	(285,247)
Gross profit(or loss):	<u>57,866</u>	<u>(68,018)</u>
Operating profit(or loss):	<u>57,866</u>	<u>(68,018)</u>
Profit(or loss) before tax:	<u>57,866</u>	<u>(68,018)</u>
Profit(or loss) for the financial year:	<u>57,866</u>	<u>(68,018)</u>

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2023

	<i>Notes</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2022</i>
		<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets:	3	24,050	20,950
Total fixed assets:		24,050	20,950
Current assets			
Debtors:	4	69,253	55,498
Cash at bank and in hand:		281,097	232,972
Total current assets:		350,350	288,470
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year:	5	(12,365)	(5,251)
Net current assets (liabilities):		337,985	283,219
Total assets less current liabilities:		362,035	304,169
Total net assets (liabilities):		362,035	304,169
Members' funds			
Profit and loss account:		362,035	304,169
Total members' funds:		362,035	304,169

The notes form part of these financial statements

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Balance sheet statements

For the year ending 31 March 2023 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared and delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

**This report was approved by the board of directors on 20 December 2023
and signed on behalf of the board by:**

Name: SHAMIM REHMAN
Status: Director

The notes form part of these financial statements

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the Period Ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies

Basis of measurement and preparation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 1A (Small Entities) of Financial Reporting Standard 102

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Period Ended 31 March 2023

2. Employees

	2023	2022
Average number of employees during the period	9	9

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the Period Ended 31 March 2023

3. Tangible assets

	Land & buildings	Plant & machinery	Fixtures & fittings	Office equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£	£	£
At 1 April 2022	25,033			36,024		61,057
Additions				3,100		3,100
Disposals						
Revaluations						
Transfers						
At 31 March 2023	25,033			39,124		64,157
Depreciation						
At 1 April 2022	25,022			15,085		40,107
Charge for year						
On disposals						
Other adjustments						
At 31 March 2023	25,022			15,085		40,107
Net book value						
At 31 March 2023	11			24,039		24,050
At 31 March 2022	11			20,939		20,950

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the Period Ended 31 March 2023

4. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	16,626	55,498
Prepayments and accrued income	3,555	
Other debtors	49,072	
Total	<u>69,253</u>	<u>55,498</u>

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the Period Ended 31 March 2023

5. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year note

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	2,387	1,521
Taxation and social security	7,592	2,255
Other creditors	2,386	1,475
Total	<u>12,365</u>	<u>5,251</u>

This document was delivered using electronic communications and authenticated in accordance with the registrar's rules relating to electronic form, authentication and manner of delivery under section 1072 of the Companies Act 2006.

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Company limited by guarantee

**Company Registration Number:
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**This report was approved by the board of directors on 20 December 2023
and signed on behalf of the board by:**

Name: SHAMIM REHMAN
Status: Director

The notes form part of these financial statements

SAHARA PROJECT (PRESTON) LIMITED

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the Period Ended 31 March 2023

1. Accounting policies

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