



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

## Trustees Annual Report For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

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

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

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

**Trustees**

Aziz Fatima BIBI

Noshin Hussain

Uzma Rani

Nazima Naz

**Charity Registered Number - 1088443**

**Registered office - 225 Blackburn Road Accrington – Lancashire BB5 0AL**

**Principal operating centre - Aawaz Access Point Blackburn Road Accrington BB5 0AL**

**Accountants – Gulfraz Ahmed (FCA) - Ahmed Alam Accountants, 63 Jonston Street, Blackburn**

**Bank – Lloyds 2 peel Street, Accrington BB5 1EP**

## Message from Aawaz Patron



This year 2024-2025 has proved to be busy and challenging. Our committed and dedicated team of volunteers alongside the small staff team continue to serve our communities.

As the Patron of Aawaz I always feel a great sense of pride when we see our service users make progress towards achieving their goals. This year like previous years we have seen the charity's activities building the profile and ensuring the voice of women is heard.

It saddens me and concerns me that Aawaz continues to see many women and families who experience food and fuel poverty, the cost-of-living crisis remains a reality for many in our communities.

I give my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated team of volunteers, who are here day in and day out working hard, welcoming everyone in need. Being there for people with a smile, a hot drink, a snack and a listening ear. Giving those in need time, helping people to access help and support.

My thanks and gratitude is extended to everyone who supports Aawaz in any way, your support matters greatly to our charity.

Mrs. Jean Battle MBE

## Message from Aawaz Chairperson



We are women working with women and we wish to be here for everyone in need. At Aawaz we show we care and respect everyone and we are here to help where it is possible. 2024 – 2025 has proved to be another year challenging as ever! Aawaz continues to work hard to ensure that the women's voices are heard and meaningful participation achieved at local events. I am so pleased that through its various activities we are assisting women to come forward and to make a positive contribution in working to improve their own neighbourhoods.

During this year we the trustees also had to make the difficult decision to pause all our face to face activities following the tragic incident in Southport. The widespread protests that followed created anxiety and unrest. Through all our activities Aawaz has always focused on bringing better understanding between communities and this has proved to be of upmost importance.

At Aawaz we have an open-door system we welcome every woman. We are pleased that so many of the women who access Aawaz learning and support are able to progress on to other accredited training courses, go onto volunteer and get paid employment.

Thank you to everyone who support our cause and to our staff and volunteers.

Mrs Noshin Hussain



## **Trustees Report 2024-2025**

Our annual report sets out the work of the Charity over the year 2024-2025

**Aawaz** is a registered charity organisation, established in 1997, its registered office is at 225 Blackburn Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 0AL.

Aawaz work to assist south Asian and other minoritised women and families, these are individuals and families who are most in need. Aawaz focuses on providing practical multilingual support to assist integration into the wider community. Aawaz believe that by assisting and encouraging individuals from minoritised communities to overcome language and cultural barriers, we can help people to feel a sense belonging to their locality, promote cohesion and improve understanding between communities.

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 4 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 organisation leadership is with the Charity's Trustees all women from south Asian and minoritised communities. Our Trustees and Executive Committee members have lived experience of the multiple barriers and inequity of services / support experienced by our service users.

The day-to-day management is in the hands of our experience and skilled manager. Who has vast experience of working with minoritised women and communities. Together with our Volunteers we continue to offer the multilingual holistic support for our women.

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 aim to keep reserves of at least two months expenditure and sufficient funds to cover any redundancy related costs.

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 Commtttee**

The following members have served on the Executive Committee during the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

- Noshin Hussain (Chairperson)
- Aziz Fatema Bibi
- Loreta Malik (resigned July 2024)
- Sahera Dala (resigned July 2024)
- Nazima Naz
- Uzma Rani
- Asia Bibi
- Zohra Begum
- 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 the Urdu language. We are a user led organisation. Our service users are represented at each tier, including representation within the Executive Committee.

The organisation ethos is about working holistically at grass roots level upskilling the women. To help the women to have equitable opportunities to learn, vocalise their needs so they can move forward into lifelong learning, volunteering and employment.

Aawaz service users are from diverse backgrounds / nationalities. We have an Open-door Policy, welcoming all women.

This year in particular presented challenges like no other, the tragic and shocking incident in Southport (July/August 2024) led to widespread protests. Aawaz Trustees had to make the difficult decision to pause all face-to-face work for a period of 4 weeks. There were many service users who felt extremely anxious and threatened. Our staff and volunteers worked hard to ensure we offered reassurance and support. Aawaz worked alongside local council, Lancashire Constabulary and Racial Equality Diversity Council and key voluntary faith and community organisations. Our work in helping to bring understanding between communities is ever more important.



As at 30<sup>th</sup> March 2025 Aawaz has received 13985 Enquiries / requests for help

#### Furthermore

- 2892 women have engaged in Aawaz Projects
- 254 women have engaged in the health & wellbeing activities at Aawaz
- 2132 women have engaged in other learning activities at Aawaz
- 8 women have secured paid employment through the learning / support offered from Aawaz
- 11 women have been introduced to Volunteering through the learning / support offered from Aawaz
- After completing their learning programmes at Aawaz 9 women have been assisted to enrol at college

This year the charity has had the opportunity to showcase its work and the charity's legacy more visually. Through local exhibitions, community events, interviews on Community Radio, published articles and continuing the networking.

During the year sharing information about our projects was a regular feature on the local community radio station. The charity received many enquiries following the radio features. Aawaz work in addressing diversity and equity was featured in the Rank Ripples magazine and received praised and acknowledgement for our efforts.



Working with Lancashire Archives we were provided the opportunity to showcase the work of Aawaz over the past 27 years through a "Digital Legacy exhibition". The exhibition alongside our displays of "Putting East Lancashire in the Picture" project was unveiled by the Mayor of Hyndburn Councillor Mike Booth on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 at Accrington Library. Both the exhibition and the colourful displays featuring South Asian fashion, dress, culture and heritage were very well received.

Hum Saath Saath Hein (meaning We are together together in Urdu) project enabled the charity to work with women experiencing isolation and loneliness. Majority of the project participants did not have anyone close who they could chat with or feel they could discuss their personal issues with; they missed friendship and networks



Our community consultations has highlighted that this is quite a big problem experienced by many of the women from south Asian and other minoritised communities. The women have shared with us the impact of feeling lonely and isolate as it affects all aspects of their health and wellbeing. In particular the issues for older women are greater and we are looking to identify what Aawaz can offer to meet the needs of the older female service users.



Our Befriending Project has provided opportunities for many more service users to join in our activities within their locality.

Aawaz has used more neighbourhood venues including local schools and Child and Family Centre to offer easy access and opportunities for learning activities.

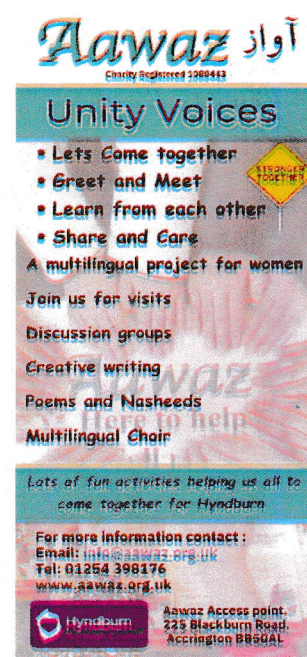


Aawaz is a partner in Hyndburn Way programme and has participated in the Systems Leadership Training programme, joining the Legacy group and the Alumni group. All of these are useful and positive connections. We value networking and partnerships.

This year more than ever Aawaz has ensured that the women's voices are heard and meaningful participation achieved at local events such as the Enlighten event. Aawaz members worked with a local artist, attending weekend workshops to explore issues and to write and record a poem. The poem itself was unveiled on 28 November 2024 at the Christmas light switch on.

Aawaz Unity Voices Project offered the opportunity to work to improve community cohesion, bringing better understanding between communities. The project provided opportunities for informal conversations between local residents from diverse communities. The project has set up a multilingual female choir and has embarked on an ambitious programme of training up volunteers to become community cohesion Ambassadors.

Throughout the year the charity has endeavoured to widen opportunities for participation for the service user in a range of different forums, debates and research. For example, a group of service users worked with British Archelogy Society. Another group of service users participated in workshop around researching mental illness within the south Asian communities.



Through the support of Lloyds Fund we are participating in further leadership development and have been able to make great connexions with other leaders of black and minoritised charity organisations across the country.

Networking with members from the Rank Foundation has also helped the charity to make connections and network across UK, where we share our experiences and help others to overcome issues that we have faced and successfully resolved.

Aawaz Food/ Fuel Help programme has continued to assist individuals and families. We have assisted local residents to access Household Support Fund. Aawaz is well known and trusted for providing Halal food items as part of the Food help programme. Our programme includes budgeting, shopping wisely, cooking skills and sourcing locally grown food.



Working closely with Helping Hands Fund Charity organisation we are identifying further options for help and assistance to extend the right support to those who are most in need.

Our charity continues to see many people who experience the cost-of-living crisis resulting in difficult choices, between, food, fuel, clothing etc. It is essential to offer timely support, and we have worked hard to help everyone who has reached out to us.



Our Silai Katai Group (Sewing Circle), Chai and Chat group, Warm space and Coffee Morning groups have all offered a warm and friendly welcome to many residents. An opportunity to come and learn, make friends and make social connections.

Using arts and crafts, creative writing, story sharing are all essential components of our health and wellbeing work. We see women who experience mental distress and the groups have reported that Aawaz activities help them greatly.

Aawaz has successfully advocated on behalf of those service users with specific needs around mental health and wellbeing, offering multilingual support and help.

We have seen a marked increase in Asylum seekers and refugees who call on our charity for help and information. Often this group has no recourse to public funds so assistance from various other sources needs to be found for them. Similarly, we are also seeing more overseas students and individuals who arrive in UK for specific employment- Work permit. This group are finding it very difficult as many report that they did not realise the high cost of living expenses required to manage their affairs and to be able to live in the UK.

Looking back, it has been a busy year, we are still very mindful of the challenges in ensuring that we stay ready and prepared for offering the support and assistance to those women who are in need. We want to be here for the women who call on Aawaz for the holistic multilingual support.

Our greatest challenges remain are around securing sufficient resources that enable us to deliver our work in a comprehensive manner.

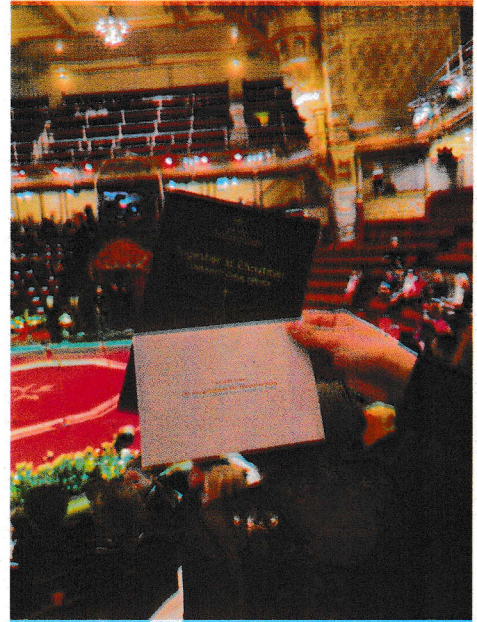






Helen Bingley The High Sheriff of Lancashire 2024 – 2025 visited Aawaz and met with the ladies group.

Aawaz was invited to the Royal Foundation “Together at Christmas Community Carol Concert” at Christmas. Our staff and volunteers attended the concert in Blackpool.



NHS Talking Therapies Team, sessions provided very helpful and useful information. It was a great opportunity to learn about their service.



## Thank you to our Volunteers

### Aawaz Volunteers

Our Volunteers are our most essential element without the support and commitment of the group of ladies who give their time to the charity we would not be able to do what we do.

The service users tell us that our volunteers play an important role in welcoming them, in particular where there are new service users who are joining in for the first time.

Volunteers offer that extra support, friendly smile, warm welcome and practical help to assist the service users feel more at ease and to be able to feel relaxed and join in the learning activities. Often Volunteers will be able to accompany the service users in attending the various learning activities or to be able to access wider support from other agencies. Volunteers help to distribute the food parcels to our more elderly service users or those service users who are living alone.

This year our team of 18 volunteers have worked tirelessly alongside our staff to ensure that every woman who comes to Aawaz feels welcome.

One of our volunteer shares her experience of being a volunteer at Aawaz:



I am a volunteer at Aawaz,

I became a volunteer after completing a learning programme with Aawaz. My learning programme helped me so much.

I learned to improve my conversation skills in English.

I improved my IT skills

I was previously quite shy and did not like talking with people but from my time at Aawaz I realized that I have to overcome some of my shyness. I have to learn to challenge myself and test myself, not be afraid but be a little braver!

I also felt that in order for me to continue to build on my new skills and confidence I should try to help others. Becoming a volunteer was a big step for me but Alhamdulillah I worked hard and I do my best. Aawaz gave me good training on what it is to be a volunteer, the dos, don'ts and how I should play my part in helping others.

I should say that the most rewarding part as a volunteer for me is the welcoming role I play in helping the ladies to feel at ease. I find it so rewarding when I work with the ladies and listen to them and get to know a little bit about their needs. I can then position



*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 2025**

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

Member of Institute of Financial Accountants Membership No: 25268



**AAWAZ  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2025**

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**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2025**

**Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees**

I report on the financial statements of **Aawaz** Charity ended 31 March 2025.

**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: 

Date 04/03/2025

Gulfraz Ahmed AFA

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2025**

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
		£	£
<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>			
Tangible Assets	(2)	748	880
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
Cash at bank:			
Restricted funds		93708	66486
Reserves (Contingency and redundancy)		65500	50000
Unrestricted Funds		27000	22600
Cash in hand		2001	155
		<u>188209</u>	<u>139241</u>
		<u>1889571</u>	<u>140121</u>
<u>CREDITORS</u> – amounts falling due within one year	(3)	11006	15330
<u>NET CURRENT ASSETS (LIABILITIES).</u>		<u>£177951</u>	<u>£124791</u>
<u>Represented by:</u>			
<u>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</u>			
Balance (bfwd)		124791	193801
Prior year adjustment	(8)	-	-
Net profit for the year	(4)	53160	(69010)
<u>TOTAL FUNDS</u>		<u>£177951</u>	<u>£124791</u>

Signed Trustee: N. Hussaini Signed Trustee: [Signature]These financial statements were approved and signed by the Trustees on 4/8/25 2025



**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
For Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2025</u> £	<u>2024</u> £
<b><u>INCOMING RESOURCES – from generating funds</u></b>			
<b><u>RESTRICTED</u></b>			
Arts Council		19350	-
BL- AFA		19997	-
BL - CF		-	-
Community Foundation		-	6000
COLF		-	43255
CVS (ICB Grant)		5000	-
Halsall Foundation		30000	-
Helping Hands Fund (Grant received for clients)		2632	-
HBC		14700	1100
HSF/ Hyndburn Leisure		13100	20500
Idle Women		3500	-
LBMEN		500	8983
LCC		10290	4000
Lloyds Foundation		25000	-
Postcode Lottery		23000	-
Rank Foundation		20000	20000
WEA – Multiply		-	24114
		<u>187069</u>	<u>127952</u>
<b><u>UNRESTRICTED</u></b>			
Income generating activities		1173	600
		<u>1173</u>	<u>600</u>
<b><u>INVESTMENT INCOME</u></b>			
Bank interest received (Net)		-	-
<b><u>OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES</u></b>			
Activities and Donations		3086	2000
<b><u>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</u></b>		<b><u>£191328</u></b>	<b><u>£130552</u></b>

<b><u>RESOURCES EXPENDED</u></b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b><u>CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</u></b>		
Staff (salaried)	94413	101691
Staff (sessional)	4598	12176
Project materials and activities	24402	52507
Volunteer expenses	2690	10223
Rent-accommodation and venue	4217	7164
Professional fees, training	365	7560
Capital spending – Office equipment & refurbishment	-	-
Utilities	4680	5852
Insurance	1277	1231
Accountancy Fees	1394	1000
Depreciation	132	158
<b><u>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</u></b>	<b><u>£138168</u></b>	<b><u>£199562</u></b>
<b><u>NET OUTGOING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR</u></b>	<b><u>£ 53160</u></b>	<b><u>£ (69010)</u></b>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
For Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

**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 STATEMENTS**  
For Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

2.	<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>	Office Equipment, Furniture <u>Fixtures &amp; Fittings</u>
	Cost at 01/04/2024	11912
	Additions	<u>11912</u>
	<u>DEPRECIATION</u>	
	To 31/03/2023	11032
	For the year	<u>132</u>
		<u>11164</u>
	Book value at 2025	<u>£748</u>
	Book value at 2024	<u>£880</u>
3.	<u>CREDITORS</u>	
	Expense Creditors:	
	Staff (salaries & NIC)	6695
	Staff (sessional)	425
	Project Materials & Activities	1020
	Volunteers	25
	Accountancy Fees	1300
	Rent, accommodation, venue	1210
	Utilities	310
	Insurance	<u>£11006</u>
4.	<u>PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT</u>	
	Net profit (Loss) for the year	<u>£ 53160</u>
5.	<u>CAPITAL COMMITMENTS</u>	
	There were no capital commitments at 31 March 2025.	
6.	<u>CONTINGENT</u>	
	At 31 March 2025 the charity allocated for ongoing Projects restricted funds amounting to.	
		<u>£ 93708</u>



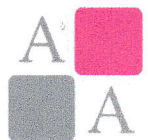
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Date 04/03/2025

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