



SIKH WOMEN'S AID

Annual Report

For the Year Ended 30 April 2025

Registered Charity Number: 1198851

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Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name	Sikh Women's Aid
Charity Registration Number	1198851
Registered Office	C/O XL Associates Ltd, Hazara House, 502-504 Dudley Road, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV2 3AA
Trustees	Gagandeep Kaur Kang Sukhvinder Kaur Mandeep Sungu
Chief Executive	Vacant: Senior Management Team Narinder Gill and Rita Chadha
Independent Examiner	XL Associates
Bankers	NatWest & Unity Trust Bank

Chair's Report 2024/25

As we enter our fourth year as a dedicated by-and-for service and our third year as a registered charity, demand for our service has continued to increase. Our work remains firmly aligned to our charitable objectives: protecting and preserving the health of Sikh Panjabi women and children who have suffered from, or are exposed to, domestic abuse and sexual exploitation.

As our work with victim survivors and their families deepens, so does our understanding of the intersecting needs affect physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Domestic abuse and sexual exploitation do not only cause immediate harm, but they also create long-term health consequences. Protecting health therefore requires specialist support that is culturally informed, trauma aware and responsive. This remains central to our strategic planning and growth.

From a Trustee Board perspective, we strengthened engagement with our frontline delivery team through quarterly in-person meetings to ensure their expertise informs sustainability, cohesion and oversight. The direction of Sikh Women's Aid must continue to be shaped by the lived realities of the women and children we support.

In furtherance of our charitable object through the provision of support, education, training and advice, we expanded our counselling offer with the recruitment of an additional therapist. The complexity of trauma within our caseload continues to grow, and timely therapeutic intervention is essential to preserving long-term health outcomes.

We launched the first Sikh Women's Remembrance Day to honour women and girls lost to domestic homicide or suicide, challenging generational silence around abuse. In the same period, with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we designed and published a Sikh Women's book project documenting 21 intergenerational narratives of UK Sikh Panjabi women who experienced domestic and or sexual abuse. Five hundred printed copies were distributed within 72 hours of launch, with requests from America, Canada and Australia. This evidences the power and reach of a truly by-and-for organisation and reflects our commitment to promoting research and publishing useful findings that deepen understanding of culturally specific abuse.

I also had the privilege of co-designing and authoring the two-yearly Sikh Women's Aid Survey and Report 2024 alongside a volunteer researcher and Data Analyst from Aston University. This brought academic rigour to our research and included a specialist focus on police responses to domestic, sexual and spiritual violence, particularly where abuse is perpetrated under the guise of faith. The publication has strengthened our national influencing work and increased demand for specialist support.

During this period, we supported a group of former cult members who pursued civil justice against their former leader, alleging decades of emotional, financial and sexual exploitation under the guise of faith. The five-week trial exposed how ill equipped systems can be when abuse intersects with religious authority. Although the final judgement was in favour of the leader, we continue to support the women and their families. This case reinforces the necessity of specialist support where abuse is compounded by spiritual manipulation.

Looking ahead, our strategic direction must deepen community-focused prevention and expand our national influencing work so that statutory responses are culturally informed and rooted in professional curiosity. After several years of significant growth, the coming year must focus on consolidation. Protecting and preserving health requires stability, and

securing multi-year funding is essential to sustain our specialist team and ensure continuity of support.

Throughout 2024 to 2025, Sikh Women's Aid has remained focused on its core purpose: protecting and preserving the health of Sikh Panjabi women and children through specialist support, education, advice and the promotion and publication of research into domestic abuse and sexual exploitation in all its forms.

It remains an honour to serve as Chair, and I am strengthened by our Trustee Board's collective commitment to our objectives and to the women and children who need our service most.

Sukhvinder Kaur

Chair of Trustees

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of Sikh Women's Aid for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

Sikh Women's Aid is a registered charity, governed by its Constitution. The charity was established to support women and girls from the Sikh Panjabi community who are affected by domestic abuse, sexual violence, and other forms of harm including spiritual and faith-based abuse.

Appointment of Trustees

Trustees are recruited through an open and transparent process, with consideration given to the skills, experience, and diversity needed to provide effective governance. New Trustees undergo an induction programme covering the charity's objectives, activities, governance requirements, and legal responsibilities.

Organisational Structure

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the strategic direction and governance of the charity. Day-to-day management is delegated to the Chief Executive, who leads the operational team in delivering services and implementing the charity's strategic plan.

Risk Management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, particularly those related to operations, finances, and safeguarding. Systems and procedures have been established to mitigate those risks identified, and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements for staff, volunteers, and service users.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable Objects

The charity's objects are the relief of women and girls from the Sikh Panjabi community who are in need because of domestic violence, sexual abuse, or other forms of abuse, by providing support services including advocacy, counselling, and practical assistance.

Main Activities

In pursuit of these objects, the charity undertakes the following activities:

- Specialist advocacy services for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse
- Counselling and therapeutic support
- Research into the prevalence and nature of abuse within the Sikh Panjabi community
- Community education and awareness-raising
- Policy advocacy and influencing
- Training for statutory and voluntary sector professionals

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. The charity provides direct support to vulnerable individuals, conducts research that informs policy and practice, and works to raise awareness and prevent abuse.

Service Delivery Overview

278

Total Clients Supported in 2024/25

During the reporting period, Sikh Women's Aid supported 278 individuals through our casework services. Our approach combines culturally competent advocacy with trauma-informed support, ensuring that survivors receive help that understands and respects their cultural background while addressing their safety and wellbeing needs.

Casework Statistics 2024/25

The following data provides an overview of our service delivery during the year:

Please note: Some datasets may be incomplete as we transitioned during the year from a bespoke CRM system to the Women's Aid standard Oasis model. This migration has strengthened our data collection processes for future reporting.

Services Provided

Service Type	Number	Percentage
Advocacy (non-IDVA)	266	95.68%
Counselling	12	4.32%
Total Cases	278	100%

Client Demographics

Our services supported individuals predominantly from the West Midlands (20.14% of cases with location data), with significant numbers from Birmingham (8.99%), Wolverhampton (1.80%), and Sandwell (2.52%). This reflects both the concentration of Sikh Panjabi communities in these areas and our organisation's growing reach.

The age range of service users was 21 to 80 years, with the largest cohorts being those aged 26-35 (15.10%) and 36-45 (14.03%). Of those whose immigration status was recorded, 17.27% were UK nationals, whilst others held various forms of leave to remain, reflecting the intersection of immigration status with vulnerability to abuse.

Perpetrator Relationships

Relationship to Survivor	Number	Percentage
Spouse	51	43.59%
Partner	20	17.09%
Ex-Partner	15	12.82%

Family members (Father, Mother, In-laws)	14	11.97%
Other (Siblings, Children, Friends, Extended family)	17	14.53%

The data confirms that the majority of abuse is perpetrated by intimate partners (spouses, partners, and ex-partners accounting for 73.50% of cases). However, it is notable that a significant proportion of cases involve family members, reflecting the complex dynamics of extended family abuse that is particularly prevalent in South Asian communities.

Linked Children

49 children were linked to cases during the reporting period. Protecting children and addressing the impact of domestic abuse on child welfare remains a core element of our work, and we work closely with children's services and schools to ensure appropriate safeguarding responses.

Service Engagement

The duration of service engagement reflects the complexity of cases. While some individuals required only brief intervention (6.48% engaged for less than one month), the majority (64.39%) required support for 1-6 months, and 7.19% remained engaged for more than 12 months. This demonstrates the intensive, long-term support often required for survivors navigating complex abuse situations, legal proceedings, housing needs, and immigration matters.

Research and Publications

Gender, Power, and Abuse in the Sikh Panjabi Community (2024)

In 2024, Sikh Women's Aid published its landmark biannual survey report examining the prevalence and nature of domestic, sexual, and spiritual abuse within the Sikh Panjabi community. This research, conducted by Sahdaish Kaur Pall BEM, Sukhvinder Kaur, and Dr Mandeep Kaur Marwah, represents the most comprehensive study of its kind to date.

Survey Methodology

The survey received 878 responses, with 675 Sikh Panjabi women forming the primary focus of analysis. The research examined three key areas: domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and faith-based/spiritual abuse.

Key Findings: Domestic Abuse

61.48% of respondents reported experiencing domestic abuse. The most common forms were emotional abuse (22.76%) and controlling behaviour (19.31%). While partners and spouses were identified as primary perpetrators (47.72%), a significant finding was the role of mothers-in-law (63.66%) and sisters-in-law (34.33%) as secondary perpetrators – a form of abuse that is often overlooked in mainstream policy and practice.

The research revealed that 24.77% of survivors had endured abuse for more than 21 years, highlighting the chronic nature of domestic abuse within the community. Only 41.87% of survivors reported the abuse to police, and of those who did, 28.67% reported that no further action was taken despite available evidence.

Key Findings: Sexual Abuse

32.89% of respondents reported experiencing sexual abuse. Alarming, 69.96% of these incidents occurred during childhood, with 68.33% reporting recurrent abuse. The most common age range for first experiencing sexual abuse was 5-10 years (36.77%), followed by 11-15 years (22.87%).

Perpetrators included husbands/boyfriends, uncles, family friends, and male cousins. Only 16.14% reported the abuse to police, with barriers including shame and guilt, fear of consequences, and concerns about family honour.

Key Findings: Faith-Based and Spiritual Abuse

8% of respondents reported experiencing abuse linked to faith or spirituality – a form of abuse that receives little recognition in policy frameworks. Perpetrators included spiritual teachers (Mahapursh), Granthis, Pandits, and Gurdwara volunteers. The abuse took forms including sexual assault, coercive control, grooming, and financial extortion.

Locations of abuse included homes and places of worship. Only 5.09% reported to police, and 50% of those who did report experienced no further action being taken.

Research Impact

The report has informed our policy advocacy work and has been shared with statutory agencies, policy makers, and community organisations. It provides an

evidence base for targeted interventions and has contributed to increased awareness of the specific forms of abuse affecting Sikh Panjabi women and girls.

Research Recommendations

The research report sets out ten key recommendations for policy makers and practitioners:

- **Ring-fenced funding streams for by-and-for support services:** Recognition of and sustainable funding for specialist support organisations that contribute to risk reduction and positive outcomes for survivors.
- **Community education and awareness:** A collective community response within the wider Sikh Panjabi community in tackling all forms of abuse and disrupting perpetrators.
- **Policy advocacy:** Ensure the voices of Sikh Panjabi women are heard at every level of policy and strategy development, locally and nationally.
- **Legal definition of spiritual abuse:** Improved understanding and awareness of faith and spiritual abuse, and development of a legal definition so perpetrators can be held to account.
- **Targeted responses to female perpetrators:** Improved awareness and understanding of female-on-female abuse through development of education packages addressing gender bias in the Sikh Panjabi community.
- **Co-ordinated and joined-up response:** Developing holistic, wrap-around community responses between voluntary and statutory sectors for survivors at the point of reporting abuse and seeking support.
- **Community policing must understand local needs:** Police Community Support Officers must work with grassroot community organisations to develop local Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plans.
- **Review and adapt risk assessment models:** Risk assessment tools must be adapted to include screening for risk from honour-based abuse and harmful practices.
- **Screening of perpetrator substance use:** Perpetrators' use of drugs and alcohol needs to be recognised as a risk factor for survivors, noting that 39.32% of respondents indicated substance use was a contributing factor in their abuse.
- **Public health routine enquiry:** Health professionals must consider underlying issues behind poor health presentation in Sikh Panjabi women, asking questions that go beyond diagnosing presenting symptoms.

Impact of Abuse on Survivors

The research gathered 1,553 responses about the impact of domestic abuse on survivors. The most frequently reported effects were depression, anxiety, and stress (314 responses), inability to trust others (251 responses), sleep disturbances (181 responses), and familial relationship problems (181 responses). Suicidal thoughts were reported by 113 respondents, with self-harm identified by 53 respondents. These findings underscore the profound and multi-faceted impact of abuse on the health and wellbeing of Sikh Panjabi women.

Female Perpetrators of Familial Violence

A significant finding of the research was the prevalence of female perpetrators of abuse, particularly mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. Of 268 respondents who identified secondary perpetrators, mothers-in-law were the most frequently mentioned (117 respondents) and sisters-in-law were the second most common (92 respondents). Common forms of female-on-female abuse reported included encouraging sons to physically or sexually abuse their wives, manipulating sons against their spouses through “whisper campaigns”, physical assault against daughters-in-law, preventing breastfeeding to undermine mother-child attachment, and spreading lies to isolate daughters-in-law. Despite the frequency and severity of this form of abuse, it is rarely addressed within domestic abuse interventions, leaving many daughters-in-law isolated in their suffering.

Domestic Homicide Reviews

Sikh Women's Aid has built a professional reputation as experts in domestic abuse affecting Sikh Panjabi women. In the reporting period, we were invited to participate as expert panel members in six Domestic Homicide Reviews and Domestic Abuse-Related Death Reviews involving Sikh Panjabi women, with further reviews pending. DHR Chairs now routinely read and cite our research reports to help increase their knowledge and understanding of the lived experiences of abuse within the Overview Reports and wider review processes. Our participation in these reviews reflects the disproportionate representation of Sikh Panjabi women in domestic homicide statistics and underscores the critical gaps in current protective systems.

Achievements and Performance

Key Activities 2024/25

The 2024 financial year began with Sikh Women's Aid undertaking its first chairing of a Domestic Homicide Review. This followed a year-long specialist mentoring programme offered to the Chair of Trustees to build by-and-for expertise within the Domestic Homicide Review landscape. As the UK's only by-and-for support service working with Sikh Panjabi women and children, it was vital for Sikh Women's Aid to occupy this space if we are serious about prevention, early intervention, and influencing systemic learning around domestic abuse and harmful practices.

Sikh Court Campaign: During 2024, Sikh Women's Aid led a national campaign challenging the establishment of the first Sikh Court in the UK. Although presented as a mediation and arbitration service, the court positioned itself publicly as a religious court and proposed mediating in cases described as "low level" domestic abuse. Sikh Women's Aid led a sustained challenge alongside Karma Nirvana, H.O.P.E Training and Consultancy, and partners across the by-and-for sector. Through multiple meetings with the Sikh Court team and senior legal professionals, we challenged the lack of grounding in Sikh faith principles, safeguarding standards, and legal frameworks. As a result of this work, the Sikh Court removed references to mediating domestic abuse cases from its public offer.

June 2024: A second culturally informed Sikh Panjabi BACP accredited psychotherapist was recruited as Sikh Women's Aid's second therapist, strengthening our therapeutic support offer to women and girls.

July 2024: Sikh Women's Aid supported seven victims through a highly traumatic and high-profile High Court civil case against self-styled God-man Rajinder Kalia. Although the case was lost at first instance, one claimant has since been granted permission to appeal at the Court of Appeal. Sikh Women's Aid worked closely with all seven claimants to secure specialist pro bono legal representation through the Centre for Women's Justice. This case remains complex and ongoing.

July 2024: Sikh Women's Aid launched its UK-wide Survey 2024, focusing on experiences of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and spiritual abuse within the Sikh Panjabi community.

August 2024: Sikh Women's Aid held its annual Sikh Women's Remembrance Day in Wolverhampton, creating space for collective remembrance and reflection. That same month, we launched our Heritage Lottery funded publication, A Journey of Resilience, celebrating lived experience, survival, and community history.

November 2024: Sikh Women's Aid was invited to attend the Diwali reception at 10 Downing Street, hosted by the new incoming government, in recognition of the organisation's groundbreaking work as the UK's only by-and-for service for Sikh Panjabi women and girls.

December 2024: Sikh Women's Aid hosted its national conference and launched its publication Gender, Power and Abuse, bringing together professionals, academics, and community leaders to examine abuse within faith and cultural contexts.

February 2025: Sikh Women's Aid delivered specialist training to NHS frontline staff in Buckinghamshire. This followed a Domestic Homicide Review and responded to a significant increase in the Sikh Panjabi population in the area. NHS leadership

identified an urgent need for staff to better understand the intersection of culture, risk, and safety, and how to provide culturally sensitive responses to women presenting with concerns.

March 2025: Sikh Women's Aid participated in the Million Women Rise march in London, a national gathering of Global Majority women and girls advocating against male violence. That same month, we spoke at the All Party Parliamentary Group on Safeguarding in Faith Settings, addressing the politicisation of grooming and child sexual exploitation and the barriers to achieving meaningful safeguarding reform in faith and religious contexts.

April 2025: Sikh Women's Aid leadership was invited to 10 Downing Street for Vaisakhi celebrations, recognising the organisation's contribution to community safety and advocacy. Later that month, we began work on the CHAB Pilot Project, co-designing a twenty-week behaviour change programme aimed at South Asian communities and providing specialist support to women connected to perpetrators engaged in the programme.

Plans for Future Periods

Building on the evidence from our research and the insights gained through service delivery, the Trustees have identified the following strategic priorities for the coming year:

- Expansion of specialist services: Seeking funding to increase our advocacy and counselling capacity, with a particular focus on supporting survivors of spiritual abuse and those with insecure immigration status.
- Policy advocacy: Working with government and statutory agencies to ensure that the specific experiences of Sikh Panjabi women are reflected in policy development, including advocating for a legal definition of spiritual abuse.
- Community education: Developing resources and training programmes to raise awareness of abuse within the community, including targeted work with Gurdwaras and community organisations.
- Professional training: Expanding our training offer to statutory agencies, particularly police and social workers, to improve responses to Sikh Panjabi survivors.
- Organisational development: Strengthening our governance and operational infrastructure to support sustainable growth.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material 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 business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the Constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 27.02.2026 and signed on their behalf by:

Sukhvinder Kaur

Chair of Trustees

Sikh Women's Aid

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 April 2025

Charity Registration Number: 1198851

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1. Reference and Administrative Details

Trustees

- Sukhvinder Kaur (Chair)
- Mandeep Sungu
- Gagandeep Kaur Kang

Chief Executive

Vacant

Registered Office

C/O XL Associates Ltd, Hazara House, 502–504 Dudley Road, Wolverhampton WV2 3AA

Independent Examiner

XL Associates Ltd, Hazara House, 502–504 Dudley Road, Wolverhampton WV2 3AA

2. Trustees' Report

The trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 30 April 2025.

Structure, Governance and Management

Sikh Women's Aid is governed by its Constitution. The Board meets regularly to oversee strategic direction, safeguarding, and financial performance.

Objectives and Activities

The charity works to protect and preserve the health and wellbeing of Sikh Panjabi women and children affected by domestic abuse. Activities include advocacy, crisis support, community outreach, and awareness-raising. The trustees confirm compliance with the public benefit requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Achievements and Performance

The charity continued to deliver frontline support, advocacy, and community engagement throughout the year, responding to increasing demand for culturally informed domestic abuse services.

Risk Management

Key risks include funding sustainability, safeguarding, and regulatory compliance. Trustees review risks regularly and maintain systems to mitigate them.

Financial Review

- **Income:** £261,205 (2024: £220,425)
- **Expenditure:** £237,004 (2024: £215,911)
- **Surplus:** £24,201
- **Total funds:** £28,715

Reserves Policy

Unrestricted reserves at year end were **£4,514**. The trustees aim to build reserves equivalent to approximately three months of operating costs.

3. Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with applicable charity law and the Charities SORP (FRS 102). They must maintain proper accounting records and safeguard the charity's assets.

4. Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the accounts of Sikh Women's Aid for the year ended 30 April 2025.

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination.

No material matters have come to my attention that give cause to believe that accounting records were not properly kept or that the accounts do not comply with the Charities Act 2011.

Signed: _____

Name: ACCA Member

For and on behalf of XL Associates Ltd

5. Statement of Financial Activities

For the Year Ended 30 April 2025

	Unrestricted (£)	Restricted (£)	Total (£)
Income	27,484	233,721	261,205
Expenditure	(27,484)	(209,520)	(237,004)
Net movement	0	24,201	24,201
Funds brought forward	4,514	–	4,514
Funds carried forward	4,514	24,201	28,715

6. Balance Sheet

As at 30 April 2025

£

Tangible fixed assets 5,589

Cash at bank 102,862

Creditors (<1 year) (81,599)

Net assets **28,715**

Approved by the trustees on __

Signed on behalf of the trustees: _____

7. Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

The accounts are prepared under FRS 102 and the Charities SORP. Tangible assets are depreciated at 25% straight line. No depreciation was charged in 2024.

2. Staff Costs

- Wages: £166,755
 - NIC: £12,202
 - Pension: £3,545
- Average number of employees: 10

3. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Cost (£) NBV (£)	
Opening	6,068	6,068
Additions	1,384	–
Closing NBV	7,452	5,589

4. Creditors

Accruals represent prior year accruals and not deferred income.

5. Restricted Funds

Fund	Income (£)	Expenditure (£)	Closing (£)
Comic Relief	47,500	(47,500)	0
PCC West Midlands	39,955	(39,955)	0
Heart of England	29,175	(29,175)	0
Lloyds Bank	27,500	(27,500)	0
Other Restricted Funds	89,591	(65,390)	24,201

Sikh Women's Aid

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