

REFUGEE WOMEN OF BRISTOL
CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
Annual Report and Accounts
Legal and administrative information

Status

Refugee Women of Bristol is a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the Charity Commission in England and Wales on 20 February 2017. Refugee Women of Bristol was originally registered as a charity on 29 April 2010

Trustees and management committee

Mrs Marfat Shamat, Chair	
Miss Tatu Nampijji	
Mrs Safa Omer, Treasurer	
Miss Ayesha Ali, Secretary	
Miss Shazia Akhtar	
Miss Aminata Coulibali	
Miss Abir Ahmed	Elected in November 2023
Mrs Jouwiryaiman Almakary	Elected in November 2023
Mrs Hibo Elmi	Elected in November 2023
Mrs Samanta Haxhagiqi	Resigned in November 2023
Mrs Muna Ali	Resigned in November 2023
Mrs Amina Jama	Resigned in November 2023
Mrs Nasra Gedi	Resigned in November 2023

Registered charity number 1171683

Registered office

Unit 35, Easton Business Centre, Felix Road, Bristol BS5 0HE

info@refugeewomenofbristol.org.uk

<http://www.refugeewomenofbristol.org.uk/>

Bankers

Lloyds TSB

Accountants

AL Accounting Solutions
Chartered Certified Accountants
21A Brighton Road
South Croydon
Surrey
CR2 6EA

REFUGEE WOMEN OF BRISTOL

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for the year ended 31ST MARCH 2024

Trustees' Report

Reflections from the Chair and Development Manager

2023-2024 was a very successful but challenging year. The cost-of-living crisis continued and has had a huge impact on the running of the organisation. However, we were fortunate enough to secure multi-year grants to sustain the vital work we are doing.

In October, we celebrated 20 years of our charity at Easton Christian Family Centre. It was a heartwarming day with speeches, singing, and lots of snacks. This was a testament to the continuing importance of women-led refugee and asylum services in Bristol. <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/celebrating-20-years-of-refugee-women-of-bristol/>

Our membership has significantly increased with an average of 130 women and 30 preschool children attending our drop-in centre and free creche. We are anticipating that the demand for our services will continue to rise.

We are so pleased that, along with our partners FORWARD and Home Girls Unite, we have been successful in securing funding from The National Lottery Community Fund to enable us to continue our Mend the Gap Project Phase 2, which is focused on tackling multiple forms of violence against women and girls within African communities in the UK.

Another significant success is that we secured another 3 years of unrestricted funds from Lloyds Bank Foundation's Racial Equity Programme, to continue our vital work of supporting refugee and asylum-seeking women in Bristol.

RWoB in partnership with Bristol Somali Youth Voice (BSYV) became a Refugee Community Hub. We coordinate and share information and resources on the cost-of-living crisis with the Bristol Refugee and Asylum-Seeking Partnership (BRASP) and other refugee organisations in Bristol.

Psychological, Adversity and Trauma (PAT) training: Members of our staff, volunteers, and trustees attended two workshops led by Second Step and funded by Bristol City Council (BCC) that focused on increasing our knowledge around trauma and helping us to increase our resilience to better support our communities. RWoB is now working on a new Action Plan that will guide us through the next few months and beyond.

Ways of Working: We are also working on an exciting project which will help guide RWoB strategy over the coming years. The 'Ways of Working' was developed by and for staff and volunteers of RWoB.

Clockwise Charity Partner 2024: Clockwise Bristol got in touch late in 2023 and let us know that RWoB had been selected by the company to be their new charity partner. We were so happy with the news and have been enjoying the partnership. Our services were dependent on a dedicated team of volunteers who gave their precious time to deliver a lifesaving service in this difficult time and we would like to acknowledge and thank them. We would also like to express our utmost gratitude and appreciation to all our funders who responded generously during this unprecedented time and enabled us to deliver a unique and flexible service to a vulnerable group of women in Bristol.

Thank you to all those who donated, fundraised, and supported us this year to continue to deliver the unique service for and led by refugee and asylum-seeking women in Bristol and its surrounding areas.

Objectives and activities

Refugee Women of Bristol is a registered charity set up in 2003 by a group of refugee women to advance education, relieve poverty, promote, and protect the health of refugee women and those seeking asylum in Bristol and the surrounding area by provision of advice, information, and support.

What we want to achieve

- To raise the educational status of refugee women and asylum seekers — giving them more choices, opportunities to gain employment and improved economic prospects.
- To ensure that women have access to relevant information on Issues concerned with welfare rights, health, education, and other appropriate issues.
- To raise awareness of the issues faced by the women and reduce barriers that prevent them from accessing other services and opportunities, building bridges, and improving integration.

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What we want to achieve continued.

*To assist the women to develop good social networks and include rather than exclude themselves from the community reducing isolation.

- To improve self-esteem and self-confidence.
- To empower women to participate in local and national decision-making processes.

How we achieve our aims

- Providing access to information on issues such as health, welfare, childcare, education, housing, training, and employment.
- Enabling women to access support from bi-lingual community workers and ensuring written information is translated or interpreted verbally for those who are not literate in their first language.
- Delivering leisure and social opportunities.
- Provision of free educational opportunities with the support of an on-site free crèche.

Informing service providers about the needs of refugee women through workshops, presentations and by raising RWOB's profile at community events.

- Organising social events/outings to give women a chance to build friendship networks.
- Outreach work to increase participation of women in the group from a wide range of cultural backgrounds.
- Making links with local and national organisations, which will support the work and the development of the organisation. -
- Developing the Board of Trustees through a programme of support and training so the organisation can be managed effectively.
- Enabling women to have a say in the development of services that may affect their lives.

Summary of activities and achievements

2023-24: We had **155** new members and a total membership of **806**. Our members speak **55** different first languages and have **63** different countries of origin.

-We had **41** volunteers; **24** volunteering places were allocated to members including trustees.

Our English language and life skills support service is run by volunteers at our weekly drop-in centre. The service focuses on teaching practical language skills that women can use in their daily lives, for example going to the doctors, and accessing information about local services. A total of **113** individual women attended these classes.

-Arts and Crafts: This is a very informal activity, where women can relax, chat and be creative. Activities include sewing, knitting and jewellery making. Women have been making cushions, cards and baskets to sell and fundraise for the organisation.

Our Community Workers provided over **288** individual advocacy and information sessions to **158** different women (of which **155** were new members this year).

Weekly and Monthly activities at the drop-in centre supported by Community Workers:

[Changes Bristol](#) provides monthly peer support through art activities while discussing concerns and worries about their health and wellbeing.

[Bristol Family Hub navigators](#): A family navigator runs monthly sessions to help members find activities for their families.

[St Paul's Children Centre](#): They provided outreach sessions with a focus on families with young children.

[WECIL charity](#): They deliver sessions at the drop-in once a month for disabled women. Most women access this service to find out about hidden disability or injuries caused by war. Some of them qualified for support but did not know before this service.

[Citizens Advice Bureau](#): They provided fortnightly sessions at our Drop-in which gave guidance on benefits, money, debt, and energy bills.

[Bristol Mind](#): A counsellor from Bristol Mind provided 1-1 counselling sessions at the drop-in centre. We referred some women who were struggling to the service and supported them while they attended these sessions.

[Caafi Health](#) ran several workshops at the drop-in centre addressing members' health issues and gave them timely support.

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MMR awareness:

We worked with NHS England to increase MMR awareness, confidence, and uptake for all. We shared evidence-based information on the MMR vaccine in groups and offered 1-1 support. We facilitated smaller information-sharing sessions and events in our drop-in centre.

Mend the Gap phase two focuses on tackling multiple forms of violence against women and girls within African communities in the UK. Our team provided **340** 1-1 emotional and practical support sessions to **36** women who are survivors of physical and emotional abuse. During these sessions, **68** referrals were made to practical and specialist support agencies and organisations.

Additionally, **36** outreach sessions were carried out with women, organisations, agencies and forums. These sessions highlighted the support our members need and the issues they are facing.

The team also run monthly Coffee Morning sessions facilitated by professionals to address violence, abuse and mental well-being.

Free bus fare tickets: We had **133** women access bus fare tickets (amount £800). **100** women accessed the free bus fare tickets that we received from the Bristol City of Sanctuary. An average of 20 women accessed the tickets every week.

Vouchers: **70** Women received a **£15** voucher each (**£1050**)

-We celebrated International Women's Day, Christmas, Eid, Chinese and Kurdish New Year.

-As part of the Refugee Festival in June 2023, we organised a dance event to celebrate the refugee contribution to Bristol. Over **100** women and some of their preschool children attended the event.

- Early Years Project (EYP): The Bristol Refugee Rights Early Years Project delivered at RWoB offers a wide range of activities for children under 5. These include construction, painting, water play, sand play and imaginary play. **49** individual children attended the EYP; in this period **38** new children were registered with **386** individual attendance sessions which were delivered.

-Training for staff and volunteers: RWoB organised training for staff and volunteers to enable them to deliver safe, supported, and appropriate services to our members; training included Trauma-Informed Practices, Mailing Software and Event Ticketing Software, Community Development Training – Ways of Working update, First Aid, Management and Leadership, training on new legislation (Nationality and Borders Act, and Illegal Migration Act), Safeguarding, Level 2 food hygiene, Anxiety and Depression, and Peer Support ICE Mental Health Workforce training. Training was also delivered to staff and volunteers to implement our new Limelight Database.

-We delivered the following workshops for members: Art for Wellbeing, RWA- Royal West of England Academy, and Health Watch.

-Lunch club and food provision: The Lunch Club has become the highlight of the activities at the drop-in centre. Women and their preschool children enjoy well-balanced, nutritious, and warm meals. We were able to cook a variety of ethnic food. Providing breakfast and running the Lunch Club helps women fully engage in different activities and remain at the drop-in centre for longer. We cook for an average of **120** women and **30** preschool children every week.

Personnel 2023-2024

Layla Ismail - Development Manager

Negat Hussein - Drop-in Co-ordinator and Community Outreach Worker

Sherien Sheikh — Drop-in Assistant

Azza Mustafa — Health and Well-being Coordinator

Sana Elgoraish Finance Worker

Vicki Harte - Admin and Communications Officer

Jade Pang - Community Worker (Chinese)

Muna Talha - Community Worker (Arabic) till October 2023

Azza Elnagmi – Community Worker (Arabic) from December 2023

Muna Mohamed – Community Worker (Somali) from November 2023

Negla Abdi Hadi - Kitchen Coordinator

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for the year ended 31ST MARCH 2024
Trustees' Report

I would like to thank the trustees, staff and volunteers whose energy, determination, and commitment to improving the quality of life for women from the refugee community is immeasurable. Finally, on behalf of everyone at RWoB, I would like to express our gratitude and thanks to all our funders, donors, and fundraisers.

Layla Ismail
Development Manager

Structure, Governance and Management Objectives and activities

The objects of the charity are:

To advance education, relieve poverty and promote and protect the health of refugee women and those seeking asylum in Bristol and the surrounding area by the provision of advice, information and support.

Organisation

Refugee Women of Bristol is governed by a Constitution which operates as an Association. The Trustees are appointed or reappointed annually at AGMs and can be co-opted in between. Trustees are provided with a 4-session induction to introduce them to their role and responsibilities. They are then supported to undertake training appropriate to any special role they undertake on the management committee. This includes an introduction to the organisation's policies including:

- *Information Security and Confidentiality policy
- *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy
- *Safeguarding Adults Policy
- *Children Safeguarding policy
- *Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures
- *Health and Safety policy and risk assessments
- *Complaints Procedures.
- *Financial policy and procedures
- *Service user involvement policy
- *Reserve policy and procedures

RWoB is a registered charity with financial support from the local council and local and national trust funds. Bristol City Council has funded the organisation since its inception in 2003. RWoB has an excellent track record of engaging hard-to-reach women from the refugee and asylum-seeking community. Refugee women have been at the heart of the organisation since its beginning, involved at all levels as volunteers, staff and trustees. The management committee is entirely led by women from refugee backgrounds who understand the needs and issues faced by refugee and asylum-seeking women from their own experience; they are therefore best placed to direct the development of services for the community and ensure that they are culturally appropriate.

The organisation is made up of trustees, paid staff and a team of volunteers. We actively support our members in developing their skills, so they can volunteer, be elected to the board of trustees or apply for paid positions. RWoB has formed successful partnerships with a range of voluntary and statutory organisations to deliver services at the drop-in centre and in the wider community. Key partnerships include FORWARD UK, BRASP, and Bristol City Council.

The trustees closely monitor risks associated with running services for the organisation by carrying out risk assessments and implementing appropriate measures to mitigate risk.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have complied with their duty under Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aim and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aim and objectives they have set.

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for the year ended 31ST MARCH 2024
Trustees' Report

Statement of trustees' responsibility

A UK Charity regulation requires the trustees to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year and its financial position at the end of the year. In doing so the trustees are required to: -

- * Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- * Make judgements and reasonable and prudent judgement;
- * State whether applicable accounting standards and statement of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- * Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable law, regulations, and the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Reserve Statement

The trustees' agreed to reserve **34%** of unrestricted funds for 2023-2024. During this time period, the unrestricted funds held as general funds totalled **£120,395**, therefore the reserve will be **£40,000**. This is to build financial resilience and manage unexpected costs. The RWoB policy sets out clear aims and objectives for this reserve.

Signed.....

Mrs Marfat Shamat
Chairperson

Date:.....

REFUGEE WOMEN OF BRISTOL
CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
Annual Report and Accounts
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees
for the year ended 31ST MARCH 2024

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the above period.

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 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.

Alhassan Bangura FCCA
AL Accounting Solutions
Chartered Certified Accountants
21A Brighton Road
South Croydon
Surrey
CR2 6EA

Date.....

REFUGEE WOMEN OF BRISTOL
CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
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Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account)
for the year ended 31ST MARCH 2024

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
	Notes				
Incoming resources:					
<i>Incoming resources from generated funds</i>					
Donations		26,155	1,501	27,656	30,493
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities</i>					
Grants and Service level agreements		500	175,953	176,453	178,395
Total Incoming resources		<u>26,655</u>	<u>177,454</u>	<u>204,109</u>	<u>208,888</u>
Resources Expended:					
Charitable activities	6	26,638	166,857	193,495	182,173
Total Resources Expended		<u>26,638</u>	<u>166,857</u>	<u>193,495</u>	<u>182,173</u>
Net incoming resources		17	10,597	10,614	26,715
Opening funds balance		115,077	49,813	164,890	138,175
Adjustments/transfers	7	5,301	(5,301)	-	-
Closing funds balance*	7	<u>120,395</u>	<u>55,109</u>	<u>175,504</u>	<u>164,890</u>
<i>*Includes £40,000 of unrestricted funds held as reserves</i>					

REFUGEE WOMEN OF BRISTOL
CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
Annual Report and Accounts
Balance Sheet as at 31ST MARCH 2024

		<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
	<u>Notes</u>	£	£
Current assets			
Debtors & prepayments	4	1,450	1,450
Cash at bank		176,100	137,812
Cash in Hand		473	403
		<u>178,023</u>	<u>139,665</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	5	<u>(2,519)</u>	<u>(3,070)</u>
Net Current Assets		175,504	136,595
Net Assets		<u>175,504</u>	<u>136,595</u>
REPRESENTED BY:			
Restricted Funds	7	55,109	49,813
Unrestricted Funds	7	120,395	115,077
		<u>175,504</u>	<u>164,890</u>

These financial statements were approved by the trustees on
and are signed on their behalf by:

.....
Mrs Marfat Shamat
Chairperson

REFUGEE WOMEN OF BRISTOL
CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
Annual Report and Accounts
Notes forming part of the financial statements
for the year ended 31ST MARCH 2024

1. Accounting policies

a) The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued in October 2019 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2019.

b) Grants and income are included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year in which they are receivable, except as follows:

- i) When donors specify that funds must be used in future accounting periods, the income is then deferred until those periods.
- ii) When funders impose conditions which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to the income, as such the income is deferred until after the pre-condition is met.

c) Resources expended are recognised in the period in which they are incurred. Resources expended include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered.

d) Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

e) Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor.

2. Net incoming resources for the year

This is stated after charging:	2024	2023
	£	£
Independent Examiners Fee	1,440	1,440

3. Staff cost and numbers

	2024	2024	2023	2023
	Number	£	Number	£
Wages & Salaries	9	112,003	9	110,372

4. Debtors & Prepayments

	2024	2023
	£	£
Prepayments	1,450	1,450
	1,450	1,450

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5. Creditors & Accruals

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade Creditors & accruals	1,440	1,440
Payroll Tax and National Insurance	670	1,331
Pension liability	409	299
	<u>2,519</u>	<u>3,070</u>

6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Salaries and pension cost	16,787	95,216	112,003	107,989
Events and workshops	1,556	13,355	14,911	17,374
Room hire	292	14,388	14,680	11,535
Volunteer expenses	6	3,262	3,268	5,102
Advocacy & support	1,022	-	1,022	4,374
Partnership and Engagement	-	10,000	10,000	-
Rent, rates & utilities	460	11,625	12,085	11,199
Postage, stationery & office sundries	-	947	947	1,116
Telephone & internet	-	816	816	585
Travel & subsistence	1,207	1,683	2,890	2,146
Recruitment & CRB checks	-	163	163	273
Non capitalised asset cost	-	3,432	3,432	1,849
Training	2,232	1,662	3,894	4,073
Membership & subscription	53	631	684	458
Legal and professional	333	3,030	3,363	4,289
Website & publicity	295	418	713	264
Insurance	1,278	1,428	2,706	1,222
Bookeeping & payroll cost	155	-	155	727
Bank charges	37	179	216	280
Trustee expenses	925	3,182	4,107	5,878
Accountancy fees	-	1,440	1,440	1,440
	<u>26,638</u>	<u>166,857</u>	<u>193,495</u>	<u>182,173</u>

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7. Movement in funds

	At 01-Apr-23	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Adjustment & Transfers £	At 31-Mar-24 £
Restricted funds					
BCC Community Champion Grant	914		(914)		-
Anonymous	13,990	20,000	(11,210)	(7,000)	15,780
Bristol City Council COVID-19 Grant	1,773		(1,773)		-
Bristol City Council BRASP Community Hubs	2,234	28,085	(26,684)		3,635
D Gill KG	1,052		(1,052)		-
Anonymous	4,001	20,000	(16,676)		7,325
HT & LB Cadbury Trust	500	2,000	(2,250)		250
JJ Charitable trust	742		(742)		-
John James Foundation	9,538	12,500	(12,596)		9,442
Lloyds Bank Foundation	7,670	25,000	(32,670)		-
National Lottery Community Fund	-	24,340	(15,868)		8,472
North Bristol NHS	-	3,000	(3,000)		-
The National Lottery Community Fund	6,371	5,000	(11,371)		-
Quartet Community Foundation		25,000	(14,795)		10,205
Anonymous	-	2,000	(3,699)	1,699	-
Triodos Foundation		1,500	(1,500)		-
Winter Household Support Funding award	1,028	9,029	(10,057)		-
Total Restricted funds	49,813	177,454	(166,857)	(5,301)	55,109
Unrestricted funds					
General Funds held as reserves	33,000			7,000	40,000
General Funds others	65,234	26,655	(9,795)	(1,699)	80,395
Pears Foundations	10,000		(10,000)		-
The Stephen Clark Charitable	6,843		(6,843)		-
	115,077	26,655	(26,638)	5,301	120,395
Total funds	164,890	204,109	(193,495)	-	175,504

REFUGEE WOMEN OF BRISTOL
CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

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Year ended: 31ST MARCH 2024

Registered CIO No: 1171683

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CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
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