

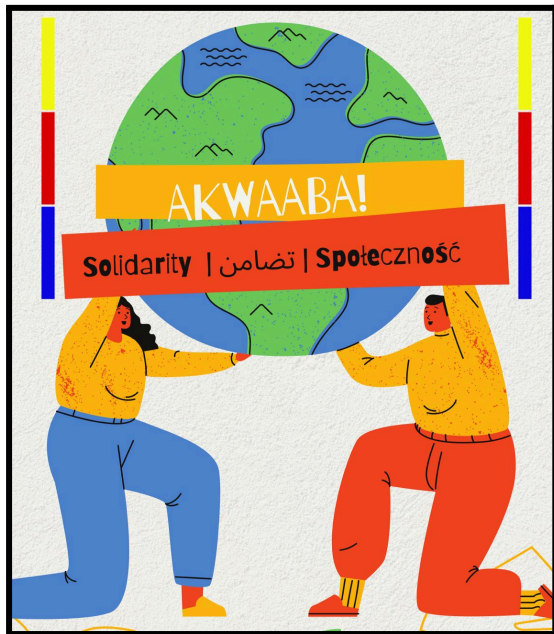


AKWAABA ANNUAL REPORT

Reporting Period: April 2023 - March 2024

Charity Registration Number: 1181291

PART 1: ABOUT AKWAABA



Akwaaba is a Hackney-based social centre for migrants. We offer a space for rest, play, learning and mutual support. Akwaaba is for all migrants regardless of immigration status, 'race', religion, country of origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and (dis)ability.

We believe that no-one is illegal. We are committed to actively opposing racism and all other forms of discrimination and oppression.

Our aim is to build community and foster care, cooperation and solidarity. As a community, we try

to make decisions collectively and give all members an equal say in how the social centre is run.

Akwaaba is a volunteer-run space.

Our primary aims are to:

- Offer a safe and welcoming space for migrants of all backgrounds for social activities and mutual support
- Foster solidarity and build a shared community of people from different backgrounds
- Provide material support including food, travel bursaries and other donated items to migrant members experiencing hardship



Summary of changes to Akwaaba's activities between April 2023 to March 2024

PART 2: ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

In 2023 and 2024, Akwaaba continued to operate from Stoke Newington School. We hold Sunday drop-in sessions twice a month from our base in Stoke Newington Secondary School. We continued our regular activities including a hot meal, a children's programme, arts workshops, English conversation classes, computer support and a barbershop. Alongside these activities, we began to expand our offer with music, movement workshops and sewing being offered. We also host monthly outreach visits delivered by a partner charity Positive East which provide free STI testing and sexual health advice.

Our sessions are attended by an average of 150 people including up to 30 children. Each week we distribute £5 travel bursaries to half the attendees (around 70 people) according to a rota system. We cover travel costs for volunteers up to £10, although some volunteers travel from far afield and pay more than this to get to our sessions.

Our Sunday sessions are run by and for migrants. The majority of Sunday volunteers are migrant members with lived experience of the hostile environment who originally attended the space in order to access support or participate in an activity. Core Akwaaba programmes are led by migrant volunteers including the kitchen, the travel support scheme, the arts workshop and the barbershop, as well as special events like our annual beach trip and Christmas party. Three quarters of the participatory budgeting group (which has determined Akwaaba's annual budget and approved discretionary spending over the past two years) are migrant members with lived experience. Similarly Akwaaba's financial transactions through our bank account are approved by migrant volunteers.

Kids Team

Akwaaba Kids sessions provide a safe, fun, child-centred space for kids whose parents/carers are onsite engaging with the wider community, with a range of games and activities.

AKWAABA

- We have continued our recruitment drive to allow us to book in more kids at our sessions, and to welcome new families into the Akwaaba community.
- We continue to run regular "child liberation" reading and reflection sessions, where we discuss new ideas relating to child-centricity, children's rights, and innovative practice, and how to implement changes in the space as a result.
- In addition to our usual Sunday sessions, we ran a session at a local adventure playground and took a trip to watch Clapton Community FC.

Pictures of marble painting, and one of the kids' continued favourites - slime!



Beach Trip

This year, the beach trip working group organised a trip on 12 August. The group chose to go to Ramsgate. The trip was attended by around 120 people, half adults and half children. People brought and shared food and as the sun was shining, lots of people went into the water.

Christmas party

At this year's Christmas party, we had 377 people attending the session. We handed out Christmas grants at an average of approximately £50 per person to support them over this period. Alongside this we provided Christmas dinner to everybody who attended the session.

English

We hold an English teaching session every week after lunch is served. We have a regular group of members attending with a range of ability levels, ranging from those with little to no English to those who speak well but want to practise their written skills. We have a team of enough volunteers to

AKWAABA

accommodate the diversity of approaches. We try to run the sessions in a participatory way, working with the regular group of students to plan our content. We normally use a theme-based structure, which allows us to take the same topic for several sessions in a row and build our knowledge consistently. Our topics generally cover knowledge directly useful to learners' daily lives and often engage with relevant social and political questions.

SIMs

We have a programme of regular SIM distribution through the National Databank, as we are part of their Online Centres Network. There is always significant demand for these SIMs, and the distribution process also allows us to identify and start to solve a range of other digital access issues that members might experience.

Movement workshops: dance and yoga

We've started a programme of movement workshops which happen every Sunday session. We have beginner salsa/afrobeat dance classes from 3.15-4 and then after a short break, accessible chair yoga from 4.15-5. The workshops are designed to be accessible to all, and there's a regular group of Akwaaba members who attend both sessions, representing a wide range of ages, backgrounds and abilities. The feedback for this new programme has been really positive - lots of people have taken up a physical activity which they had never done before in their lives and have felt the benefit.

Volunteer day

At the end of April, we held a full day volunteer day open to all Akwaaba volunteers, with approximately 30 people in attendance.

The day allowed us to discuss Akwaaba's values, history, and past achievements, as well as think about the future of the organisation. Through a series of activities the group was able to reflect on questions such as what it meant for Akwaaba to be a community and where people could see the organisation in 5 years. We also discussed a range of topics in more detail, including how to make Akwaaba a safer space for all, or how to better recruit and support volunteers. The day ended with a shared meal, allowing volunteers to socialise and get to know each other better.

We received positive feedback from many volunteers, who appreciated the opportunity to come together, reflect on our current praxis, make collective decisions, and build up relationships. We hope to organise regular volunteer days going forward, at least twice a year.

Arts project

We meet weekly every Sunday. 2 weeks at Stoke Newington school and 2 weeks at Kilburn library. Our members enjoy drawing, painting, colouring, making clay, mash paper, making masks, etc.

The members reflect that the art group helps their wellbeing, socialise and make friends as well as improving their creativity.

We have an art exhibition in the refugee week. We share our art work at Stoke Newington school and invite visitors from outside to see our art work. We exhibited around 100 pieces and had a music show in which a professional singer sang three songs for us and members from the art group

AKWAABA



performed some poems. Then we opened the stage to open mic from Akwaaba members. There were some people singing and some people playing guitar.

We made a trip to Victoria and Albert museum to get our artist inspired.

We visited the Serpentine gallery. There was an exhibition there and we made the workshop there that time.

We made a trip to the zoo exhibition and we ran our workshop there as well.

AKWAABA



AKWAABA



AKWAABA



AKWAABA



AKWAABA





Sewing class

At Akwaaba, those who attend are able to use sewing machines to make pillow cases, or personal items. Each person was able to take a pillow case at the Christmas party.

Kitchen

Both of Akwaaba's regular kitchen volunteers continue to do great and people love their meals. At present Akwaaba is open twice a month and they usually serve up to 250 meals every session for both adults and children. The cost of cooking for each session adds up to £500 per session.

Hairdressing

Akwaaba continues to provide haircuts to those coming to our sessions. Despite our previous hairdresser now being too busy with other obligations at Akwaaba, we have managed to find new volunteers who are willing to provide haircuts. We provide haircuts to both women and men to ensure that many of the mental health benefits associated with a haircut are available to our community and not obstructed by financial barriers.

Computer section

Akwaaba has an IT cafe where members can use a number of laptops for browsing, listening to music, to watch a movie, to make online applications. A couple of volunteers are available to help with queries or online searches or applications for a range of needs. Tech support for personal devices is available. A total of 5 reconditioned laptops were purchased and lent to volunteers. A new printer has been purchased and is available for members to do printouts and photocopies.

PART 3: GOVERNANCE OF AKWAABA

The Board of Trustees continued to meet quarterly to monitor and oversee the activities of these working groups while individual trustees participated in other working groups.

During the 2023-2024 financial year Akwaaba continued to function in decentralised way, in which our working groups came to the fore:

- The Budget Group, which is open to all members to join, met regularly to determine the budget for the coming quarter and authorise changes to funds allocated to different parts of the project.
- The Fundraising Group continued to source funding for Akwaaba's operation

Akwaaba's community ethos continues to be its strength, allowing the project to rapidly respond and making dramatic changes according to the needs of our members.



PART 4: FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Akwaaba's income was £67,967 (2022-23 - 75,426)

Akwaaba's income decreased from the previous financial year, Akwaaba ended the financial year of 2023/24 with a loss of £8,776. We intentionally increased our spending this year in response to cash reserves being far above our minimum reserves policy. We would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to all those who contributed funds to Akwaaba's operations as well as those who continue to put in efforts into our fundraising.

Net assets at year-end (ie. cash balance) was £69,313 (2022-23 £78,089), of which £61,116 (2022-23 £57,654) was unrestricted funds and £8,197 (£26,452 2022-23) restricted funds.

Akwaaba's main costs continue to be running Sunday sessions, specifically the kitchen costs as well as rent and activities, members' travel to the sessions, which more than doubled that year, as well as newly introduced Winter Resilience Support. Overheads were for insurance, fundraising and employing an accountant.

This year we maintained reserves of around £35,000 to continue running sessions. This provides for approximately six months of essential costs required to run sessions. Any restricted fund balances that cover operational costs are taken into consideration when calculating the required unrestricted reserve.

The main financial risk is the loss of income from recurring donations/grants over a sustained period of time, particularly during current difficult socio-economic conditions in the UK which are seeing household and organisational incomes heavily impacted. During uncertain times, Akwaaba is committed to making plans based on existing and confirmed funds only, protecting its reserves and monitoring funds to avoid a deficit position.

PART 5: ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

AKWAABA



Charity name	Akwaaba
Registered charity number	1181291
Charity's principal address at 31-03-2024	154 Sandford Road LONDON E6 3PX

Names of Trustees at 31-03-2024

1. Bukola Akinniyi
2. Omolola Alimi
3. Ibtisam Imam
4. Naomi Byrne
5. Tomasz Muszynski
6. Otto Wolf
7. Jihad Issa
8. Lucy Rix

Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit

This is to confirm that the Trustees have had due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit set out on their website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-benefit-rules-for-charities>.

Approved by the order of the members of the board and signed on behalf by:

27.01.2025
(Otto Wolf, Trustee)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF AKWAABA (CHARITY NUMBER: 1181291)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of AKWAABA Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) for the period ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 15 to 16.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the CIO's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 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 2011 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1 the accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 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 in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Kalpesh Shah FCCA
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
5 Dacre Road
Croydon
Surrey
CR0 3DL

Dated: 28 January 2025



Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01 April 2023		31 March 2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donation Income	48,990	-	-	48,990	41,458
Grant Income	0	18,977	-	18,977	33,968
Fundraising Income	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	48,990	18,977	-	67,967	75,426
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	48,990	18,977	-	67,967	75,426
A3 Payments					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sunday Rent and Activities	12,332	8,985	-	21,317	20,146
Sunday Kitchen	10,075	-	-	10,075	7,877
Sunday Children Activities	2,513	529	-	3,042	3,815
Sunday Travel Support Sunday	7,230	6,960	-	14,190	6,181
Winter Resilience Support	6,950	12,950	-	19,900	16,440
Daytrips	3,000	891	-	3,891	3,412
Citizenship Support	-	-	-	-	50
Covid-19 Response	-	-	-	-	-
Volunteer Training	1,177	900	-	2,077	650
Volunteer Devices & Data	38	-	-	38	1,953
Overheads	1,663	-	-	1,663	3,212
Governance	550	-	-	550	475
Sub total	45,528	31,215	-	76,743	64,211
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	45,528	31,215	-	76,743	64,211
Net of receipts/(payments)	3,462	- 12,238	-	- 8,776	11,215
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	57,654	20,435	-	78,089	66,874
Cash funds this year end	61,116	8,197	-	69,313	78,089

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank	60,609	8,197	-
	Petty Cash	219	-	-
	Paypal Account	288	-	-
	Total cash funds (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	61,116	8,197	-
		OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	-	
		-	-	
		-	-	
		-	-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	O. Wolf	Otto Wolf	28/01/2025	