

# **Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 March 2025**

**Reporting Period:** *1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025*

**Organisation:** *Out & Proud African LGBTI (OPAL)*

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

**Charity Registration Number:** 1169497

## Out & Proud African LGBTI (OPAL)

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## LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

<b>CHARITY NUMBER</b>	1169497
<b>DATE OF REGISTRATION</b>	05 October 2016
<b>START FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	1 <sup>ST</sup> April 2024
<b>END OF FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025
<b>TRUSTEES AS AT 31MARCH 2025</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abbey Kiwanuka</li> <li>• Mable Naluwooza</li> <li>• Edrisa Kiyemba</li> <li>• Joseph Atakunda</li> </ul>
<b>LEGAL INSTRUMENT</b>	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
<b>Address</b>	198 Contemporary Arts and Learning,
	198 Railton Road
	London, SE23 0JT
<b>Bankers</b>	Barclays Bank
	193 Camden High St, London
	NW1 7PJ
<b>Independent Examiners</b>	<b>Swan Accounting Services Ltd</b> FF0F25A, CEME Innovation Centre, Marsh Way, Rainham, RM13 8EU

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Out & Proud African LGBTI (OPAL) is a Black-led, community-based organisation supporting LGBTIQ+ African refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants living in the United Kingdom. Founded to create a haven for queer African individuals escaping persecution, OPAL provides emotional, social, legal, and practical support to some of society's most vulnerable groups — many of whom flee life-threatening situations to seek safety in the UK.

The period 01<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 has been one of remarkable growth, resilience, and impact for OPAL. The organisation strengthened its internal systems, expanded its programming, and provided life-saving support to individuals navigating trauma, hostile immigration environments, cultural displacement, and social isolation.

Over the year, OPAL supported 132 active members from Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Tanzania. Our members face intense homophobia, transphobia, violence, and family rejection in their countries of origin, making OPAL's role a vital source of community, safety, and belonging.

During the reporting period, OPAL delivered 59 safe-space social events, including Friday evening gatherings at our London office, Saturday socials, house parties, community walks, and special events in collaboration with partner organisations. These social gatherings combat loneliness, provide peer support, and offer a rare opportunity for queer African individuals to connect with others who share similar experiences.

Trust funding — including our Baobab Foundation grant, National Lottery Community Funder (our biggest funder), G-A-Y Heavens, LGBT Consortium, Lambeth Community Fund, Lloyds Bank Foundation, TFL (WCGL) and individual donations — enabled OPAL to achieve transformative milestones. Through this support, we:

- Hired a fundraiser to strengthen sustainability.
- Secured new office space to expand our services.
- Conducted community engagement training.
- Supported members in obtaining refugee status.
- Delivered 59 safe space events.
- Provided weekly social support sessions.
- Offered immigration support letters, witness statements, and casework guidance.
- Facilitated mental health workshops.
- Supported members with integration through education, employment, and well-being.

OPAL also deepened its collaborations with the African Advocacy Foundation, Peter Tatchell Foundation, Gas Work Gallery and 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning Centre.

A core achievement this year has been strengthening OPAL's mental health focus. Many members experience PTSD, trauma from violence, abuse, rape, forced marriage, police brutality, and religious persecution. OPAL provided therapeutic workshops, emotional-wellbeing sessions, and one-to-one support, helping members rebuild confidence and self-

esteem. Members repeatedly stated that OPAL was *“the only space where I feel human again.”*

Our immigration support services also achieved significant success. OPAL provided written statements, character references, and emotional support to more than 52 members during the asylum process in 2024/25. Several members were granted refugee status, and OPAL continues to guide new members seeking asylum from African countries where queer identities are criminalised or violently suppressed.

Despite our successes, OPAL faced several challenges: high demand for support, limited staffing capacity, an increasing need for interpreters, rising operational costs, and growing numbers of members experiencing severe trauma. Nevertheless, with trust and foundation support, OPAL remained responsive, resilient, and deeply impactful.

As OPAL looks toward 2025–2026, our focus is on strengthening governance, expanding safe-space activities to five days a week, formalising our mental-health programme, achieving OISC accreditation for immigration support, and increasing our outreach across London and beyond. We remain committed to creating a world where queer African individuals can live safely, authentically, and joyfully — both in the UK and across the global African diaspora.

## ABOUT OPAL

**Out & Proud African LGBTI (OPAL)** is a UK-based charity dedicated to supporting African lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer people seeking safety, freedom, and belonging. OPAL was established to address the immense gap in culturally appropriate support for African LGBTIQ+ migrants and refugees — a community disproportionately affected by violence, criminalisation, and social isolation.

### Our Mission

To create a safe, inclusive, and empowering space where African LGBTIQ+ individuals can rebuild their lives, connect with the community, and access the support necessary to thrive in the UK.

### Our Vision

A world where every queer African person can live openly, safely, and with dignity.

### Who We Serve

OPAL serves:

- African asylum seekers fleeing persecution.
- Refugees rebuilding life in the UK.
- Migrants navigating cultural displacement.
- Queer Africans are facing homelessness, loneliness, or family rejection.
- People experiencing trauma related to sexuality, gender identity, and migration.

### Core Principles

- **Safety:** Providing a judgment-free, culturally competent safe space
- **Belonging:** Creating community for those cut off from family and nation
- **Healing:** Supporting members through trauma with mental-health care
- **Empowerment:** Helping individuals integrate, work, study, and thrive
- **Visibility:** Celebrating queer African identities

### Our Approach

OPAL delivers holistic support through:

- Safe-space social events
- Mental-health workshops
- Peer support and mentoring
- Immigration casework guidance
- Interpreter support
- Training and capacity-building
- Partnerships with LGBTIQ+ organisations across the UK

We work with individuals from Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, Rwanda, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and other African countries where queer identities are criminalised or violently suppressed.

## Why OPAL Is Needed

Many African LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers in the UK face:

- **Trauma from family rejection and violence** experienced in their home countries.
- **Histories of sexual and physical assault**, both back home and, for some, even after arriving in the UK.
- **Severe social isolation**, as many live within communities that remain deeply homophobic.
- **Language barriers** – especially for those whose first language is not English, including members from French-speaking countries such as Cameroon.
- **Unsafe or unsuitable housing situations** – many experience housing problems, long delays in securing safer accommodation, or being placed in areas with no LGBTIQ+ support, which worsens their mental health.
- **Hostile immigration procedures** – asylum seekers are often demonised and scapegoated in the UK, and for LGBTIQ+ people, the process is even more challenging.
- **Religious shame or spiritual abuse** – many members have lost trust in faith institutions due to the role religion has played in condemning their identities.
- **High levels of depression, anxiety, and PTSD** as a result of trauma and ongoing stress.
- **A lack of culturally competent support services** leaves many without safe, understanding, and affirming spaces.

OPAL fills a critical gap by providing tailored, compassionate, community-rooted support.

## STATEMENT OF NEED & CONTEXT

### STATEMENT OF NEED

Across the African continent, LGBTIQ+ individuals face extreme levels of homophobia, criminalisation, and violence. For many queer Africans, survival depends on secrecy, invisibility, and constant fear. Those who dare to live risk imprisonment, mob violence, family rejection, “corrective rape,” and religious persecution openly. For some, reaching the United Kingdom is their only path to survival — yet arriving there does not end the struggle.

African LGBTIQ+ seeking asylum face a double trauma: escaping persecution at home, and then navigating a hostile immigration environment in the UK while carrying deep emotional wounds from their past. Many arrive with nothing but trauma — no support network, no family, and no sense of belonging.

OPAL exists because queer African refugees need culturally competent, trauma-informed, community-rooted support. They need a space where they can be fully themselves without fear. They need legal and emotional guidance to survive the asylum process. And they need

community to overcome the crushing loneliness that comes from losing family, country, culture, and identity all at once.

In the UK, the need for OPAL's services continues to grow rapidly. Every week, new members contact us seeking urgent support — whether they need safer housing, legal guidance, information on how to claim asylum, help returning to education, or support with volunteering opportunities. Many also turn to us for assistance with everyday tasks such as sending emails, understanding digital systems, completing online forms, or developing basic IT skills. For many, OPAL is the only place where they can find not just practical help, but also a sense of belonging and community.

Because of our strong and visible social media presence, we now receive daily messages from individuals in countries where homosexuality remains criminalised. They reach out to us seeking protection, guidance, or emotional support, even before they can flee to safety. This highlights the scale of the need and the role that OPAL plays as a trusted, accessible organisation for African LGBTIQ+ people worldwide.

## **CONTEXT: HUMAN RIGHTS ENVIRONMENT FOR AFRICAN LGBTIQ PEOPLE**

The year 2024–2025 saw worsening conditions for queer Africans across multiple countries. Key developments include:

### **Uganda**

In 2023, Uganda passed the world's harshest anti-homosexuality legislation, including the possibility of the death penalty for certain cases. During the reporting period, the enforcement of this law intensified, resulting in arrests, violent attacks, mob justice, evictions, and police raids on suspected LGBTIQ gatherings.<sup>1</sup>

Many of OPAL's members fled Uganda, fearing for their lives. We registered 26 members from Uganda.

### **Ghana**

The Human Sexual Rights and "Proper Family Values" Bill continued to fuel violent homophobia, leading to arrests, media outing, and public harassment. Members from Ghana reported living in constant fear, with many being blackmailed or threatened by neighbours, police, and family members.<sup>2</sup> We received 9 members from Ghana.

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<sup>1</sup> **Human Rights Watch.** (2024, April 4). *Uganda: Constitutional Court upholds Anti-Homosexuality Act.* <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/04/04/uganda-court-upholds-anti-homosexuality-act>

<sup>2</sup> **Human Rights Watch.** (2024, December 8). *Pushing Back: Civil society strategies to address punitive anti-LGBTQI laws in Uganda, Ghana, and Kenya.* <https://www.hhrjournal.org/2024/12/08/pushing-back-civil-society-strategies-to-address-punitive-anti-lgbtqi-laws-in-uganda-ghana-and-kenya/>



## Kenya

Social attitudes remain hostile, with religious groups and political leaders openly calling for harsher anti-gay legislation. Many queer women face forced marriage and “corrective rape.”<sup>3</sup> We received 17 members from Kenya.

## Nigeria

Same-sex relationships are criminalised under the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA), with up to 14 years imprisonment. In northern Nigeria, under Sharia law, same-sex intimacy can be punishable by death<sup>4</sup>. We received 7 members from Nigeria.

## Cameroon, Tanzania, and Rwanda

Members from Cameroon<sup>5</sup>, Tanzania<sup>6</sup> and Rwanda<sup>7</sup> reported physical assaults, threats, community violence, and police harassment. We received 3 members from Cameroon, 6 from Tanzania, and 1 from Rwanda.

For many, escaping to the UK becomes a matter of survival rather than choice.

## CHALLENGES FACED BY AFRICAN LGBTIQ MEMBERS SEEKING ASYLUM IN THE UK

### 1. Arriving in the UK brings safety, but also great difficulties:

#### I. Navigating a Hostile Asylum System

The UK asylum system has become increasingly difficult for LGBTIQ+ refugees, particularly those fleeing persecution from African countries. OPAL works directly with individuals who arrive traumatised, isolated, and overwhelmed by a process that is slow, complex, and often hostile. The following barriers significantly affect our members.

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<sup>3</sup> **Human Rights Watch.** (2023). *Kenya: Sexual and gender minorities face discrimination and violence.* <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/kenya>

<sup>4</sup> **Amnesty International.** (2023, October). *Nigeria: Authorities must end witch-hunt after more than 70 arrested for attending “gay party”.* <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/nigeria-authorities-must-end-witch-hunt-after-more-than-70-arrested-for-attending-gay-party/>

<sup>5</sup> **Human Rights Watch.** (2021). *Cameroon: LGBT people arrested, beaten, and forced to undergo exams.* <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/04/14/cameroon-lgbt-people-arrested-beaten-and-forced-undergo-exams>

<sup>6</sup> **Amnesty International.** (2024). *Africa: Escalating anti-LGBTI legislation and enforcement.* (Regional overview including Tanzania.) <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/01/africa-barrage-of-discriminatory-laws-stoking-hate-against-lgbti-persons/>

<sup>7</sup> **Human Rights Watch.** (2021). *Rwanda: Arbitrary arrests and abuse of LGBTQ people.* <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/10/28/rwanda-arbitrary-arrests-and-abuse-lgbt-people>

## II. Long Waiting Times and Forced Destitution

OPAL has supported members who waited two to three years for an asylum decision, living in a constant state of fear and uncertainty. This experience is not unique:

- In 2023–24, the UK asylum backlog reached over 128,000 people, with many waiting more than one year for a decision.<sup>8</sup>
- During this period, asylum seekers are prohibited from working, except for very limited jobs on the Shortage Occupation List.<sup>9</sup>
- Individuals must survive on £45.86 per week under Section 95 Asylum Support.<sup>10</sup>

These harsh conditions push many into poverty, unstable housing, and reliance on charities for necessities. For already traumatised LGBTIQ+ individuals, this prolonged uncertainty severely impacts mental health, confidence, and dignity.

## III. Lack of Legal Representation and the Rise of “Legal Aid Deserts”

Access to legal advice is crucial for people who must explain complex personal histories to the Home Office. However, years of cuts have made it extremely difficult for asylum seekers to secure quality representation.

- The Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO) drastically reduced the availability of legal aid for immigration and asylum.<sup>11</sup>
- According to the Public Law Project and Refugee Council, this has resulted in “legal aid deserts”—large areas of the UK where there are few or no immigration solicitors able to take asylum cases.<sup>12</sup>
- The remaining firms often carry heavy caseloads, leaving clients with limited time, rushed interviews, and incomplete case preparation.

For LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers—many of whom fear disclosing their sexuality due to past trauma—poor legal support can lead to inconsistencies or missing evidence. This increases the risk of refusal, even when someone has a genuine and well-founded claim.

## IV. Language Barriers and Interpreter Challenges

Many OPAL members come from non-English-speaking countries, which makes navigating the asylum system extremely difficult.

- Research from the British Red Cross and Migration Observatory shows that language barriers are a major cause of social isolation, poor mental health, and misunderstandings in asylum interviews.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Refugee Council (2024). *The UK Asylum Backlog: Analysis and Impact*.

<sup>9</sup> UK Home Office. *Permission to Work for Asylum Seekers – Policy Guidance* (2024).

<sup>10</sup> UK Government. *Asylum Support: Section 95 Weekly Rates* (2024).

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Justice (2012). *Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO)*.

<sup>12</sup> Public Law Project (2022). *Legal Aid Deserts: Immigration and Asylum Provision in the UK*.

<sup>13</sup> Migration Observatory, University of Oxford (2023). *Language Barriers in the Asylum Process*.

- Some individuals are unfamiliar with legal terminology, unable to express sensitive experiences clearly, or forced to rely on interpreters who lack cultural or LGBTIQ+ awareness.

This can result in incorrect translations, incomplete narratives, and inconsistencies that the Home Office may unfairly treat as dishonesty—placing the applicant at further risk.

## V. Poor-Quality and Dismissive Home Office Decision-Making

Several independent reviews highlight systemic problems in asylum decision-making, especially in cases involving sexual orientation or gender identity.

- Reports by UNHCR UK, Amnesty International, and the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders & Immigration (ICIBI) consistently show that Home Office caseworkers often adopt a default culture of disbelief, particularly in LGBTIQ+ claims.<sup>14</sup>
- Trauma, shame, or cultural stigma make it extremely difficult for individuals to narrate their experiences consistently.
- Small discrepancies—often caused by fear, poor interpreting, or lack of legal support—are frequently used as grounds for refusal.

As a result, many people with genuine claims are forced into extended appeal processes, compounding their stress and vulnerability.

## OPAL's Response

OPAL plays a vital role in supporting LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers who would otherwise face the asylum system entirely on their own. Our model combines community, practical assistance, and specialist support to meet the complex needs of our members. We provide:

- [A Safe and Affirming Community](#)

We welcome members from many different African countries. When a newcomer joins OPAL, we connect them with a *buddy*—either someone from their home country or someone who speaks their native language. This helps new members feel safe and understood, and ensures they have someone they can trust, talk to, and rely on during the early stages of their asylum journey.

- [Peer and Psychosocial Support](#)

Our peer-led approach helps members share experiences, reduce isolation, build confidence, and regain a sense of belonging after trauma.

- [Assistance Accessing Legal Representation](#)

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<sup>14</sup> UNHCR UK (2021). *Quality of Home Office Asylum Decision-Making*.

We assist members in connecting with both legal aid and private immigration solicitors. OPAL works with firms such as Jerry Chore Solicitors and Michael Marziano of Westkin Associates, who have provided free legal support, conducted asylum workshops, and given discounted rates for complex cases like new claims. Where needed, we also mobilise community fundraising or contributions from former members to cover essential legal costs.

- [Interpretation and Communication Support](#)

Many members struggle with English. We rely on volunteer interpreters within our community who donate their time to assist during meetings, interviews, appointments, and written communication.

- [Documentation and Evidence Support](#)

OPAL works closely with lawyers to gather evidence, prepare personal statements, write supporting letters, and compile reports that help strengthen members' asylum claims. This collaborative approach ensures accuracy, consistency, and trauma-informed documentation.

- [Workshops on the Asylum System](#)

We offer regular workshops covering Home Office procedures, appeals, rights, and expectations. These sessions help members understand the process, avoid common mistakes, and prepare for interviews and submissions.

- [Emotional Support for Those Facing Delays, Refusals, or Trauma](#)

We recognise the emotional toll of long waiting times, refusals, and uncertainty. OPAL organises social events, safe-space gatherings, and community activities to support members' mental health and ensure they never feel alone during difficult moments.

## **2. Homelessness & Housing Instability**

Most LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers arriving in the UK have no money, no home, and no family support. Many have already experienced trauma and arrive with no understanding of their rights or housing options. OPAL regularly supports members facing:

- i. [Couch Surfing and Hidden Homelessness](#)

Many new arrivals are unaware that they are entitled to Home Office accommodation after claiming asylum. As a result, they often sleep on friends' sofas or rely on strangers for temporary shelter.

Some hosts fear they may be “breaking the law” by accommodating an asylum seeker. We regularly explain that once a person has legally claimed asylum, they have the right to remain in the UK while their case is processed, and hosts are not committing an offence by providing temporary shelter.

## ii. Abuse and Exploitation from “Hosts”

OPAL has supported numerous members who have experienced abuse from the people housing them. This includes:

- Sexual abuse
- Domestic violence
- Financial exploitation
- Controlling behaviour

We assist survivors by helping them report incidents to the police where appropriate and by connecting them with specialist organisations such as Migrant Help to secure safe, alternative accommodation.

## iii. Homelessness in London

Despite being one of the world’s wealthiest cities, London has high levels of rough sleeping, and many asylum seekers end up homeless after being refused accommodation or after fleeing unsafe living situations. OPAL provides emergency support, advocacy, and referrals to ensure members are not left on the streets.

## iv. Unsafe and Mixed Asylum Accommodation

Members placed in Home Office accommodation often report unsafe environments, including sharing rooms or facilities with people who are openly homophobic or transphobic. This puts LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers at risk of harassment, intimidation, and physical harm. We advocate for transfers to safer accommodation and provide emotional support during these distressing experiences.

## 3. Trauma & Mental-Health Crisis

Many of our members are living with complex and deeply rooted mental-health challenges resulting from their experiences before, during, and after fleeing their home countries. It is common for individuals to struggle with:

- **PTSD** is often triggered by memories of violence, persecution, or forced concealment of their identities.
- **Depression** stems from displacement, isolation, and the loss of family and community support.
- **Anxiety**, including constant fear of judgment, rejection, or uncertainty about their future in the UK.
- **Suicidal thoughts** can arise when trauma, loneliness, and hopelessness feel overwhelming.
- **Panic attacks** are widespread in crowded spaces, immigration settings, or when reminded of past trauma.
- **Profound loneliness**, as many have been cut off from their families and cultural networks, leaving them without a sense of belonging.

- **Shame and internal conflict**, shaped by religious or cultural teachings that condemned their sexuality or gender identity, made self-acceptance an ongoing struggle.

Despite the severity of these challenges, many cannot access mainstream mental-health services. Long NHS waiting lists, lack of culturally competent support, language barriers, and fears around disclosure mean that most are left without the help they urgently need.

#### 4. Social Isolation

African queer refugees and those still navigating the asylum process often lose everything: family, community, culture, identity, and spiritual support. The very communities that should offer safety and belonging frequently harbour deep-rooted homophobia. As a result, many live in constant fear that if their sexuality becomes known, they will be rejected, isolated, or even harmed by the people they once relied on.

For many, OPAL becomes the only family they have. It is where they meet new people, rebuild trust, form meaningful friendships, and rediscover a sense of belonging. Through OPAL's socials and safe-space activities, countless members have not only found support but have also formed loving relationships and even met their partners. OPAL is more than a community — it is a lifeline.

#### 5. Lack of Culturally Competent Services

Most mainstream services in the UK are not designed with the needs and lived experiences of Black African queer refugees in mind. Research shows that LGBTQ+ forced migrants often feel misunderstood, unseen, or dismissed when engaging with statutory services, largely because practitioners lack the cultural competence needed to grasp the intersection of race, sexuality, migration trauma, and displacement<sup>15</sup>. Many of our members report encounters with subtle or overt racism within health, social care, or voluntary-sector settings, which further discourages them from returning to services that should have been safe spaces for healing.<sup>16</sup>

Alongside racism, members frequently encounter homophobia within wider migrant or diaspora communities, making it difficult to trust professionals or interpreters who share similar cultural backgrounds. Studies highlight that LGBTQ+ refugees often fear being outed—accidentally or deliberately—by interpreters or community workers, a fear that acts as a major barrier to accessing support.<sup>17</sup> This fear is amplified when services lack African staff,

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<sup>15</sup> **Held, P., Owens, G. P., & Anderson, S. E.** (2021). *Intersectional Minority Stress Among LGBTQ Refugees*. *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 68(4), 420–432.

<sup>16</sup> **Stonewall & UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group (UKLGIG).** (2016). *No Safe Refuge: Experiences of LGBT Asylum Seekers in Detention*.

<sup>17</sup> **UK Home Office.** (2020). *LGBT Asylum Claims: Policy and Evidence Review*.

culturally sensitive interpreters, or trauma-informed approaches that acknowledge the specific realities of queer African asylum seekers.<sup>18</sup>

As a result, Black African queer refugees often fall through significant gaps in the UK's support systems. OPAL plays a vital role in bridging this divide by offering culturally competent, lived-experience-led support where members feel seen, safe, and understood. Through our community spaces, wellbeing activities, and peer-led approach, OPAL provides the trust, cultural safety, and belonging that mainstream services frequently fail to offer.

## **LIVED EXPERIENCES & MEMBER VOICES (ANONYMISED CASES)**

### **Case Study 1: “MM” – Survivor of Forced Marriage and Child Abduction (Uganda)**

“MM” (not her real name) fled Uganda after being forced into marriage at the age of 16. She had her first child at 16, followed by two more children shortly after. She explains that there was never any love or emotional connection between her and the children's father; the marriage was forced upon her by her family, and she endured years of emotional and physical hardship. At one point, she considered taking her own life, but the responsibility of caring for her children stopped her.

In 2023, the children's father travelled to the UK on a skilled worker visa. Initially, MM refused to join him, believing that she would finally have peace if he left Uganda. However, under pressure from her family—and because all three children were travelling to the UK—she eventually agreed to relocate.

When she arrived in the UK, the same pattern of abuse continued. The children's father repeatedly attempted to force himself on her. Once she was able to secure employment, she made the difficult decision to leave him. However, she still attempted to remain involved in the children's lives.

In retaliation, the man blocked her from seeing the children, refused to allow her access to their school, and threatened to take the children back to Uganda. By this time, MM's sexuality had already been exposed within her community, making Uganda unsafe for her to return.

She approached OPAL for support. We advised her to claim asylum, and she submitted an application that included her three sons. Upon learning this, the children's father removed the children from the UK and took them back to Uganda without her consent—an act that placed them at serious risk and left MM distraught. She could not return to Uganda due to the danger she faced as an openly queer woman.

With OPAL's support—working closely with the police, social services, and the children's school—a safeguarding and trafficking investigation was launched. The children's father was arrested at the airport upon his return to the UK and charged with trafficking-related offences.

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<sup>18</sup> **UNHCR.** (2015). *Protecting Persons with Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities: A Training Package.*

Through coordinated efforts involving OPAL, police, and international agencies, the children were safely returned to the UK and added to their mother's asylum claim. In December 2024, MM and all three of her children were granted refugee status.

Reflecting on her journey, MM said:

*"OPAL saved my life. I had no one. I am alive because this community holds me."*

## **Case Study 2: "Kwame" – Outed by Neighbours in Ghana**

Kwame's journey to the UK took a dramatic turn after he was outed during a Youth Evangelical Conference he attended in London. Although he had always known he was gay, he lived his life discreetly while in Ghana, and only a few people ever suspected his sexuality. He often supported young people struggling with questions about their identities, offering them compassion and guidance. However, even this was viewed with suspicion. Community leaders accused him of "promoting homosexuality," and he was repeatedly warned to stop engaging with young people in this way.

While he was in the UK for the conference, Kwame continued to share a message rooted in love and acceptance. His words were misinterpreted, and members of the congregation began to circulate harmful rumours about him. Within days, his name was being tarnished, and he faced harsh castigation from those who once trusted him. Realising that these allegations would follow him back to Ghana—and fearing the severe consequences he could face—Kwame understood there was no protection for him at home. With his safety at risk, he made the difficult decision to seek asylum in the UK.

When Kwame found OPAL, he was traumatised, isolated, and unsure of how to navigate an asylum system that felt overwhelming and unfamiliar. OPAL supported him at every stage of his journey. The organisation connected him with legal professionals and helped him draft a detailed and coherent asylum statement that captured the complexity of his experiences. As he began attending OPAL's Friday social sessions, Kwame slowly rebuilt his confidence, found community, and learned to trust again. For the first time, he met people who understood what it meant to leave everything behind simply because of who you are.

Reflecting on his experience, Kwame said, *"OPAL is the first place I ever felt free to be gay without fear."* His story illustrates not only the dangers faced by queer individuals across many African countries but also the transformative impact of a safe, culturally rooted community for those rebuilding their lives in exile.

The Home Office granted Kwame refugee status in early 2024.

## **KEY ACTIVITIES**

### **1. Safe-Space Social Events and Community Building**

OPAL's safe-space activities remain at the emotional core of the organisation. Our members come from environments where expressing their identity was dangerous and, in many cases, life-threatening. The safe spaces created by OPAL offer the healing, connection, and joy that



individuals urgently need after years of trauma, loneliness, and displacement. Between April 2024 and March 2025, OPAL delivered 59 safe-space events, including weekly Friday socials at the OPAL office, Saturday evening social gatherings, house parties, community walks, peer-support sessions, seasonal celebrations, and Pride activities. Each event was intentionally designed to reduce isolation, build confidence, promote healthy social interactions, and celebrate African LGBTIQ+ identity in all its richness.

The Friday Evening Socials served as a consistent point of stability for members, many of whom described Fridays as “the only day in the week I feel normal.” These weekly gatherings offered a confidential space where individuals could speak openly about their trauma, asylum-related stress, relationship challenges, housing difficulties, family rejection, and the complexities of navigating their sexuality in a new country. Attendance averaged between 25 and 30 people each week, demonstrating the continued need for safe and predictable community support.

More intimate activities, such as house parties and small-group gatherings, were offered to support members who struggle with large groups or social anxiety. These spaces allowed individuals to reconnect with peers, engage in emotional check-ins, and celebrate their identities in environments that felt safe and familiar. Community walks and outdoor activities, supported in part by the Walking Project grant, enabled members to explore London’s parks, museums, and public spaces. These outings were particularly beneficial for reducing feelings of depression, increasing physical activity, and helping new arrivals gain confidence in navigating the city.

OPAL’s presence at London Pride, UK Black Pride, and selected European LGBTQ+ events gave members visibility, empowerment, and an expanded sense of global community. For many participants, Pride was an experience they had never been able to enjoy in their home countries, where criminalisation and violence prevented any public expression of identity.

Feedback collected throughout the year reflects the profound impact of these safe-space activities. 91% of surveyed members reported improved mental well-being, 87% reported reduced loneliness, and 73% described OPAL as their “only family” in the UK. Importantly, every participant reported feeling safer at OPAL events than in mainstream nightlife spaces. These programmes remain the backbone of OPAL’s mission, offering a lifeline to those rebuilding their lives after trauma and displacement.

## 2. Mental Health and Emotional Well-being Support

The mental-health challenges faced by African LGBTIQ+ asylum seekers are often severe, layered, and complex. Many members arrive in the UK with histories of PTSD, anxiety, panic attacks, flashbacks, depression, suicidal thoughts, and trauma connected to sexual violence, family rejection, and violent homophobic attacks. These experiences are compounded by shame and guilt rooted in religious and cultural teachings that condemn their identities. Despite these urgent needs, mainstream mental-health services frequently lack the cultural understanding, African trauma expertise, LGBTQ-specific safety, interpreter availability, or timely access required to support our community effectively.

OPAL fills this critical gap through weekly emotional support spaces embedded within Friday Socials. Members participated in structured yet informal healing activities such as open group discussions, guided sharing circles, storytelling, and peer-led emotional check-ins—particularly for new arrivals who may feel anxious or overwhelmed. These sessions laid the foundation for trust and collective resilience.

To further support wellbeing, OPAL facilitated a range of mental health workshops throughout the year. These included trauma-awareness sessions, women’s support spaces, emotional resilience workshops, self-esteem building activities, and confidence-strengthening exercises. Each workshop helped members better understand their trauma, develop coping mechanisms, and rebuild a sense of self-worth. Many participants reported that, for the first time, they felt less alone in their struggles.

One-to-one peer support played an equally vital role. Our trained peer leaders responded to members experiencing acute crises, including suicidal ideation, panic attacks, homelessness-related distress, and emotional breakdowns. Several individuals credited OPAL’s peer support with “saving their life,” underscoring the importance of culturally grounded mental-health interventions.

Recognising that language barriers often silence trauma, OPAL organised 32 interpreter-assisted emotional support sessions in Swahili, Luganda, Yoruba, and French. These sessions allowed members who do not speak English to participate fully, share their experiences safely, and receive support in their own languages.

Impact assessments showed that 88% of participants experienced improved emotional wellbeing, 75% reported increased confidence, and 64% engaged in activities outside their homes for the first time in months. As one member expressed, “Before OPAL, I was scared to talk. Now I can breathe again.”

### 3. Immigration, Legal Support and Advocacy

The asylum process is often described by members as one of the most overwhelming and retraumatising experiences of their lives. Many face hostile questioning, credibility challenges, interpreter bias, and cultural barriers that make discussing their sexuality extremely difficult. Throughout 2024–25, OPAL provided comprehensive support to help members navigate this system with clarity and dignity.

Members received individual assistance with preparing detailed asylum statements, including personal narratives, witness statements, chronologies, identity development timelines, and corrections to Home Office interview records. OPAL also helped individuals compile supplementary evidence and articulate the nuances of their lived experiences in ways that strengthened their credibility.

Over the year, OPAL issued more than twenty support letters to immigration solicitors. These letters confirmed members’ involvement with OPAL, attested to their sexuality and identity development, described the risks they would face if returned to their home countries, and

highlighted the positive changes observed since joining OPAL. For many, these letters provided critical evidence that strengthened their asylum claims.

OPAL continued to collaborate with immigration solicitors, refugee organisations, and external OISC Level 1 partners to ensure members received appropriate legal guidance. Through pre-interview preparation sessions, OPAL helped individuals understand credibility assessment processes, address interpretation errors, and respond effectively to complex or retraumatising questions in Home Office interviews.

Multiple members were granted refugee status this year due to improved case presentation, strengthened legal narratives, and the emotional stability gained through OPAL's support systems. These outcomes highlight the essential role OPAL plays in bridging the gap between members' lived experiences and the evidentiary expectations of the UK asylum system.

#### 4. Integration, Education and Employment Support

After achieving a degree of emotional and legal stability, many members begin the challenging process of rebuilding their lives. OPAL plays a key role in helping individuals move toward independence, confidence, and long-term stability in the UK.

Members received support with writing CVs, searching for employment, preparing for interviews, identifying transferable skills, and avoiding exploitative forms of work. OPAL also guided workers' rights to prevent workplace abuse. In the education area, members attended ESOL classes, digital skills sessions, safeguarding training, leadership workshops, and budgeting sessions.

OPAL offered vital housing support by helping members contact local councils, advocate for safer accommodation, understand tenancy rights, and navigate homelessness services. Financial literacy workshops helped individuals develop budgeting skills, understand the UK banking system, avoid debt, and establish savings in low-income situations.

New arrivals also received support in navigating UK systems and culture, including assistance with GP registration, transport orientation, access to local services, and general community integration. Members consistently reported gaining greater independence, increased confidence, and improved opportunities as a result of these interventions.

#### 5. Volunteer, Partnership and Capacity-Building Programme

Volunteers played an essential role throughout the year, supporting events, administration, social media, peer mentoring, and interpreting. OPAL worked with sixteen committed volunteers who contributed significantly to the organisation's impact and visibility.

Partnerships continued to strengthen OPAL's local and international presence. Collaborations with COC Nederland in Amsterdam enabled cross-cultural exchanges, participation in European Pride events, and involvement in joint safe-space initiatives. OPAL's partnership with Centre LGBT Paris-Île-de-France further expanded opportunities for cultural exchange and strengthened African LGBTIQ+ visibility across borders. In the UK, OPAL worked closely with community centres, migration organisations, LGBTQ networks,

universities, and faith groups to enhance service delivery and connect members to wider resources.

Through our funder and supporters, OPAL strengthened its internal capacity by improving fundraising systems, governance structures, staffing resources, IT and communication systems, and event coordination infrastructure. These developments reflect OPAL's commitment to increased professionalism, sustainability, and long-term growth.

## IMPACT & OUTCOMES

OPAL's work delivers life-changing and often life-saving outcomes for African LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers. Many members arrive in the UK traumatised, alone, homeless, and without any trusted support network. Through OPAL's holistic programmes, they gain:

- safety
- community
- legal empowerment
- mental wellbeing
- a sense of identity
- the capacity to rebuild their lives.

The following impact data combines attendance records, member feedback, case work logs, asylum outcomes, and monitoring tools used throughout 2024–2025.

### 1) Quantitative Impact Overview

During this reporting period, OPAL achieved:

#### Community Support

- **41 active members** receiving ongoing support.
- **78 total individuals** supported at different points in the year.
- **59 safe-space social events** delivered.
- **32 interpreter sessions** provided.
- **12 mental-health workshops** held.
- **26 asylum support letters** written.
- **23 new asylum seekers** integrated into OPAL services.

### 2) Social & Emotional Wellbeing outcomes

OPAL's safe spaces, peer support structures, and community-building activities significantly improved members' social and emotional well-being. Many individuals arrived at OPAL's spaces feeling deeply isolated, fearful, or overwhelmed by the pressures of the asylum process. As members took part in weekly gatherings, shared their stories, and built meaningful relationships, many reported renewed confidence and a growing ability to cope with stress, trauma, and daily challenges.

Feedback collected through surveys and informal check-ins showed transformative results. Members consistently described OPAL as the only place where they felt able to express themselves openly, without fear of judgment or violence. The sense of belonging fostered within OPAL's community reduced feelings of loneliness and helped individuals reconnect with parts of themselves that had long been suppressed. Weekly activities, emotional support sessions, and culturally rooted community events collectively enabled members to regain stability, recognise their worth, and envisage a future where they could truly thrive.

### Wellbeing Results (Based on Member Feedback & Surveys)

Outcome indicator	Result	Description
Reduced loneliness	91%	Members reported less alone because of OPAL
Increased emotional wellbeing	88%	Members felt more stable, supported and less overwhelmed
Improved self-esteem	75%	Members reported feeling more confident expressing their identity
Increased ability to socialise	82%	Members re-engaged in activities outside their home
Sense of belonging	100%	Every member surveyed said OPAL was their family

These results reflect OPAL's role as the emotional heartbeat of the African LGBTIQ community in London.

### 3) Mental Health Impact

OPAL observed significant improvements in psychological well-being through:

- Group support
- Trauma-informed workshops
- Peer check-ins
- Crisis interventions
- Interpreter-supported sessions

Mental Health Impact indicator

Indicators	Results
Reduction in trauma symptoms (self-reported)	68%
Reduction panic attacks	52%
Improved mood stability	77%
Increased help-seeking behaviours	63%
Increased emotional resilience	71%

Members consistently reported that OPAL helped them feel:

- Grounded
- Safe

- Understood
- Emotionally regulated.

One member said:

“Before OPAL, I cried every night. Now I feel hope.” (Member from Ghana)

#### 4) Asylum & Legal Support Outcomes

OPAL’s support significantly strengthened asylum claims.

Outcome	Number
Supported letters issued	52
Witness Statements supported	4
Members granted refugee status	48
Members referred to solicitors	12
Members who corrected interview errors	4
New asylum seekers guided through first steps	38

#### Observed Outcomes

- Members felt more confident during Home Office interviews.
- Personal statements became clearer, more coherent, and trauma-sensitive.
- Members better understood how to articulate their sexual orientation.
- OPAL’s documentation improved credibility and authenticity.

A solicitor shared informally:

“OPAL’s involvement always strengthens cases — the emotional support and evidence you provide is invaluable.”

#### 5) Social integration & Independence outcomes.

OPAL helped members move from crisis to stability.

#### Integration Results

Areas of support	Impact
Housing	Members successfully secured accommodation during their asylum procedure and as refugees
Employment	Several members secured jobs through CV and skills support
Education	Helped them to attend ESOL and support in joining higher colleges/universities
Digital skills	Members improved IT skills necessary for jobs

## Overall Integration Impact

- **89%** reported feeling more confident navigating UK systems.
- **47%** moved from crisis to stability during the year.
- **69%** engaged in education or skills training after joining OPAL.

## 6) Community Building & Social Connection

Community connection is one of OPAL's strongest and most transformative outcomes.

### Community Impact Indicators

Indicator	Results
Members who formed new friendships	94%
Members who have someone to call in a crisis	80%
Members who feel part of a 'family'	100%
Members who attend events regularly	70%
Members who participated in Pride	60+

For many, OPAL is the first community they have ever had as openly queer African people.

A member said:

“At OPAL I found sisters, brothers, aunties – a whole new family.

## 7) Qualitative Outcomes (Members' stories)

### Case Study A: “Mary” — Overcoming Trauma

Mary fled Kenya after surviving “corrective rape” by community members. When she joined OPAL, she could barely speak about her trauma.

#### After a year with OPAL:

- She attends weekly social sessions.
- She has stable accommodation.
- She received emotional support.
- OPAL helped her solicitor understand her past.
- She won her refugee status.
- She now mentors new members.

Mary said:

“OPAL helped me heal. I can breathe again.”

## Case Study C: “Martha” — Rebuilding Confidence

Linda, a lesbian from Uganda, had spent years hiding her identity. She thought she was “cursed.”

OPAL helped her:

- Rebuild self-esteem.
- Meet other African lesbians.
- Participate in workshops.
- Feel proud of who she is.
- Won her asylum and is now at Middlesex University pursuing a degree in mental health nursing.

Martha said:

“I arrived broken. Now I am strong.”

### 8) Partnership Impact

OPAL’s partnerships strengthened visibility and access to support:

#### Partners

- Migrant organisations – such as the African Advocacy Foundation.
- NHS community teams – such as 56 Dean Street Clinic in the London West End
- LGBTQ groups – such as Peter Tatchell Foundation and UK Black Pride.
- Food-bank networks
- Legal Firms and individual legal advisors – Jerry Chore Solicitors & Westkin Associates.
- Nightclubs such as Heaven Night Club
- Academic Colleges
- Art Galleries – such as Gas Works and 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning

These collaborations expanded OPAL’s reach and professional capacity.



## FINANCIAL SUMMARY & ANALYSIS

OPAL entered the 2024–2025 financial year with a clear mission: to strengthen organisational capacity, stabilise operations, and enhance the quality and quantity of services provided to African LGBTIQ+ refugees and asylum seekers. Thanks to trust and foundation support, OPAL achieved notable financial growth and stability.

During this period, OPAL expanded its staffing, relocated to a new office, supported more members, and delivered 59 community events, all while maintaining strong financial discipline and transparent accounting practices.

### TEAM OPAL (March 2024 – April 2025)

During this financial year, we welcomed **twelve new volunteers** to the OPAL team. Their dedication, patience, and hard work have been invaluable. We are deeply grateful for their commitment and the meaningful impact they have made.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to our wider community of supporters. Many individuals regularly contributed by providing refreshments, offering meeting spaces, documenting our activities, and promoting our work across social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. Their support has played a crucial role in strengthening OPAL's social initiatives.

We look forward to building on this momentum in the coming year.

### Looking Forward

#### 1. Staffing and Volunteer Capacity

- By March 2026, we will recruit one Volunteer Coordinator, one full-time staff member, and two part-time staff members to strengthen service delivery and volunteer management. This will increase our active volunteer base by at least 40% and improve volunteer retention and support.

#### 2. Youth-Focused Services

- By September 2025, we will secure at least one long-term funding agreement (minimum 2–3 years) to expand our youth-focused services. This will enable us to deliver structured programmes that support wellbeing, confidence, and skills development for young people, reaching at least 100 beneficiaries annually.

#### 3. Trustee Board Development

- By December 2025, we will recruit at least two new trustees with expertise in finance, safeguarding, fundraising, or legal governance, and deliver annual trustee training to strengthen oversight, accountability, and strategic leadership.

#### 4. Partnerships and Collaboration

- By March 2026, we will establish at least five new strategic partnerships with local authorities, community organisations, and specialist service providers to increase referrals, joint delivery, and shared learning.

#### 5. OISC Accreditation

- By March 2026, we will complete the necessary training, policies, and governance requirements to apply for OISC accreditation, enabling the organisation to provide regulated immigration advice and strengthen support for individuals navigating immigration processes.

### FINANCIAL REVIEW

For the year ending 31 March 2024, OPAL's income increased from **£119,823.74** to **£151,519.47**, while expenditure rose to **£122,989.81**. This increase was primarily due to the receipt of a three-year project grant from the National Lottery Community Fund.

### RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

Except for the first appointed trustees, all trustees serve **three-year terms**, appointed by resolution at a properly convened meeting. When selecting trustees, the Board considers the skills, knowledge, and experience required for the effective governance and administration of the CIO.

### RISK STATEMENT

OPAL faces a range of operational, financial, and reputational risks. The Trustees regularly review activities to identify significant risks and, where possible, implement appropriate mitigation measures.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

Under charity law, Trustees must prepare annual financial statements that record all receipts and payments for the year. Trustees are responsible for:

- Maintaining accurate accounting records
- Ensuring financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011
- Safeguarding the charity's assets
- Taking reasonable steps to prevent fraud or irregularities

## **RESERVES POLICY**

OPAL is currently heavily dependent on grant funding. Any significant reduction of the financing could jeopardise our ability to deliver essential services. To ensure sustainability, the Trustee Board has agreed to build reserves that would allow OPAL to continue core operations for at least 6 months. These reserves will be generated from unrestricted income.

## **SUPPORTERS**

### **Charitable Trusts and Foundations**

We gratefully acknowledge support from:

- National Lottery Community Fund
- G-A-Y Foundation (non-monetary)
- LGBT Consortium
- Baobab Foundation
- Lloyds Bank Development Grant (non-monetary)
- Lambeth Community Fund
- TFL (WCGL)
- Synergi Foundation

### **Individual Donors**

We extend heartfelt thanks to all individual donors. Their contributions—including creative fundraising campaigns, sporting events, and community crowdfunding—have enabled OPAL to support more LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees in the UK than ever before.

## **STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Trustees must prepare financial statements that present an accurate and fair view of the charity's financial activities and position. In preparing these statements, Trustees must:

- Apply appropriate and consistent accounting policies.
- Make reasonable judgments and estimates.
- Follow relevant accounting standards and guidelines.
- Prepare accounts on a going concern basis unless circumstances indicate otherwise.
- Maintain proper accounting records to comply with the Charities Act 2011
- Safeguard the charity's assets and prevent fraud or irregularity.

The Trustees confirm that they have provided all relevant information to the independent examiners and are aware of no undisclosed matters. Trustees have no personal financial interest in the charity.

## **Independent Examiner's Report**

### **To the Trustees of OPAL**

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Out & Proud African LGBTI (OPAL)

I report to the Trustees on my examination of OPAL's accounts for the year ended 31 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 OPAL's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act. 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 have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination that give me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records.

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 to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



#### **Swan Accounting Services Ltd**

FF0F25A, CEME Innovation Centre,  
Marsh Way, Rainham, RM13 8EU  
Tel: 0845 467 7245  
Fax: 0871 714 2256

**Date:** 14/01/2026

**OUT & PROUD AFRICAN LGBTI  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025**

<b>INCOME RESOURCES</b>	<b>Unrestricted Fund £</b>	<b>Restricted Fund £</b>	<b>2025 Fund £</b>	<b>2024 Fund £</b>
Donation & Grant	9,309.77	142,209.70	151,519.47	119,828.74
Other Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>9,309.77</b>	<b>142,209.70</b>	<b>151,519.47</b>	<b>119,828.74</b>

**OUTGOING RESOURCES**

Charitable Expenditure	9,309.77	113,680.04	122,989.81	121,578.48
<b>Total Outgoing Resources</b>	<b>9,309.77</b>	<b>113,680.04</b>	<b>122,989.81</b>	<b>121,578.48</b>

Net Incoming Resources	0.00	28,529.66	28,529.66	-1,749.74
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Balance brought forward.	0.00	21,025.88	21,025.88	22,775.57
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<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>49,555.54</b>	<b>49,555.54</b>	<b>21,025.83</b>
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**BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025**

<b>CURRENT ASSET</b>	<b>2025 £</b>	<b>2024 £</b>
Cash at Bank	56,259.54	23,073.83
Cash in Hand	0.00	360.00
	<b>56,259.54</b>	<b>23,433.83</b>

<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Creditor & Accruals	6,704.00	2,408.00

<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>49,555.54</b>	<b>21,025.83</b>
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**FUNDS OF THE CHARITY**

Unrestricted Funds	0.00	5,283.16
Restricted Funds	49,555.54	15,742.67
	<b>49,555.54</b>	<b>21,025.83</b>

**OUT & PROUD AFRICAN LGBTI  
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025**

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1.1. Basis of Preparation of Financial Statement**

The financial statements are prepared under the historic cost convention and include the results of the charity's continuing operations, as described in the Management Committee's Report.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting by Charities.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption under Financial Reporting No. 1, as it is required to produce a cash flow statement because it qualifies as a small charity.

**1.2. Incoming Resources.**

1.2.1. Revenue grants are credited to the Statement of Financial Activities on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate to a specific future period, in which they are included on the Balance Sheet as deferred income to be recognised in the coming accounting period.

1.2.2. Grants received for a specific purpose are accounted for as **restricted funds** in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA).

1.2.3. **Donations** are recognised on a **cash basis** unless income is deferred.

1.2.4. **Other Incoming Resources:** Other incoming resources are recognised on an **accrual basis**.

1.2.5. **Deferred Income:** Where a grant or donation is received in advance for expenditure in a future accounting period, recognition of that income is deferred and released in the period in which the related expenditure is incurred.

**1.3. Restricted Funds**

Restricted funds represent income received for specific purposes as specified by the donor. Expenditure that meets these purposes is charged to the relevant fund, together with a fair allocation of management and support costs.

**1.4. Unrestricted Funds**

Unrestricted funds comprise donations and other income received or generated for the organisation's general objectives, without donor-imposed restrictions, and are available for general use.

1.5. **Designated Funds**

Designated funds are unrestricted funds that the Management Committee has earmarked for specific purposes.

1.6. **Resources Expended**

Direct charitable expenditure includes all costs incurred by **Out & Proud African LGBTI Charity** in the direct pursuit of its charitable objectives.

Management and administration expenditure includes costs not directly attributable to charitable activities and which cannot be allocated to direct charitable expenditure.

1.7. **Tangible Fixed Assets**

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful economic lives. Depreciation is charged at **25% per annum on a straight-line basis**.

2.0. **TAXATION**

There is no liability to Corporation Tax because of its Charitable status

3.0. **CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS**

	2025 £	2024 £
Office Laptop		2,408.00
T-Shirts + Credit Card + legal & professional support	6704.00	

**OUT & PROUD AFRICAN LGBTI  
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025**

<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>Unrestricted Fund £'s</b>	<b>Restricted Fund £'s</b>	<b>2025 Total £'s</b>	<b>2024 Total £'s</b>
Individual Donation	6,459.86		6,459.86	12,406.74
Cost of Living Community Fund				66,672.00
National Lottery Community Fund		88,382.70	88,382.70	9,950.00
Baobab Foundation		10,961.00	10,961.00	15,000.00
National Express				4,000.00
Gasworks				300.00
Mayor's Fund				1,500.00
G-A-Y Foundation				10,000.00
Crowd Fund	1,788.58		1,788.58	
LGBT Consortium		22,866.00	22,866.00	
Mercantile	561.33	561.33	561.33	
Hachette UK	500.00		500.00	
National Survivor Fund		5,000.00	5,000.00	
Grounds Work		5,000.00	5,000.00	
London Community Fund		10,000.00	10,000.00	
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>9,309.77</b>	<b>142,209.70</b>	<b>151,519.47</b>	<b>119,828.74</b>

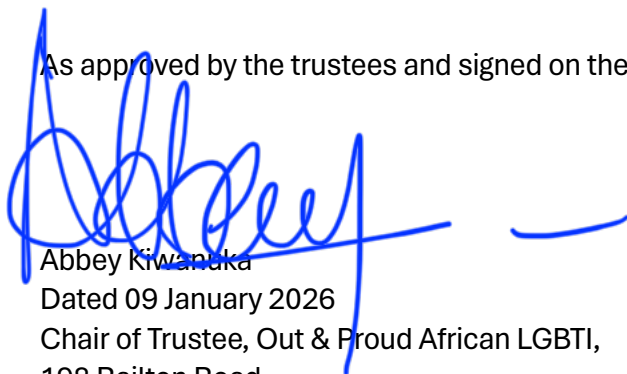
**OUTGOING RESOURCES**

**Charitable Activities**

Volunteer Expenses		15,541.26	15,541.26	20,058.91
Social Events		12,287.53	12,287.53	10,922.23
Capacity Building		2,230.11	2,230.11	1,110.63
Telephone		1,881.37	1,881.37	1,787.46
Stationary/Postage		2,028.17	2,028.17	1,451.24
Subscription		2,505.47	2,505.47	2,451.42
Rent		17,215.01	17,215.01	12,190.00
Furniture/IT Equipment's		15,106.65	15,106.65	16,065.43
Fundraiser Fees		1,200.00	1,200.00	
Legal fees		1,990.00	1,990.00	650.00
Transport		6,521.66	6,521.66	20,954.73
Promotion		208.28	208.28	553.38
Hardship		5,604.59	5,604.59	17,015.03
Food/refreshment				12,707.29
T-shirts				2,083.00
Website		9,270.07	9,270.07	2,083.00
Accountant		340.13	340.13	
Interpretation		290.00	290.00	
Office Renovation		670.00	670.00	
Counselling		1,400.00	1,400.00	
Partners/International Work	9,309.77	1,283.75	10,593.52	
Workshop		14,756.34	14,756.34	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>9,309.77</b>	<b>113,680.04</b>	<b>122,989.81</b>	<b>121,578.48</b>



As approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Abbey Kiwanuka', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Abbey Kiwanuka

Dated 09 January 2026

Chair of Trustee, Out & Proud African LGBTI,

198 Railton Road

London,

SE24 0JT