



Voice of the Asian Women across the Nation
Charity Registration Number 1088443

Trustees Annual Report
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Head Office: Aawaz Access Point 225 Blackburn Road Accrington – Lancashire BB5 0AL

www.aawaz.org.uk

Administrative Details of the Charity, its Trustees
for the year ending 31 March 2024

Trustees

Loreta Malik

Aziz Fatima BIBI

Noshin Hussain Chairperson

Sahera Dala

Uzma Rani

Nazima Naz

Charity Registered Number

1088443

Registered office

225 Blackburn Road Accrington – Lancashire BB5 0AL – Lancashire

Accountants – Gulfraz Ahmed (FCA) - Ahmed Alam Accountants
63 Johnston Street, Blackburn BB2 1 HD

Bankers – Lloyds 2 peel Street, Accrington BB5 1EP

Message from Aawaz Patron



2023-2024 has been another very busy year in the life of Aawaz charity organisation. We have seen some wonderful outcomes in helping those people who were in real need and had nowhere to turn. Coming to Aawaz greatly assisted them in their time of need.

As the Patron of the charity, I felt so proud when a group of our service users wrote a song to celebrate the coronation of King Charles. The group worked very hard and brought together so many local residents, who all joined in to record the song. What a great achievement for the women's group!

Our work to assist those who are experiencing the cost of living crisis has continued and in fact during these 12 months it has required considerable resources. Volunteers have dedicated their time ensuring everyone can receive the help and support in a timely manner.

I thank everyone in the Aawaz team for continuing with their efforts in being there with a warm smile, a hot drink, a snack and time and patience to listen and to offer whatever help is required.

I wish to thank everyone who supports Aawaz in any way no matter how small a contribution, you can be rest assured that your help is extremely valued.

Mrs. Jean Battle MBE



Message from Chairperson

This year has been quite a challenging one for me on a personal and professional level. I have experienced loss and bereavement at a personal level and it has made me realise that I have so many wonderful people around me who care and are there for me and my family. Therefore, I want to be there for all others in their time of need.

At Aawaz we want to be there for every woman who is in need, we want to show we care and that we respect, we can empathise and want to help. Aawaz charity is under great pressure because the demand for our support service has continued to rise. We are seeing many more women who are experiencing complex issues and require our time and expertise to work with them. However, our resources have reduced, so we continue to work hard to work within the given resources and identify other funding opportunities.

Mrs Noshin Hussain

Trustees Report 2023-2024

Our annual report sets out the work of the Charity over the year 2023-2024

Aawaz is a registered charity organisation, established in 1997, its registered office is at 225 Blackburn Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 0AL. Aawaz work is to assist women and their families in need. Today Aawaz is well established, matured, respected and accepted by and all those diverse communities that we serve. The charity's work is recognised by local authority, statutory and non-statutory organisations and faith sector organisations in the area. Aawaz works holistically at grass roots level, with the principle of helping the women and their families and welcomes everyone under its "Open Door policy". The charity's work helps in bringing equity of services and support to our client group.

Statement of Trustees Responsibilities

Aawaz have 6 Trustees and 5 members of Executive Committee. Volunteers and Service users are also represented on the Committee. The Executive Committee have the overall responsibility for our work and finances. They meet four times per year. Our patron is a well-known and dedicated lady, Mrs Jean Battle MBE.

The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit reporting in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements with applicable law and regulations.

The Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable organisation and of the income resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable organisation for that period. In preparing these financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP.
- Make judgements and estimated that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on the ongoing concern unless it is appropriate to presume that the charitable organisation will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of charitable organisation and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charitable Act 1993 and the charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable organisation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Reference & Administrative detail

Reference and Administrative details are shown on page one of the Trustees Report

Registered Office

Aawaz Access Point
225 Blackburn Road, Accrington
BB5 0AL Lancashire

Executive Committee

The following members have served on the Executive Committee during the year ended 31st March 2024.

- Noshin Hussain (Chairperson)
- Loreta Malik
- Zohra Begum
- Aziz Fatema Bibi
- Sahera Dala
- Nazima Naz
- Uzma Rani
- Asia Bibi
- Afia Begum
- Sobia Begum
- Maryam Bibi

Organisation Vision

“To remove the culture of dependency, improve the lives of south Asian women and their families and help create equal and cohesive communities where women can feel a sense of belonging and play their part in the wider society”

Introduction

Aawaz means Voice in Urdu language and the organisation ethos is about working holistically at grass roots level upskilling the women to help them be equal and have equitable opportunities to learn, vocalise their needs so they can move forward into lifelong learning, volunteering and employment. At present Aawaz see nearly 300 women from diverse backgrounds and nationalities a week. We are a user led organisation. Our service users are represented at each tier, including representation within the executive committee.

2023 – 2024 has been another busy year of activity, full of learning, support and health and wellbeing activities to help all the women who approached Aawaz.

The charity has seen an increase in requests and referrals to provide support to women and families from BAME communities and we have done our very best to deliver what was needed within the available resources.

The year began with Aawaz bringing all communities together to record the Coronation Song to celebrate King Charles III Coronation. What a wonderful mix of people coming together from all walks of life to gather, practice and sing together at our recording session in the Accrington Library. The song was released on You-tube and on the Coronation Day 6th May 2023 the song was played by the Hyndburn Borough Council at all the Coronation events. Thank you to everyone who made this possible and a big well-done to the Women's group who wrote the song.

Aawaz also hosted a fantastic week of activities during the Refugee Week in June, the week provided informal discussions and dialogues around bringing a better understanding and respect for everyone. The main Aawaz event was attended by the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress who were impressed with Aawaz way of working and very pleased to meet all the participants.

The charity provided a summer activity programme during July and August which was found to be very useful for all our mothers who access Aawaz support. Aawaz use of arts and crafts and creative writing as an effective medium to help express emotions, working on bringing about improvements in health and wellbeing.

Aawaz completed the Move Forward Project in July, this particular project has assisted many women to make progress with their personal development goals, move into volunteering and paid employment.

Our Learn Together Project has assisted participants to improve their numeracy through learning practical skills such as pattern making and sewing. The participants have improved their numeracy skills and have been able to use the newly acquired knowledge and understanding to help their children and grandchildren.

This year has seen the continuation of cost of living crisis, many more individuals and families experiencing financial hardship, food poverty and fuel poverty with its detrimental impact on their feeling of health and well-being.

Our volunteers have continued to work hard to provide food related help in terms of food parcels (Halal items), as well as blankets, toiletries and other essential items. Our volunteers work alongside our staff who provide energy advice, benefits checks, help with budgeting and planning for managing their finances more effectively.

We have been able to secure some resources that have allowed us to provide a hot lunch, healthy snacks and refreshments for many of our service users, ensuring that everyone has access to a hot meal each day. Our service users have greatly valued this additional help. Welcoming service users with a warm drink and a snack also helps many to feel at ease. It's part of our hospitality when women in need call on Aawaz we welcome everyone in a safe and friendly environment.

Working with Hyndburn Borough Council Aawaz has provided practical assistance in helping to complete online applications for accessing Household Support Fund. Many residents struggle and don't realize help is available or they lack confidence and IT skills to complete online applications.

Aawaz have found that this year in particular has proved financially challenging, with a reduction in resources and another increase in the demand for our support services. The Cost of living grant assisted with managing this to some degree and provided a useful lifeline.

We continue to trial the On-Call service to cover out of hours and weekends. A recent evaluation has identified the need for this kind of multilingual service to be available on a long-term basis. The On-call service was at its busiest around holidays and festive periods such as Ramadan, Eid, summer and Christmas holiday times highlighting the fact that the families and individuals needed additional help and support at those times.

Despite all activities Aawaz has been increasingly concerned about the cost of living crisis and its impact on the women and families who use our support services. The rise in the cost of food and energy has had a severe impact on the families we see, these are families who experience multiple barriers.

Aawaz prides itself on the fact that all the charity's projects are based on identified needs and that all our services are user led. We the Trustees believe that Aawaz charity exists to serve the women in our communities, we are here because we are needed and we know that we are making a tangible positive difference.

During this year we have also noted the increase in the number of enquires made from outside Lancashire. These are enquiries made by agencies, statutory and voluntary and individuals who have found Aawaz information through web search and Facebook. We have been able to assist many people by ensuring they receive the most appropriate help in their locality. In addition, Aawaz has provided guidance and information to professionals answering their queries and helping to understand how they can provide the right support for their clients.

We the Trustees all continue with passion and commitment to Aawaz ethos, we know it is hard and tiring and challenging but together with our supporters, our volunteers and our small staff team we are a strong team and we pledge to help every woman who comes to Aawaz in whichever way we can.

Our records show that Aawaz is contacted by many more refugee, asylum seekers, overseas students, and by people with no recourse to public funds. Majority of the help is required around food and fuel poverty. Aawaz is well known for providing Halal food items and this is greatly valued by everyone.

This year Aawaz received 13321 enquiries

- Charity has engaged with 4950 people through projects and offered help and support
- 985 people have engaged in the learning activities
- After completing their learning and employability programme with Aawaz 21 women have achieved paid employment.
- After completing their learning programme with Aawaz 18 women have applied for voluntary work, 6 women were accepted and are volunteering for various Charities.
- After improving their confidence and English language communication 31 women enrolled with the local college.
- 541 women have participated in the health and wellbeing activities

Our Activities during 2023 – 2024 included:

- Multilingual holistic help and support
- English language and communication skills programme
- Confidence building programme
- Employability programme including Job Club
- Health & Beauty Course
- Multiply Project – improving numeracy
- IT sessions
- Health and wellbeing programme including walking for good health
- Art and craft sessions including story sharing and creative writing
- Food help, including budgeting, simple cooking, Halal Food parcels, distribution of warm packs, blankets, toiletries, children's clothing
- Energy advice and access to Fuel vouchers
- Benefit checks and information
- Multilingual befriending support
- Out of hours on call service
- Helping individuals and families to access Household Support Fund applications
- Sewing classes
- Prepare for Driving Theory Test
- Visits and introduction to mainstream local organisations
- Mothers and children activities during holidays
- Day Trips

Aawaz Volunteers

At Aawaz we would not be able to do all that we do without our wonderful Volunteers. Once again this year Volunteers have played an important part in welcoming everyone at Aawaz.

In the words of our service user Mrs. Ali "My Volunteer lady is so helpful she has been my strength from the first day, encouraging me and helping me to understand. She has accompanied me to the Job Centre and to other offices where I have been nervous to go by myself. Most of all she has helped me to get more confident and join the Aawaz employability training sessions"



This year 27 volunteers have been involved in providing various support activities. The volunteers in particular have coordinated the food related help including food parcels for the service users. We are also pleased that 3 of our volunteers achieved paid employment and 4 of our volunteers have progressed onto further learning at the College.



Feedback

Presented here are just some of the comments and feedback we have received from our service users during this year.

“It has been very helpful to me when volunteer came to my house and walked up with me daily to help me to come to the group learning sessions. I did not feel able to do it on my own, support I got from Volunteer made a big difference” Mrs K

“I really found it difficult at first and when I joined in the Aawaz programme it was so valued that volunteers helped me greatly. I eventually felt able to talk about things and this provided me with some relief. Thank you, you are great” Mrs A

“I liked your sewing class, I improve my math’s skills and I learned to use machine and now I can make my own dress. I am really happy and thank you for all your help.” Mrs Q

“I have been going to Aawaz center for over a year and they have helped me so much that today I have found the job with office cleaning firm. Now all my bad days are behind me! I cannot thank enough to people in Aawaz who are so kind and helping everyone in need. Allah bless you all in Aawaz, keep up the good work. Thank you”. Ms G

“I found a job in ASDA and it is all through your help and training I received from Aawaz.” Ms Akhter

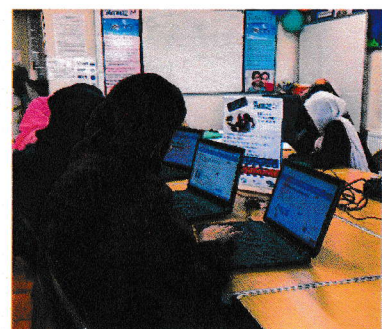
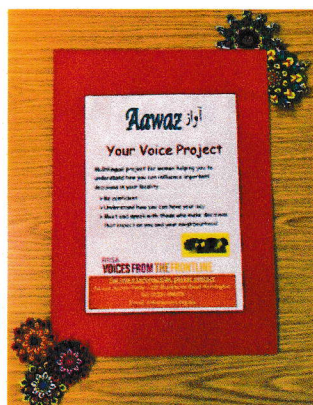
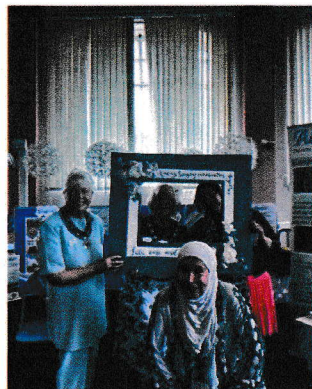
“I wanted to learn IT and came to Aawaz where you helped me to learn writing my CV and sending my job application through internet. I am ever so grateful to everyone in Aawaz who helped me to learn IT to find a job.” Mrs J

“The food parcel given to me is greatly appreciated, as I am in great difficulty, with very little money”. Mrs FR

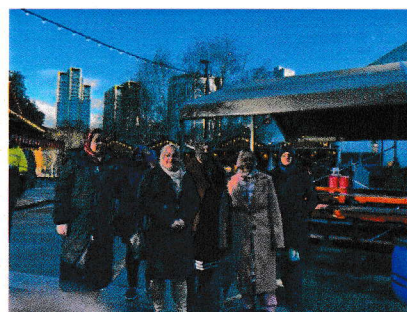
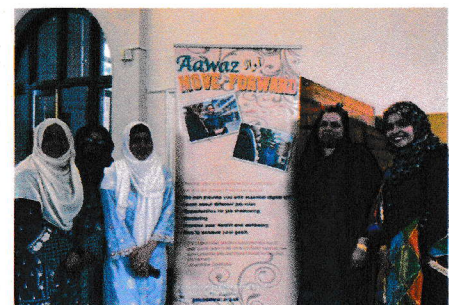
“I wish Aawaz was open 7 days a week, I am very alone and I find it good to go and talk with everyone and have a drink and something to eat, it makes me feel I have support” Mrs Z



We take you on a journey to view Aawaz activities during 2023 – 2024 in pictures



We take you on a journey to view Aawaz activities during 2023 – 2024 in pictures



The Trustees would like to express our gratitude and heartfelt thanks to everyone who supports Aawaz charity in all its charitable work. Your support is making a real difference to the people who access our services.

Aawaz - Registered Charity Number 1088443

**Financial Statement
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

Gulfraz Ahmed AFA
Ahmed Alam Accountants
63 Johnston Street. Blackburn, Lancashire.BB2 1H

Member of Institute of Financial Accountants Membership No: 25268



FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2024

Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees

I report on the financial statements of **Aawaz** Charity ended 31 March 2024.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year of the Charities Act 1993 as amended by s.28 of the Charities Act 2006 and that an independent examination is needed:

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts
- To follow the procedures laid down in General Directions given by the Charity Commission
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters.

Independent Examiner's Report

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:

Proper accounting records are kept and accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 

Date13.....June.....2024

Gulfraz Ahmed AFA CeMap

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2024

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
		£	£
<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>			
Tangible Assets	(2)	<u>880</u>	<u>1038</u>
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
Cash at bank:			
Restricted funds		66486	98102
Reserves		50000	65500
Unrestricted Funds		22600	43629
Cash in hand		<u>155</u>	<u>3310</u>
		139241	210541
		<u>140121</u>	<u>211579</u>
 <u>CREDITORS</u> – amounts falling due within one year	(3)	<u>15330</u>	<u>17778</u>
 <u>NET CURRENT ASSETS (LIABILITIES).</u>		<u>£124791</u>	<u>£193801</u>
 <u>Represented by:</u>			
<u>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</u>			
Balance (b/fwd)		193801	220275
Prior year adjustment	(8)	-	-
Net profit for the year	(4)	(69010)	(26474)
 <u>TOTAL FUNDS</u>		<u>£124791</u>	<u>£193801</u>

Signed Trustees: C. Melik Signed Trustee: N. Hussain

These financial statements were approved and signed by the Trustees on 13th June 2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIESFor Year ended 31st March 2024

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2024</u> £	<u>2023</u> £
<u>INCOMING RESOURCES</u> – from generating funds			
<u>RESTRICTED</u>			
BL- AFA		-	9750
BL - CF		-	63306
Community Foundation		6000	10000
COLF		43255	-
Eve Appeal		-	2500
Halsall Foundation		-	15000
HBC		1100	-
HSF/ Hyndburn Leisure		20500	7500
JHR Fund		-	12300
LBMEN –CRF		-	13057
LBMEN – Energy 360		8983	15160
LBMEM - Workshops		-	2000
LCC		4000	6100
Lloyds Foundation		-	2250
Onwards Homes Grant		-	2300
Rank Foundation		20000	-
Rosa		-	7000
WEA - ESF Community Grant		-	7830
WEA – Multiply		24114	24776
		<u>127952</u>	<u>200829</u>
<u>UNRESTRICTED</u>			
Income generating activities		600	1300
		<u>600</u>	<u>1300</u>
<u>INVESTMENT INCOME</u>			
Bank interest received (Net)		-	-
<u>OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES</u>			
Activities and Donations		2000	1509
<u>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</u>		<u>£130552</u>	<u>£230638</u>

<u>RESOURCES EXPENDED</u>	2024	2023
<u>CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</u>		
Staff (salaried)	101691	121285
Staff (sessional)	12176	23463
Project materials and Activities	52507	54530
Volunteer expenses	10223	9815
Rent-accommodation and venue	7164	6089
Professional fees, training	7560	7011
Capital spending – Office equipment & refurbishment	-	-
Utilities	5852	5609
Insurance	1231	1127
Accountancy Fees	1000	1000
Depreciation	158	183
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<u>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</u>	<u>£199562</u>	<u>£230112</u>
<u>NET OUTGOING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR</u>	<u>£ (69010)</u>	<u>£ (26474)</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For Year ended 31st March 2024

1. Accounting policies

(a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in March 2005 (SORP 2005) and the Charities Act 1993.

(b) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use, at the discretion of the trustees, in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

(c) Incoming Resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of Income:

Income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable.

Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant. Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the Charity earns the right to consideration by its performance.

(d) Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write down the cost of the tangible fixed assets to their estimated residual values over expected useful lives.

The following rates and basis apply:

Office equipment & Furniture, Fixtures & Fittings at 15% reducing balance

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTSFor Year ended 31st March 2024

2.	<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>	Office Equipment, Furniture <u>Fixtures & Fittings</u>
	Cost at 01/04/2023	11912
	Additions	0
		<u>11912</u>
	<u>DEPRECIATION</u>	
	To 31/03/2023	10874
	For the year	<u>158</u>
		<u>11032</u>
	Book value at 2024	<u>£880</u>
	Book value at 2023	<u>£1038</u>
3.	<u>CREDITORS</u>	
	Expense Creditors:	
	Staff (salaries & NIC)	6046
	Staff (sessional)	1453
	Project Materials & Activities	4010
	Accountancy Fees	1000
	Rent, accommodation, venue	1210
	Utilities	300
	Volunteers	80
		<u>£15330</u>
4.	<u>PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT</u>	
	Net profit (Loss) for the year	<u>£ (69010)</u>
5.	<u>CAPITAL COMMITMENTS</u>	
	There were no capital commitments at 31 March 2022.	
6.	<u>CONTINGENT</u>	
	At 31 March 2023 the charity allocated for ongoing Projects restricted funds amounting to.	
		<u>£ 66486</u>

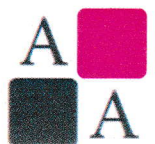
Aawaz - Registered Charity Number 1088443

**Financial Statement
For the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

Independent Examiner Report

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Gulfraz Ahmed AFA CeMap