

AKWAABA ANNUAL REPORT

Reporting Period: April 2024 - March 2025

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 2024 to March 2025

PART 2: ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

In 2024 and 2025, 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.

- 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.
- At Akwaaba's Christmas session the team activities include making snow globes, karaoke, gingerbread decorating, Christmas cards/decorations. Each child who attended was given a small chocolate gift.

- In addition to our usual Sunday sessions, we ran a session at a local adventure playground over summer with biscuit decorating and glitter tattoos alongside outdoor play.

Beach Trip

In August, Akwaaba took 200 members to Margate in its biggest trip yet. 140 adults and 60 children took the train from Kings Cross to the seaside on a spectacular sunny day. Some members plunged into the sea, while others tentatively wet their feet. Some enjoyed fish and chips on the sand, while others shared home cooked meals with friends. But everyone seemed to cherish another special trip where we got to leave London, revel in each other's company, and breathe in some fresh sea air.

Christmas party

At this year's Christmas party, we had 322 people attending the session in total. Everybody who attended the session enjoyed Christmas dinner and a variety of activities.

English classes

We run English teaching sessions on a fortnightly basis with a consistent core group of learners, alongside occasional attendance from other members. At the beginning of each term, we hold collective planning sessions with learners to understand what they want from the classes and what would be most useful or enjoyable for them. This collaborative approach shapes the programme and helps ensure the sessions are relevant and engaging.

As a result, our sessions combine practical English linked to real challenges learners have experienced in their daily lives with topics they are personally interested in exploring. For example, one learner who hopes to become a hairdresser spent several weeks researching and writing about this ambition in English. Learners have also actively contributed to how the classes are taught. Many have told us they value more formal exercises, particularly those who missed structured learning during their earlier education, and we have incorporated this feedback into our approach.

Alongside the learner sessions, we hold regular teacher training sessions. This has allowed us to expand and strengthen the teaching team over time, including supporting former learners to become involved as teachers themselves.

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 ran two movement sessions throughout the year at our Sunday drop ins at Stoke Newington - dance classes and chair yoga. Our dance classes were attended by around 5 people per week and encompassed a range of styles including salsa, afrobeats and zumba. Participants enjoyed them as an opportunity to have fun, let their hair down and do some exercise.

Chair yoga is an accessible physical practice which promotes bodily awareness, relaxation and mobility. Sessions begin with a few minutes of breathing exercises which calm the nervous system and facilitate mindfulness, move into a series of gentle movements and stretches starting from the head and gradually working down to the feet, and close with a period of silence. We usually had 5-10 participants at each session, including a mix of community members and volunteers of all ages. In feedback, participants said they found the exercises to be accessible and helpful for unlocking stiffness in their bodies. Many people asked for recommendations of videos that they could use to practice at home, and some got involved in other yoga classes in other settings.

Volunteer day

In March this year, we began planning for a volunteer day, pictured below, that was used to engage Akwaaba volunteers and our wider community in deciding the direction for Akwaaba strategically. We made key decisions on working groups, funding allocations and priorities for the year ahead.

In February, we also held the Akwaaba 10 year anniversary. At this we brought together a significant number of volunteers and community members to celebrate the achievements of Akwaaba over the last 10 years, we had food, music, comedy and a range of other activities available for adults and young people.



Arts project

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

We've 10m discussions at the end of each session. Our members comment that the art group helps their wellbeing, socialise and make friends as well as improving their creativity.

We practise writing for some time. Some of our members write poems. Some write some emotional writing. We made a trip to the other cinema to watch some refugee's show. It was free. We have offered good delicious pizzas with different tastes .

We did a small exhibition in our Christmas party and ran a workshop to make any creature from the flour and water. We always used recycled materials or simple ones to be creative.



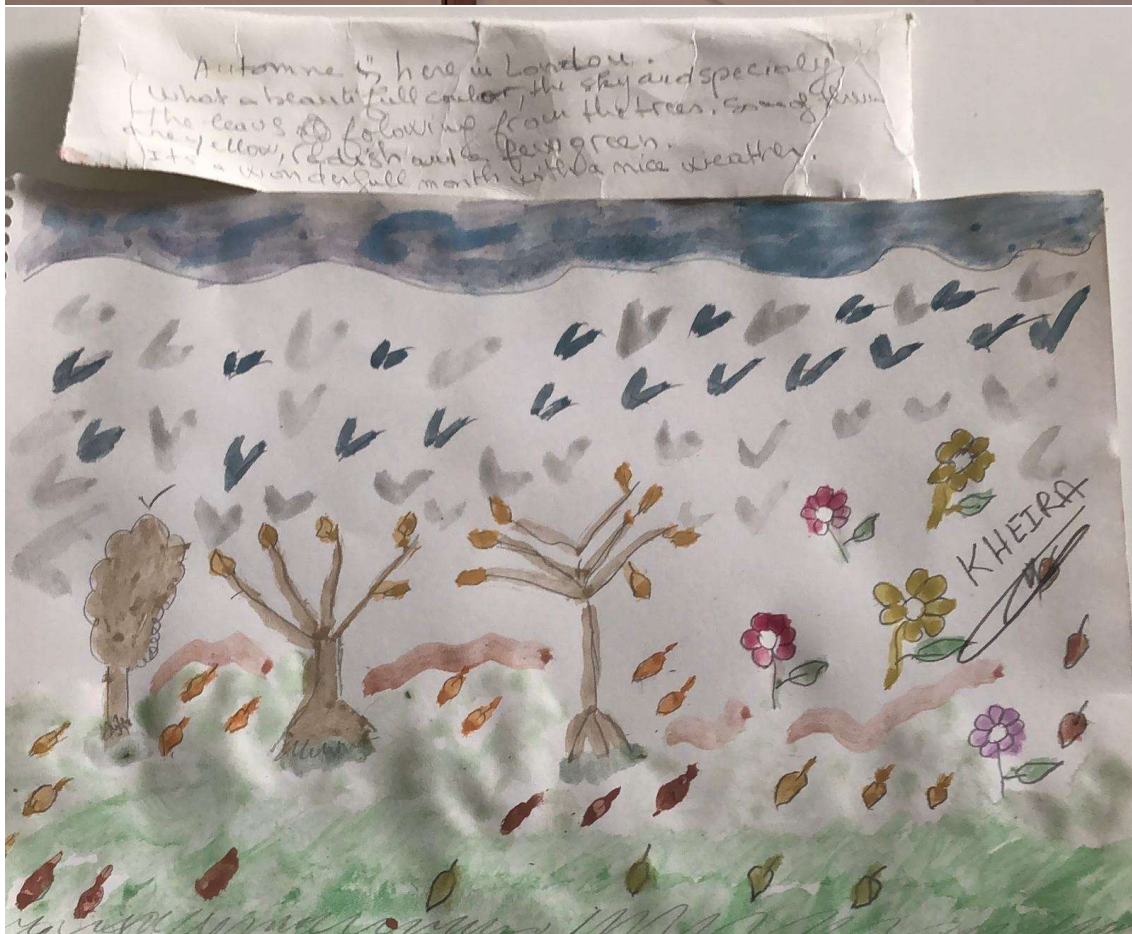




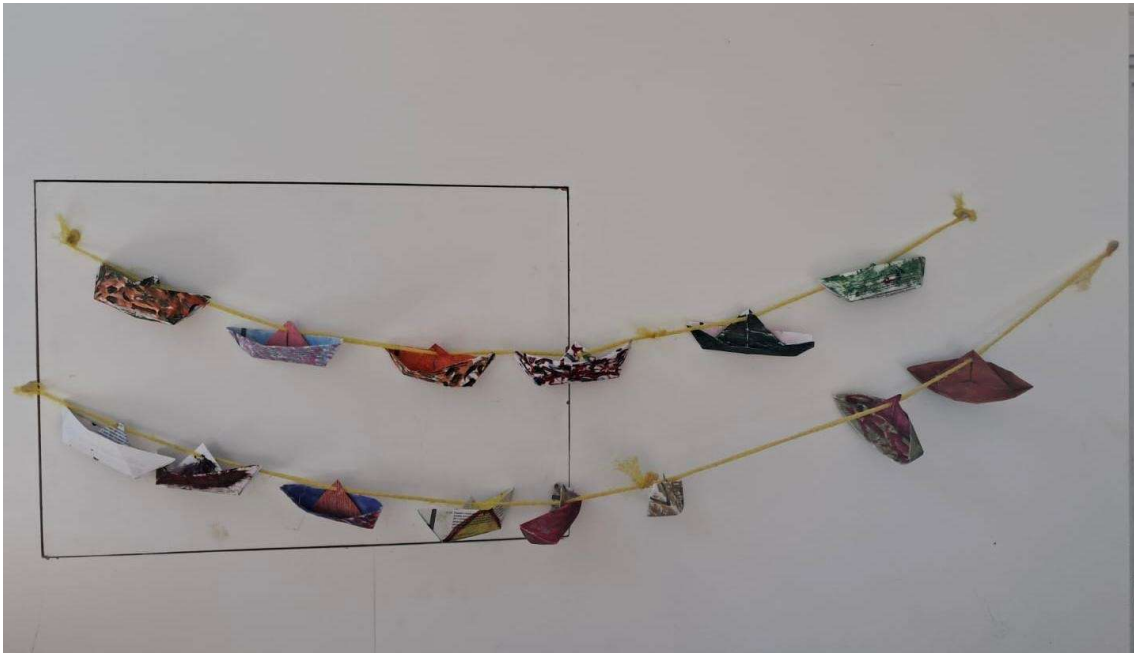












Kitchen

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 £750 per session.

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.

This year we were able to provide reconditioned laptops to volunteers to improve their engagement with Akwaaba and provide printing for volunteers and community members where needed.

Sexual Health Support/Advocacy - Positive East

Positive East continued to attend Akwaaba sessions providing a range of support including STI testing, contraception and sexual health related support.

Women's Resilience fund

In 2024, Akwaaba won a bid to secure multi-year funding from the Smallwood Trust to directly support migrant/refugee/asylum-seeking women in Hackney. Akwaaba received the first 10k installment of a 4 year unrestricted grant in late 2024, and assembled a working group to decide how best to allocate the resource. Women with experience of the immigration system were in the working group, so were able to lend their perspectives about a fair system of distribution. The decision was made collectively to provide as many small grants as possible, with a higher amount available to women who had no recourse to public funds or were experiencing homelessness. We gave out 62 grants in February 2025, and women reported using this money on essential things like food, travel, rent, utilities and homeware. A member of the working group is also representing Akwaaba at the Hackney Women's Network, where grantees from Smallwood meet quarterly to discuss systemic issues affecting migrant women, and how these can be better addressed in partnership.

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 2024-2025 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 £84,038 (2023-24 - 67,967)

Akwaaba's income increased from the previous financial year, Akwaaba ended the financial year of 2024/25 with an increase of £4,430. 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 £73,743 (2023-24 £69,313), of which £72,340 (2023-24 £69,313) was unrestricted funds and £1,403 (£8,197 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 as well as newly introduced Winter Resilience Support. One of the significant increases in costs related to catering our sessions as we began to use external caterers due to venue limitations for cooking on site. 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

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

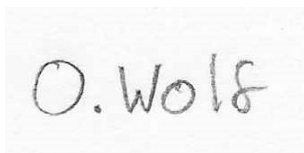
Names of Trustees at 31-03-2025

1. Bukola Akinniyi
2. Omolola Alimi
3. Ibtisam Imam
4. Naomi Byrne
5. Otto Wolf
6. Jihad Issa
7. Morgan Harries

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:



28/01/2026
(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 2025, which are set out on pages 19 to 20.

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: 29 January 2026



AKWAABA			1181291	CC16a
Receipts and payments accounts				
For the period from	Period start date 01 April 2024	to	Period end date 31 March 2025	

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donation Income	49,321	-	-	49,321	48,990
Grant Income	-	34,717	-	34,717	18,977
Fundraising Income	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	49,321	34,717	-	84,038	67,967
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	49,321	34,717	-	84,038	67,967
A3 Payments					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sunday Rent and Activities	7,011	6,634	-	13,645	21,317
Sunday Kitchen	15,435	4,700	-	20,135	10,075
Sunday Children Activities	2,291	252	-	2,543	3,042
Sunday Travel Support	10,926	11,079	-	22,005	14,190
Winter Resilience Support	5,330	-	-	5,330	19,900
Daytrips	2,536	1,109	-	3,645	3,891
Citizenship Support	-	-	-	-	-
Womens Resilience Support	-	8,440	-	8,440	-
Volunteer Training	607	1,100	-	1,707	2,077
Volunteer Devices & Data	-	-	-	-	38
Overheads	1,608	-	-	1,608	1,663
Governance	550	-	-	550	550
Sub total	46,295	33,314	-	79,609	76,743
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	46,295	33,314	-	79,609	76,743
Net of receipts/(payments)	3,027	1,403	-	4,430	- 8,776
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	69,313	-	-	69,313	78,089
Cash funds this year end	72,340	1,403	-	73,743	69,313

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	70,754	1,403	
	Petty Cash	102	-	
	Paypal Account	1,483	-	
	Total cash funds	72,340	1,403	-
	(agree balances with receipts)	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	28/01/2026	