

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)  
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE  
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)  
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS  
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**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)  
CHARITY INFORMATION  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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<b>Trustees</b>	Bitenge Makuka Ma Mbombo Lukubika Mazuba Makwim
<b>Charity Number</b>	1120861 (England and Wales)
<b>Registered Office</b>	Friary House, Friary Park Friern Barnet Lane London N20 0NR United Kingdom
<b>Accountants</b>	Accountae Ltd 3 The Quadrant Warwick Road Coventry CV1 2DY

# **AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)**

## **(CHARITY NO: 1120861 ENGLAND AND WALES)**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

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The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025.

#### **Principal activity**

The African Refugee Community is a local charity registered by the Charity Commission since 2007, providing psychosocial and holistic services to African Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrants living in Barnet, in particular and in London in general.

The African Refugee Community is a self-help organisation of those who themselves went through the immigration process.

Therefore, they understand the struggle that asylum seekers, migrants and refugees face during their integration in the UK.

- Our principal objective continues to be the advancement and self-empowerment, promotion of education, training and volunteering opportunities, as well as reducing isolation through the provision of advocacy, case working, wellbeing, social and cultural activities in Barnet and surrounding areas.
- Our annual report gives a flavour of what the African Refugee Community has achieved during the year. It is a snapshot of the range of services we provide, but, most importantly, it gives the people we work for an opportunity to develop safely and to contribute by telling their stories of achievements and hope.
- We have noticed during 2024- 2025 an increase in the number of service users with complex needs expecting assistance from us. As a result, we had to increase the number of service providers' paid staff as well as volunteers.
- Throughout the year 2024-2025 we have run successful projects on: General information related to integration and living in a new culture, advocacy, advice, case management and individual and family support, Mental health, wellbeing, food bank, meals on the wheels, hate crime, keep fit, employment, education, parenting, cooking healthy eating, language and IT support, volunteering, referrals to other agencies and visit to seaside and other places in London.

#### **Our Services**

We run weekly service user-led activities, and all are free of charge to our beneficiaries. Service users can access any of our weekly activities we offer "under one roof" and they can access the support as long as they wish.

#### **Drop-in sessions**

Every Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 to 17:00 held at our office, we provide a wide range of services to meet the needs of the communities we serve from translation and interpreting services to general information, advice and guidance, arranging GPs and hospitals' appointments and help explaining contents of related correspondences, benefit checks, housing issues, grants, filling forms, destitution support as well as referring or signposting to specialist.

250 individual beneficiaries and families attended our holistic services during 2024-2025.

15 volunteers and 2 paid staff supported sessions and visits throughout the year. These volunteers supported the African Refugee Community through administrative tasks, visits, advocacy, case management, translation and interpretation services. Under the direct supervision of our Volunteer Coordinator and Programme Manager.

Feedback from a service user with no recourse to public funds said the following: "One of the reasons I came through the African Refugee Community's doors was to seek help, as I do not have an income. My asylum claim has been refused, and I am in the process of making a new claim. All my final support has been stopped, and I am homeless. I'm delighted with the range of support I have received from the African Refugee Community. Basically, I felt like they gave me a second chance, as most of the organisations I was visiting could not offer me any assistance. The good thing here is that frontline staff have similar experiences and backgrounds to me. They could relate. I was given food, the local food bank address, a place to sleep and I was helped to register with a GP". I decided to volunteer with the wellbeing programme to support other women.

Our commitment sets us apart- This may seem a common statement, but the African Refugee Community is run by staff, volunteers and trustees who care deeply about the people and the community we serve, as we share the same life experience. The passion, energy and drive of the African Refugee Community's management team come together to address something they care about because they have been through similar life experiences and that spurs them to action.

**Appointment basis:** Recommended for private conversation

#### **Activities covered:**

- Advocacy and case management
- Advice and Information on different issues
- Translation and interpretation
- Outreach visits
- Individual and group workshops
- Food distribution
- Referrals and signposting to other organisations

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)**  
**(CHARITY NO: 1120861 ENGLAND AND WALES)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**

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- Wellbeing workshops and activities
- After school club
- Language and IT support
- Support for the destitute ones
- Volunteers, students on placement and paid staff are involved.

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**Outsourced Legal Advice Clinic**

We hold a weekly clinic supported by qualified immigration advisors to provide free initial advice on immigration and asylum law. The Legal Advice Clinic offers assistance and expert advice for any enquiries they may have. Service users benefit from impartial advice and information, or help with an immigration application, appeal or extension.

Type of support provided in relation to Immigration

- British citizenship queries and support
- Support with passport and travel documents application
- Helped with biometric card / e-visa queries and applications
- helped with no recourse to public fund queries and support
- Helped with asylum appeal, Leave to remain and destitution
- Helped with EU and rights information and advice
- 69 referred to solicitors for further assistance.

**Referral, signposting to other partner agencies.**

**Mental Health, Emotional and Wellbeing support**

- Providing one-to-one and group support activities to reduce isolation, improve social network and empowerment: Activities include fitness and wellbeing activities covering different aptitudes and interests and peer support.
- Befriending services: this is an informal befriending support offering companionship. The role can also include advocacy and support for clients, including by accompanying them to appointments.
- Counselling services are outsourced by a qualified counsellor to provide specialist counselling and therapeutic support to asylum seekers, refugees and victims of witchcraft accusations, women survivors of FGM and breast ironing practices, alongside women who have been affected by the trauma of domestic abuse and/or sexual violence. Beneficiaries can access as many sessions as needed until they feel that they have come to their natural therapeutic close. 88% of participants reported improved emotional well-being, less isolated, with increased fitness as a result of attending these activities. Training and Education
- We provide free English conversation and an IT club for adults in the community. Our conversation club, coupled with the wellbeing group, is a place for asylum seekers and refugees, particularly women survivors, to meet other women who can empathise with their situations, providing peer support and enduring friendships. There is no pressure to discuss personal circumstances, but participants report that they find strength and comfort through the group support, which is valuable. 86 adults enrolled in our English conversation and IT club, with 5 dropouts. 82% reported increased confidence, improved English language and ICT skills.
- Weekly support to adults who are planning to further their education, prepare their GCSEs and promote personal development. 17 adults helped with their GCSE needs. Attending these counselling sessions opened my eyes to see the light at the end of the tunnel of my life. Gracia.
- Maths and English supported classes for young people in primary and high schools within our after-school club and Homework club. 55 young people helped from Y1 to Y11. African Forum and the Golden Age Project (G.A.P)
- The activities support older people from African Francophone backgrounds. The main aim is to reduce their isolation and ensure that they are socially connected with increased access to help and support, improved physical and emotional wellbeing, and provide them with the opportunity to learn new skills, keep active with befriending opportunities.
- Monthly café to discuss and challenge harmful traditional practices such as FGM, Breast Ironing and witchcraft branding, as well as a dementia awareness session.
- Arts for Wellbeing: These sessions provided opportunities for self-expression, creativity, inspiration, exploration of ideas and provided a sense of accomplishment. Volunteering and Placements Warm Hut UK puts volunteering at the heart of our work. Volunteers help us in a wide range of activities, from helping newly arrived asylum seekers and refugees to settle down in their new communities. They are well embedded in all our activities and bring a great wealth of experience. Volunteering here gave me so much confidence. Nenette N, I'm grateful that you helped me improve my career opportunities, and this is a stepping stone for my aim to further my education at the University level. 8 Volunteering in return increases their skills and knowledge, improves personal well-being and employment prospects whilst helping support the community we work with. We also regularly offer work placement hours to local students undertaking a degree. Public Benefit The Charities Act 2011 requires charities to demonstrate that their work is of direct benefit to the public. When planning Warm Hut UK's activities each year, the Trustees take due regard of the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. The main

# **AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)**

## **(CHARITY NO: 1120861 ENGLAND AND WALES)**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

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beneficiaries of our work are asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers. These people benefit directly from our information, advice and related community projects. All our services are free of charge as they are funded and benefit many who are disadvantaged, poor or destitute. We provide free, confidential and non-judgemental support services to French, Lingala and Portuguese speaking communities in Barnet and London in general.

- Wellbeing hub and group work

#### **Our community projects empower our beneficiaries**

by enhancing their skills, their knowledge, and their self-confidence. In everything we do, we seek to empower our beneficiaries and build their skills, confidence and self-esteem. Therefore, the Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duties as per guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission. Some stories behind the statistics: The trustees felt it was important to have a record of what the charity has achieved, but also (We don't do enough of this) to show the difference we are making. We are proud of our record of delivering top-quality services in Salford and beyond. We are proud of how we involve our service users. We are proud of our unique, innovative approach.

#### **Information and Advice**

Case study: Afiam, 46, is originally from DRC and moved to the UK in 2019 and could not speak English. She has moved to Barnet to join her husband, Lola. Her leave to remain visa limited her access to benefits- No Recourse to Public Fund, and her husband prevented her from working or going to college to learn English. Thus, Afiam has no friends and little experience of going out alone in Salford as a result of her husband's controlling behaviour. She did not have access to her passport or her N.I. Her husband told her that as his wife, she was unable to be "legal" in the UK independent of him. Then the pandemic came, and the 9-man lost his job as a security guard in the hospitality sector. He became violent and abusive, leaving Afiam vulnerable. Lola managed to secure a loan using Afiam's details without her consent. When she found out, she confronted him. She was severely beaten by her husband, who left her bleeding on the floor, telling her not to be in the house when he returned. She managed to escape to their pastor's house, and the pastor's wife called the police. The police took a statement, and the Police Domestic Violence Officer came around to speak to her in the house the next day and offered to take her to the hospital due to the injuries she had sustained. The next day, when the police returned to offer additional support, she decided to withdraw her statement, didn't go to the hospital, refused the offer to contact the African Refugee Community on her behalf to get a refuge space and said she wanted to stay in the house with the pastor's family. Her leave to remain was expiring, and without benefit, it became difficult for her to manage, and she developed depression with attempted suicide. During our mental health outreach programme, Afiam left us a Messenger message to contact her as a matter of urgency. The wellbeing team contacted Afiam and offered tailored support weekly at Warm Hut UK through counselling, one-to-one sessions and group activities. With the support of her case worker, who has lived experience of domestic violence and after accessing the legal advice clinic, she had the opportunity to talk with other women, weekly attending our English class; she has greatly improved her English and decided to volunteer with our short break project. She has gained valuable work experience and employability skills. In November 2024, she received the news that her immigration status has been granted- Indefinite Leave to Remain, and she is now working with our careers coach for further advice about her employment. She managed to get a Level 2 food and hygiene certificate, and we have secured a placement for her to gain work experience with La Buka - African Restaurant to enable her to set up her own catering business. We connected Afiam with another African restaurant -ChopnGo- to further improve her English, build networks and continue to develop her employability skills. Afiam's confidence has greatly improved, and she no longer needs a translator. Afiam said: "I had found a warm, welcoming team of skilled people, passionate about helping anyone who arrived at their door. You empowered me and gave me back my self-esteem and confidence. Thanks a million. I can't believe so much has happened to me in just a year."

#### **Warm Centre:**

To break isolation, many of our service users who are isolated visited our centre to keep warm and to interact with others. Food and hot drinks are served.

#### **The Food Club**

With the support of local authorities and other donors from the community (OJ Solutions), including Afro shops to secure donations and food at reduced costs to ensure food is diverted from waste; we were able to supply fresh and ambient food to those who need it most in the community. The role of the food club is often misunderstood, and you may not realise the scope of its impact. When we started the Food Club in 2023, it was mainly for destitute asylum seekers, but this FYE 2024, the demand for food has increased sixfold, and we found out that 80% of new people accessing our food club are due to benefit cuts and job loss. All the people who accessed our food club reported significant financial hardship. The financial hardship is often exacerbated by the universal credit system. Our food club is also a social opportunity where people learn skills, get additional support and access training- recycling, reuse of food and awareness of environmental issues. Feedback received from participants indicated that the club is supportive and non-judgmental, with the opportunity to receive ethnic food.

#### **Our service users from:**

- Uganda

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)  
(CHARITY NO: 1120861 ENGLAND AND WALES)  
TRUSTEES' REPORT**

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- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Algeria
- Sudan
- Tunisia
- Somalia
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Angola
- Togo
- Gambia
- Nigeria
- Cameroun

**Funding received:**

- Society for the Relief of Poverty
- Friends Trusts
- London Church Refugee Funds
- Hackney Congolese Youth and Parents Support Group
- London Borough of Barnet
- Network for Changes
- Other refugee organisations
- Contribution from friends
- Community Barnet
- City Bridge Foundation
- Refugee Council
- Red Cross
- Young Barnet Foundation
- Donations

**Organisational Challenges**

- **More funding to cover core costs and activities**

**Raised issues in need of more funding and support**

- Mental health issues
- General well-being support
- Immigration issues
- Language and IT Support
- Housing and welfare advice
- Unemployment
- Poverty
- Impact of the cost of living
- Destitute in need of support

**Case study**

Edmond recalled being slightly nervous and a little bit embarrassed to come to the food club and said, “ I was a bit embarrassed as a man to come and beg for food, but as soon as I woke, all my worries disappeared. I was impressed and surprised that neither the staff nor the volunteers judged me, and I did not feel like a beggar as they all put me at ease. With a friendly face, they made me understand that there are a lot more people out there, like myself, who are struggling to make ends meet as well.’ They treat me like a human being. I recall a bad experience I had with the job centre where they only consider you as a name and number, and the staff will tell you rudely, “Well, you should work. You shouldn’t be on benefits.” But at the food club here, it’s a lot better, a lot more human, where before it’s like more pen and paper, everything’s got to be done by the computer. You are making a difference and a lot better. Should we also tell you about how we supported service users’ access to the Household Support Fund? Oh yes, we did. We supported vulnerable service users struggling to cover the costs of food, energy and water bills, and some of them have even received a one-off payment for other essentials over winter.

We have provided individual as well as group support to families.

- ~~All the trustees take this opportunity to thank all our funders, big or small, who have helped us make a difference and allow~~

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)  
(CHARITY NO: 1120861 ENGLAND AND WALES)  
TRUSTEES' REPORT**

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us to extend our gratitude to all our staff, the volunteers, partners and service users for being part of this journey with us.

- Most of all, I would personally like to thank the amazing asylum seekers and refugees who take that first brave step on the bumpy road to safety, and walk through our doors so that we can guide and support them.

Their stories are of resilience, overcoming huge challenges, but they keep going when they are exhausted, and together we have achieved positive outcomes that are right for them.

- The following summary highlights the activities we did throughout the year 2024/2025. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions by emailing [africanrefugeecommunity@acrc.org.uk](mailto:africanrefugeecommunity@acrc.org.uk)

It is our commitment, our past experiences that set us apart.

## **Trustees**

The following Trustees held office during the whole of the period:

Bitenge Makuka Ma  
Mbombo Lukubika  
Mazuba Makwim

## **Charitable and Political donations**

No political donations were made or received during the financial year

## **Statement of Trustees' responsibilities**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the report and accounts in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year. Under that law, the Trustees have elected to prepare the accounts in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under Charity law the Trustees must not approve the accounts unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the Net Income or loss of the Charity for that period. In preparing these accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.



**Small Charity provisions**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Signed on behalf of the board of Trustees

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Bitenge Makuka Ma  
Trustee

Approved by the board on: 1 October 2025

## **AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC) ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT**

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Accountants' report to the board of Trustees of African Refugee Community (ARC) on the preparation of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025

In order to assist you to fulfil your duties under the Companies Act 2006, we have prepared for your approval the accounts of African Refugee Community (ARC) for the year ended 31 March 2025 as set out on pages 7 - 10 from the Charity's accounting records and from information and explanations you have given us.

This report is made solely to the Board of Trustees of African Refugee Community (ARC), as a body, in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 17 October 2021. Our work has been undertaken solely to prepare for your approval the accounts of African Refugee Community (ARC) and state those matters that we have agreed to state to them, as a body, in this report. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than African Refugee Community (ARC) and its Board of Trustees as a body for our work or for this report.

It is your duty to ensure that African Refugee Community (ARC) has kept adequate accounting records and to prepare statutory accounts that give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and Net Income of African Refugee Community (ARC). You consider that African Refugee Community (ARC) is exempt from the statutory audit requirement for the year.

We have not been instructed to carry out an audit or a review of the accounts of African Refugee Community (ARC). For this reason, we have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the statutory accounts.

Accountae Ltd

3 The Quadrant  
Warwick Road  
Coventry  
CV1 2DY

1 October 2025

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)**  
**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND NET MOVEMENT IN**  
**FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Turnover</b>	85,001	74,571
Charitable Activities	(18,295)	-
<b>Gross Net Income</b>	<u>66,706</u>	<u>74,571</u>
Administrative expenses	(47,561)	(56,453)
<b>Operating Net Income</b>	<u>19,145</u>	<u>18,118</u>
<b>Net Income on ordinary activities</b>	<u>19,145</u>	<u>18,118</u>
	-	-
<b>Net Income for the financial year</b>	<u>19,145</u>	<u>18,118</u>
Net Movement in funds at the start of the year	55,350	37,232
Net Income for the financial year	19,145	18,118
	-	-
Net Movement in funds at the end of the year	<u>74,495</u>	<u>55,350</u>

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	4	2,266	3,966
<b>Current assets</b>			
Current Assets	5	53,084	28,840
Cash at bank and in hand		19,145	22,544
		<u>72,229</u>	<u>51,384</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>72,229</u>	<u>51,384</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>74,495</u>	<u>55,350</u>
<b>Capital and reserves</b>			
Net Movement in Funds		<u>74,495</u>	<u>55,350</u>
<b>Total funds</b>		<u>74,495</u>	<u>55,350</u>

For the year ending 31 March 2025 the Charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the Charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 and Charity Law.

The Trustees 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 in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102 Section 1A - Small Entities and Charity Law..

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 1 October 2025 and were signed on its behalf by

Bitenge Makuka Ma  
Trustee

Charity Registration No. 1120861

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)  
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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**1 Statutory information**

African Refugee Community (ARC) is a charity, registered in England and Wales, registration number 1120861. The registered office is Friary House, Friary Park, Friern Barnet Lane, London, N20 0NR, United Kingdom.

**2 Compliance with accounting standards**

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of FRS 102 Section 1A Small Entities. There were no material departures from that standard.

**3 Accounting policies**

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below and have remained unchanged from the previous year, and also have been consistently applied within the same accounts.

***Basis of preparation***

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of certain fixed assets.

***Presentation currency***

The accounts are presented in £ sterling.

***Tangible fixed assets and depreciation***

Tangible assets are included at cost less depreciation and impairment. Depreciation has been provided at the following rates in order to write off the assets over their estimated useful lives: 5

Computer equipment

Computer Equipment

***Government grants***

Government grants in relation to tangible fixed assets are credited to Net Income and loss account over the useful lives of the related assets, whereas those in relation to expenditure are credited when the expenditure is charged to Net Income and loss.

***Turnover***

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes. Turnover from the sale of goods is recognised when goods have been delivered to customers such that risks and rewards of ownership have transferred to them. Turnover from the rendering of services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of the contract. The stage of completion of a contract is measured by comparing the costs incurred for work performed to date to the total estimated contract costs.

***Grants and donations***

Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 FRS102 SORP).

***Governance and support costs***

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)  
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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**4 Tangible fixed assets**

	<b>Computer equipment £</b>
<b>Cost or valuation</b>	At cost
At 1 April 2024	20,174
At 31 March 2025	20,174
<b>Depreciation</b>	
At 1 April 2024	16,208
Charge for the year	1,700
At 31 March 2025	17,908
<b>Net book value</b>	
At 31 March 2025	2,266
At 31 March 2024	3,966

**5 Debtors**

	<b>2025 £</b>	<b>2024 £</b>
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Accrued income and prepayments	53,084	28,840

**6 Transactions with related parties**

No related party transactions took place during the financial year.

**7 Average number of employees**

During the year the average number of employees was 3 (2024: 3).

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY (ARC)**  
**DETAILED NET INCOME AND LOSS**  
**ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31**  
2025                      2024

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total funds £	Prior year funds £
Donations and legacies	11,986	-	11,986	-
Grants	15,670	57,345	73,015	74,571
Other trading activities	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,656</b>	<b>57,345</b>	<b>85,001</b>	<b>74,571</b>

**Expenditure**

**Expenditure on:**

Staff Salaries	2,345	14,837	17,182	24,450
Professional Fees	2,023	-	2,023	-
Rent	4,800		4,800	4,800
Destitution Fund		12,500	12,500	
Volunteer and Staff Training	2,470	2,589	5,059	3,560
Travel and Subsistence	1,287	1,500	2,787	1,450
Project Costs	1,245	4,550	5,795	2,490
Telephone	108	1,789	1,897	1,600
Stationery and Printing	567	658	1,225	897
Bank Charges	400		400	380
Insurance	550		550	480
Equipment Expensed		5,000	5,000	4,359
Depreciation	1,700		1,700	3,968
Sundry Invoices	1,887		1,887	2,500
Accountant Fees		520	520	450
Consultancy Fees				850
Management Fees	400		400	370
Advertising	675		675	670
Other Legal and Professional Fees	1,456		1,456	3,179
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,913</b>	<b>43,943</b>	<b>65,856</b>	<b>56,453</b>

<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>	<b>5,743</b>	<b>13,402</b>	<b>19,145</b>	<b>18,118</b>
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## **African refugee community**

### **TRUSTEE'S REPORT 2024-2025**

The African Refugee Community is a local charity registered by the Charity Commission since 2007, providing psychosocial and holistic services to African Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrants living in Barnet, in particular and in London in general.

The African Refugee Community is a self-help organisation of those who themselves went through the immigration process. Therefore, they understand the struggle that asylum seekers, migrants and refugees face during their integration in the UK.

- Our principal objective continues to be the advancement and self-empowerment, promotion of education, training and volunteering opportunities, as well as reducing isolation through the provision of advocacy, case working, wellbeing, social and cultural activities in Barnet and surrounding areas.
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- Throughout the year 2024-2025 we have run successful projects on: General information related to integration and living in a new culture, advocacy, advice, case management and individual and family support, Mental health, wellbeing, food bank, meals on the wheels, hate crime, keep fit, employment, education, parenting, cooking healthy eating, language and IT support, volunteering, referrals to other agencies and visit to seaside and other places in London.

#### **Our Services**

We run weekly service user-led activities, and all are free of charge to our beneficiaries. Service users can access any of our weekly activities we offer “under one roof” and they can access the support as long as they wish.

#### **What we offer**

##### **Advocacy and Case Management**

Referrals and signposting to partner agencies such as: GP surgeries, medical health centres, solicitors, social services, job centre, hospitals, housing including other refugee organisations

##### **Advice and information**

Education, immigration, health, employment agencies, training, housing, welfare benefit, individual and family grant applications for white goods, utility debts and holidays



**Translation and Interpreting services** (French, Swahili, Kikongo, Tshiluba, Lingala and Arabic)

**Outreach visits:** Home, hospital, detention centre, prison, residential care homes

**Workshops**

Healthy eating, obesity, well being, tackling youth violence, domestic violence, completion of CV, job Interview techniques, IT, basic English classes, cultural barriers and parenting skills

**Group visits:** seaside, park/gardens, museums, libraries, football stadiums and African cultural event

**Drop-in sessions**

Every Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 to 17:00 held at our office, we provide a wide range of services to meet the needs of the communities we serve from translation and interpreting services to general information, advice and guidance, arranging GPs and hospitals' appointments and help explaining contents of related correspondences, benefit checks, housing issues, grants, filling forms, destitution support as well as referring or signposting to specialist.

250 individual beneficiaries and families attended our holistic services during 2024-2025.

15 volunteers and 3 paid staff supported sessions and visits throughout the year. These volunteers supported the African Refugee Community through administrative tasks, visits, advocacy, case management, and translation and interpretation services.

**All our volunteers worked under the supervision of our Paid Coordinator, post funded by City Bridge Foundation and Programme Manager.**

Feedback from a service user with no recourse to public funds supported by our volunteers said the following:

"One of the reasons I came through the African Refugee Community's doors was to seek help, as I do not have an income. My asylum claim has been refused, and I am in the process of making a new claim. All my financial support has been stopped, and I am homeless. I'm delighted with the range of support I have received from the African Refugee Community. Basically, I felt like they gave me a second chance, as most of the organisations I was visiting could not offer me any assistance. The good thing here is that frontline staff has similar experiences and backgrounds to me. They could relate. I was given food, the local food bank address, a place to sleep and I was helped to register with a GP".

I decided to volunteer with the wellbeing programme to support other women.

Our commitment sets us apart- This may seem a common statement, but the African Refugee Community is run by staff, volunteers and trustees who care deeply about the people and the

community we serve, as we share the same life experience. The passion, energy and drive of the African Refugee Community's management team come together to address something they care about because they have been through similar life experiences and that spurs them to action.

**Appointment basis:** Recommended for private conversation

**Activities covered during the financial year 2024-2025:**

- Advocacy and case management
- Advice and Information on different issues
- Translation and interpretation
- Outreach visits
- Individual and group workshops
- Food distribution
- Referrals and signposting to other organisations
- Wellbeing workshops and activities
- After school club
- Language and IT support
- Support for the destitute ones
- Recruitment of Volunteers
- Students on placement

**Outsourced Legal Advice Clinic**

We hold a weekly clinic supported by qualified immigration advisors to provide free initial advice on immigration and asylum law. The Legal Advice Clinic offers assistance and expert advice for any enquiries they may have. Service users benefit from impartial advice and information, or help with an immigration application, appeal or extension.

Type of support provided in relation to Immigration

- British citizenship queries and support
- Support with passport and travel documents application
- Helped with biometric card / e-visa queries and applications
- helped with no recourse to public fund queries and support
- Helped with asylum appeal, Leave to remain and destitution
- Helped with EU and rights information and advice
- 69 referred to solicitors for further assistance.

**Referral, signposting to other partner agencies.**

## **Mental Health, Emotional and Wellbeing support**

- Providing one-to-one and group support activities to reduce isolation, improve social network and empowerment: Activities include fitness and wellbeing activities covering different aptitudes and interests and peer support.
- Befriending services: this is an informal befriending support offering companionship. The role can also include advocacy and support for clients, including by accompanying them to appointments.
- Counselling services are outsourced by a qualified counsellor to provide specialist counselling and therapeutic support to asylum seekers, refugees and victims of witchcraft accusations, women survivors of FGM and breast ironing practices, alongside women who have been affected by the trauma of domestic abuse and/or sexual violence. Beneficiaries can access as many sessions as needed until they feel that they have come to their natural therapeutic close. 88% of participants reported improved emotional well-being, less isolated, with increased fitness as a result of attending these activities. Training and Education.
- We provide free English conversation and an IT club for adults in the community. Our conversation club, coupled with the wellbeing group, is a place for asylum seekers and refugees, particularly women survivors, to meet other women who can empathise with their situations, providing peer support and enduring friendships. There is no pressure to discuss personal circumstances, but participants report that they find strength and comfort through the group support, which is valuable. 86 adults enrolled in our English conversation and IT club, with 5 dropouts. 82% reported increased confidence, improved English language and ICT skills.
- Weekly support to adults who are planning to further their education, prepare their GCSEs and promote personal development. 17 adults helped with their GCSE needs. Attending these counselling sessions opened my eyes to see the light at the end of the tunnel of my life. Gracia.
- Maths and English supported classes for young people in primary and high schools within our after-school club and Homework club. 55 young people helped from Y1 to Y11. African Forum and the Golden Age Project (G.A.P).

- The activities support older people from African Francophone backgrounds. The main aim is to reduce their isolation and ensure that they are socially connected with increased access to help and support, improved physical and emotional wellbeing, and provide them with the opportunity to learn new skills, keep active with befriending opportunities.
- Monthly café to discuss and challenge harmful traditional practices such as FGM, Breast Ironing and witchcraft branding, as well as a dementia awareness session.
- Arts for Wellbeing: These sessions provided opportunities for self-expression, creativity, inspiration, exploration of ideas and provided a sense of accomplishment. Volunteering and Placements AT African Refugee Community puts volunteering at the heart of our work. Volunteers help us in a wide range of activities, from helping newly arrived asylum seekers and refugees to settle down in their new communities. They are well embedded in all our activities and bring a great wealth of experience. Volunteering here gave me so much confidence.

Nenette N, I'm grateful that you helped me improve my career opportunities, and this is a stepping stone for my aim to further my education at the University level. 8 Volunteering in return increases their skills and knowledge, improves personal well-being and employment prospects whilst helping support the community we work with. We also regularly offer work placement hours to local students undertaking a degree. Public Benefit The Charities Act 2011 requires charities to demonstrate that their work is of direct benefit to the public. When planning Warm Hut UK's activities each year, the Trustees take due regard of the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. The main beneficiaries of our work are asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers. These people benefit directly from our information, advice and related community projects. All our services are free of charge as they are funded and benefit many who are disadvantaged, poor or destitute. We provide free, confidential and non-judgemental support services to French, Lingala and Portuguese speaking communities in Barnet and London in general.

- Wellbeing hub and group work

## **Our community projects empower our beneficiaries**

by enhancing their skills, their knowledge, and their self-confidence. In everything we do, we seek to empower our beneficiaries and build their skills, confidence and self-esteem. Therefore, the Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duties as per guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission. Some stories behind the statistics: The trustees felt it was important to have a record of what the charity has achieved, but also (We

don't do enough of this) to show the difference we are making. We are proud of our record of delivering top-quality services in Salford and beyond. We are proud of how we involve our service users. We are proud of our unique, innovative approach.

### **Information and Advice**

Our teams of paid staff and volunteers are available to provide advice on different services related to the integration of our population. Service users in need of specialist advice were referred to other partner agencies for any additional support.

### **Warm Centre;**

To break isolation, many of our service users who are isolated visited our centre to keep warm and to interact with others. Food and hot drinks are served.

### **The Food Banks**

We are in contact with local Food Banks who provide additional food to some of our vulnerable service users or to those who are destitute and in the process of making a Fresh Claim application to the Home Office.

### **Our service users from:**

- Uganda
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Algeria
- Sudan
- Tunisia
- Somalia
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Angola
- Togo
- Gambia
- Nigeria
- Cameroun

### **Funding received from 01.04.2024- 31.03.2025**

- **City Bridge Foundation £10.000 ( amount published as part of the grant requirement)**
- Society for the Relief of Poverty
- Friends Trusts
- London Church Refugee Funds
- Hackney Congolese Youth and Parents Support Group

- London Borough of Barnet
- Network for Changes
- Other refugee organisations
- Contribution from friends
- Community Barnet
- Refugee Council
- Red Cross
- Young Barnet Foundation
- Donations

### **Organisational Challenges**

More funding is needed to cover core cost of our organisation and activities as the number of beneficiaries increase.

### **Raised issues in need of more funding and support**

- Mental health support
- General well-being support
- Immigration issues
- Language and IT Support
- Housing and welfare advice
- Unemployment
- Poverty
- Impact of the cost of living
- Destitute in need of support

### **Case study**

Edmond recalled being slightly nervous and a little bit embarrassed to come to the food club and said, “I was a bit embarrassed as a man to come and beg for food, but as soon as I woke, all my worries disappeared. I was impressed and surprised that neither the staff nor the volunteers judged me, and I did not feel like a beggar as they all put me at ease. With a friendly face, they made me understand that there are a lot more people out there, like myself, who are struggling to make ends meet as well.’ They treat me like a human being. I recall a bad experience I had with the job centre where they only consider you as a name and number, and the staff will tell you rudely, “Well, you should work. You shouldn’t be on benefits.” But at the food club here, it’s a lot better, a lot more human, where before it’s like more pen and paper, everything’s got to be done by the computer. You are making a difference and a lot better. Should we also tell you about how we supported service users’ access to the Household Support Fund? Oh yes, we did. We supported vulnerable service users struggling to cover the costs of food, energy and water bills, and some of them have even received a one-off payment for other essentials over winter.

We have provided individual as well as group support to families.

- All the trustees take this opportunity to thank all our funders, big or small, who have helped us make a difference and allow us to extend our gratitude to all our staff, the volunteers, partners and service users for being part of this journey with us.

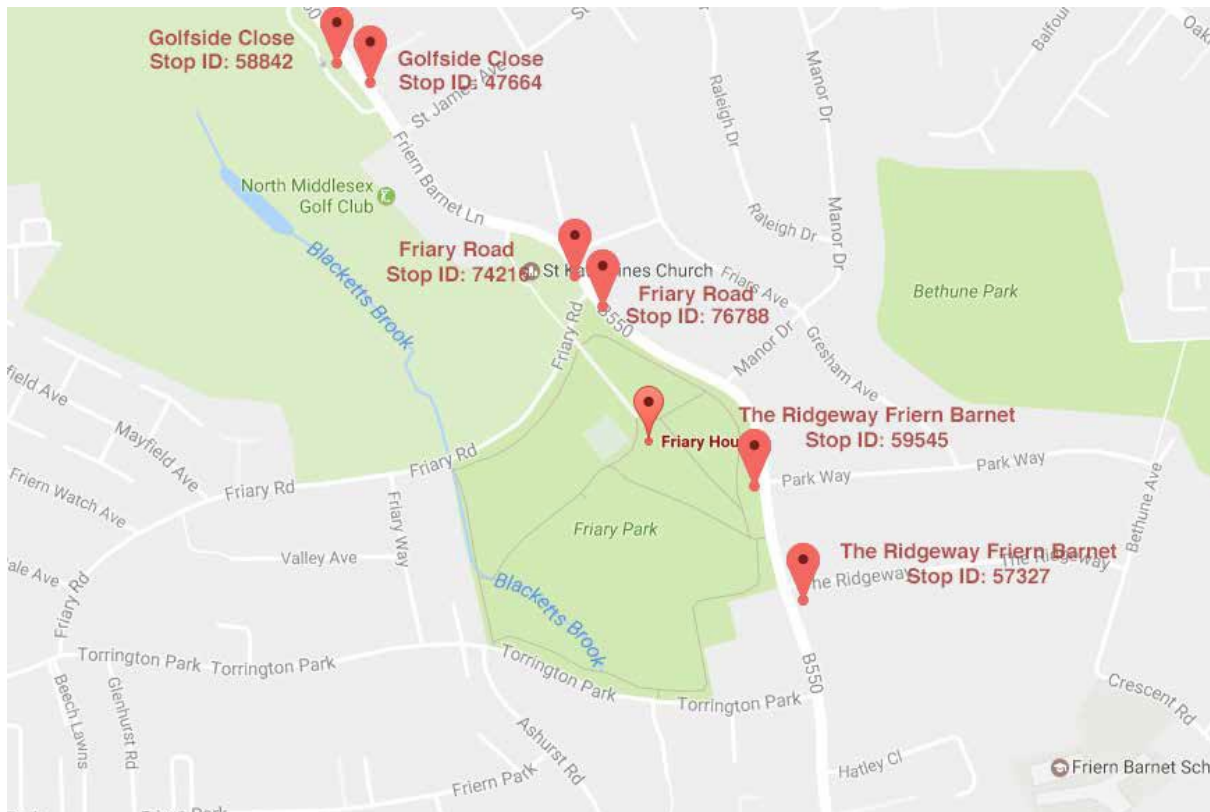
- Most of all, I would personally like to thank the amazing asylum seekers and refugees who take that first brave step on the bumpy road to safety, and walk through our doors so that we can guide and support them.

Their stories are of resilience, overcoming huge challenges, but they keep going when they are exhausted, and together we have achieved positive outcomes that are right for them.

- The following summary highlights the activities we did throughout the year 2024/2025. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions by emailing [africanrefugeecommunity@acrc.org.uk](mailto:africanrefugeecommunity@acrc.org.uk)

It is our commitment, our past experiences that set us apart.

## **Where to Find Us**



**Our address:**  
**African Refugee Community**  
**Office 3, Friary House Friary Park**  
**Friern Barnet Lane**  
**London N20 0NR**

**Our Contacts:**  
**Office: Tel/ Fax: 020 8368 9070**  
**Mobile: 07956566573**  
**Email address: [africanrefugeecommunity@acrc.org.uk](mailto:africanrefugeecommunity@acrc.org.uk)**  
**Website: [www.africanrefugeecommunity.co.uk](http://www.africanrefugeecommunity.co.uk)**

Reported by



Bitenge Makuka

Trustee

18.09.2025

Mr Bitenge Makuka  
African Refugee Community  
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Friary House, Friary Park  
Friern Barnet Lane  
London N20 0NR

Contacts: 020 8368 9070 / 07956566573

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Website: [www.africanrefugeecommunity.co.uk](http://www.africanrefugeecommunity.co.uk)

Registered Charity Number: 1120861

# Independent examiner's report on the accounts

## Section A

## Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

**AFRICAN REFUGEE COMMUNITY**

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

**Reg**

1120861

**Set out on pages**

3 to 16 Of the financial statements

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31st March 2025

**Responsibilities and  
basis of report**

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent  
examiner's statement**


I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a part qualified member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Signed:**



**Date:**

05/10/2025

**Name:**

Mamadou Bah

**Address:**

109 Poppleton Close, Coventry, CV1 3BN