

AFRICAN WOMEN'S HEALTH GROUP (AWHG)

2022-23 Annual Report

In the Beginning ...

Over thirty years ago, three mums of Somali heritage became overwhelmed at the growing number of neighbours knocking on their kitchen doors for help. Many were very isolated refugees and single-heads-of-households from war-torn Somalia with limited or *no* English language skills. The door-knocking continued until, in a bid to find a better way to help, Halima Mohamed, Amina Warsame and Dequa Ibrahim decided to set up *AWHG* as a 'self-help' group.

AWHG volunteers found one-day-a-week office space to meet and help with reading and writing letters, interpreting for women at doctors, schools, benefit and court appointments. ESOL classes followed in partnership with *WEA (Workers Education Authority)*, and, when parents with no experience of the British education system struggled to support their children, *AWHG* secured their very first small grant for a *Homework Club* tutor for young people, supported by *AWHG* volunteers. Health talks on managing diabetes, arthritis and chronic conditions disproportionately affecting local women soon followed, as did fitness classes.

Service has since evolved according to changing local need and ideas emerging from a growing number of women coming to our doors. Some go on to help as volunteers, supporting events and activities for other women in need.

Most *AWHG's* service-users are displaced and of Pakistani, Yemeni, Somali, Kurdish, Iraqi, Bangladeshi, Sudanese, Syrian, African, Afghani and Ethiopian heritage. Many have limited educational experiences and, in an area experiencing some of Britain's highest indices of deprivation, are from low-income households

We are governed by a voluntary Management Committee of displaced local women who themselves face challenges experienced by service-users in accessing much-needed services. A majority joining classes, workshops, craft activities, celebrations and outings hear of us from peers who trust us, further deepening bonds to:

- Reduce isolation, stigma towards single parenthood and discrimination by helping affected women strengthen social networks and confidence to become better integrated and active into their locality;
- Reach out, empower and equip disadvantaged women with advocacy, awareness, interpreting support, health, legal and practical tools to take action and make informed decisions;
- Address high levels of unemployment by providing basic skills, literacy, vocational training, childcare, as well as a homework support for a further generation of young people. Our aim is to enable isolated women and families living in, or at risk of poverty, with skills to achieve their full social, emotional, civic and employment potential.

Supporting Women at Times of Crisis

At a time of shrinking resources and growing need, community, statutory partners and funders have helped AWHG to sustain and diversify our diversity of services.

We support one another. Word spreads about each woman who achieves a small success. AWHG's caring reputation also helps us reach some of Sheffield's most alienated residents. As each newcomer sees how others have developed skills to move forward in life, we also serve as informal, collective role models.

Most women coming through our doors are displaced, isolated, low-waged or unemployed single heads of households of Pakistani, Yemeni, Somali, Bangladeshi, Sudanese, Syrian and Ethiopian heritage communities. A majority have limited formal education and many, challenged to identify and access services, experience trauma, poor health and struggle as they try to find their feet.

Women of all ages arrive in crisis. Quite a few are vulnerable older BAME women. Poor health, disproportionately experienced amongst BAME women, holds them back. It makes it hard to find work, to travel, care for dependents and themselves.

We work to help women better understand what is wanted of them, where to go for help and how to access services online. While sharing skills, learning and comfort with women who are bereft, we try to help each newcomer build skills to become more resilient, move into volunteering, employment and improve family finances.

We are so proud of our contributions! Our neighbourhood experiences some of Britain's highest deprivation indices and was, until recently, considered dangerous. Yet as younger people begin to achieve and finding skilled jobs, showing the way for further generations who had no idea they could make better choices through persistence, hard work and qualifications, our whole community is improving.

Relationships of Trust

Trust is fundamental to what we do. We work organically - listening, reflecting and helping each visitor work out best courses of action in to survive and thrive in a fast-changing environment. Our staff and volunteers share languages, cultural experiences and an understanding of each displaced woman's journey. This helps us weave each newcomer into our rich and expansive community network tapestry.

Meet our Team!

Some of our **Management Committee** of local Somali, Black, Syrian and Yemeni heritage women first came to us as service-users and volunteers. All of us are DBS-checked. Our Acting Chairperson and founder, *Halima Mohamed*, Secretary, *Marium Mohammed* who is also an qualified Advocacy Worker, our Treasurer and multi-talented engineer with talents to repair anything, *Rima Al-Khayat*, multi-certificated Health & Wellbeing community Outreach Worker, *Corrie Moss* and *Iram Al-Khasadi* who speaks Arabic and helps interpret, fill forms and visit GPs with visitors. All generously contribute their talents and support to help us shine!

Our Chair, Secretary and Treasurer help support our day-to-day running, supervising and supporting workers, tutors and volunteers while encouraging former service-users to join in and help. We meet quarterly and invite newcomers to join us reviewing the progress of our projects, making sure we provide safe services and keep within budgets. Feedback from service-users, staff, tutors, volunteers and partners also help us identify new needs and think about how to help.

Our Chair, who helped establish our community initiative four decades ago, received Sheffield's East Local Area Committee *Community Star Award* in September 2023. She is increasingly asked to share insights and help shape strategies so Sheffield's most disenfranchised residents can access support needed while effectively contribute towards improving our whole community. Halima was also recently nominated by *Voluntary Action Sheffield* for a Community Award!

Staff

The impact of two p/t staff reaches far beyond our limited resources ...

Our 4-days-a-week Project Manager and 3-days-a-week English, Arabic, Somali (and Dutch!)-speaking Outreach Advocate coordinate activities, support tutors running ESOL, IT Drop-in, Childcare and Health and Social Care classes with partner organisations and volunteers. In-house fitness, sewing sessions, crafts and group discussions, support for children out of school, health & wellbeing talks, family outings to allotments and annually, to the Peak District, are facilitated alongside advocacy, signposting and support for isolated women, refugees and families.

In spite of a challenging year in which our own Outreach Advocate and Project Worker straddled overtime work with themselves becoming homeless and nursing critically ill family members, we now find ourselves invited to speak and share insights with wider forums after decades of quietly working at a local level.

Our Project Manager shares insights with strategic community panels including Sheffield's Partnership Board and South Yorkshire Community Foundation's grants panel. In the process, we are also learning about wider resources available to support Sheffield's wider diverse demographic communities.

We are grateful to our wonderful volunteers, *Asiya Dull*, who runs three 12-week cycles of IT support helping particularly vulnerable women take first steps towards navigating a world of online communications; our qualified and experienced community counsellor, *Samira Siddiqi*, facilitates weekly craft activities knitting together 60 women yearly to share strategies for tackling anxiety, depression and building resilience at times of trauma. Many thanks to our *Fitness Tutor*, *Elena*, formidable *Sewing Tutor*, *Niyam Mohamed*, who supports women in repairing, designing and making clothes, textiles and domestic goods. From March- June, *Freelance Welfare Advisor*, *Maryam Ali*, also supported over 40 women in crisis.

Weekend Homework Club Team: two Maths and two English tutors are supported by two 4-hours-a-week Administrator who help our young people thrive!

Volunteers

Volunteers help welcome each newcomer to our service. Seven volunteers of Pakistani, Somali, Kurdish, Syrian, Yemeni and Sudanese heritage now help prepare informal *breakfast-luncheon* of sandwiches and fruit for women attending classes.

Bilingual volunteers with Arabic, Somali, Kurdish, Urdu and Bengali community languages, to name a few, also serve as informal interpreters, even accompanying and supporting women at appointments while explaining how systems work. They help tutors and support learners in larger classes who need a bit of extra help.

At the end of our academic year, volunteers also help coordinate our annual outings with women and children to the Peak District. Each, in turn, also becomes a role model for peers and neighbours.

We celebrate their achievements. Without them, our team would struggle and hidden needs amongst lonely, struggling and anxious BAME women and refugees might not receive the attention volunteers help provide. Many thanks!

Newcomers Welcome!

Where we once primarily catered to women within walking distance, women from across Sheffield have begun to arrive. As our geographic reach grows, the profile of service-users is also widening, with more women of Iraqi Kurdish heritage now asking to join ESOL, IT and vocational training. Our waiting lists grow as civic funding cuts bite, local provisions disappear and local groups struggle to find volunteers.

ESOL and Employability

Demand for ESOL and vocational training has soared. An ESOL student explains:

My husband only works part-time and his salary is not enough to pay our bills. That is why I really need to improve my English so I can get a job and help!

Three Celta-qualified English as a Second Language (ESOL) teachers run five levels of **ESOL classes attended by 80 BAME women**. They're run in partnership with Sheffield College. AWHG staff recruit and support tutors and learners and, alongside volunteers, take registers, remind women to bring absence notes for GP or benefits appointments, and help students, in smaller groups, learn how to receive messages, homework, join classes online, take tests and receive updates via *WhatsApp* and *Google Classroom*. Should the centre be forced to close, vulnerable learners are now equipped to attend lessons remotely!

We also help facilitate elements of exams including video recording of speaking and listening skills, which culminate in an end-of-year celebration where learners are awarded what might be the first certificates they've ever earned in their lives!

Most learners are aged of 25-60 and of Pakistani, Libyan, Somali, Sudanese, Bangladeshi, Yemeni, Syrian, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Afghani, Iraqi and Turkish heritage - now joined by an influx of Kurdish heritage women. Classes offer a chance to get out

of home and meet others which isolated women say improves their mental outlook. It also help knit together a community of women who go on to help one another out in times of challenge. While improving English skills to fill forms, speak with GPs, teachers and neighbours, most say they slowly gain confidence and skills to become more active, volunteer or attend vocational training for employment.

AWHG starts in late July to recruit, interview and register learners for each further academic year, ferrying women to and from Sheffield College, helping with form filling, translations and follow-ups to ensure each woman's papers are processed. *Sheffield College*, meanwhile, provides funds to cover venue hire and tutors who are also recruited by AWHG itself.

Employability Training and Support

Most women attending our ESOL classes move up a level each year. Those achieving Level 1 qualifications often go on to attend courses at Sheffield College or our own 12-week cycles of *Level 1 National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)* in **Childcare** training with tutor *Helen Haythorne* sent by *Red Tape*. we facilitate three cycles each year so that total of 30 women annually gain skills to support nurseries or join *Red Tape* Level 2 *Childcare* training for further qualifications as Nursery Workers.

We also jointly run Level 1 **Health & Social Care** training for a further 30 women yearly to move towards employment which fits around family caring timetables!

This year, AWHG's service-users have also been supported by an *Employability Worker* from the *Centre for Refugees and Asylum-seekers* who helped women **prepare CVs and undertake job searches online**.

IT Drop-in Sessions

Our IT Drop-in sessions help 30 women each year via three 12-week-long sessions. By helping women learn to set up and write emails, do online searches, shopping and access critical GP appointments and update Universal Credit information for benefits, these small but vital steps help particularly vulnerable and disenfranchised women to begin to transition online.

Refreshments for All!

We noticed women who spend much of the day with us don't bring food along, so a small team of volunteer now prepare sandwiches and lay out fruit for visitors each morning. More than fifty sandwiches and fruit arrays we purchase wholesale disappear each day; some women seem to head straight to our kitchen when they arrive. This informal *Breakfast-Lunch Club* is particularly popular Fridays when 25-odd women visit mornings.

Advice and Advocacy Support

Seemingly simple tasks - booking GP appointments or updating benefits information – are quickly transiting online, making them inaccessible for women with limited

digital and English skills. Where complex issues cannot be resolved online, waiting times for telephone assistance can literally waste hours of staff and client time.

Where digitally-skilled residents have skills to resolve benefits, housing, schooling and disability issues swiftly, women lacking such skills often arrive in crisis, penniless, homeless, without heating or electricity. Unable to read letters and respond without external support, it is only at this point that they realize there is a problem.

Timing is critical so we frequently remind service-users to come to us immediately when they receive letters they don't understand. Delays can mean women might find themselves without homes, food, benefits and help. Once alerted, we act swiftly to make sure each visitor gets the help she needs before matters get worse.

Thankfully, *Sheffield City Council's Hardship Grants* helped single parents and older women over the course of last year to decipher energy bills, health, housing, caring, education and benefit systems pressuring them to repeatedly apply, and be rejected, for one job after another. Where court cases, immigration or specialist issues arise, we also help clients access a new online *Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)* screen located in a neighbouring community centre. We also routinely now take women along to show them how to use this new local touchscreen service for benefit updates.

As we emerged from Covid and into a *Cost of Living* crisis, we secured *South Yorkshire Community Foundation* funding to employ a one-day-a-week Welfare Advisor over three months to meet a surge in demand from women in crisis.

Newcomers often say they feel safe coming for help at our women-only service as our own experiences reflect theirs. Empathy and understanding of how easily women can find themselves alone, and with no one to turn to, comes naturally as we've all faced similar challenges along the way.

A Search for Employment

Poverty and distress are directly linked to poor physical and mental health. Women with limited educations, employment, digital and English language skills speak of feeling demoralised and distraught as they do their best to comply with a system into which they simply don't fit. As they struggle to find work, many experience severe anxiety and depression. Some simply come in and cry. Others confide they skip morning meals to ensure their children are properly fed.

Increasingly, we are also visited by clients over the age of 60 who are in poor health and, with limited English and digital skills, struggle to find work. Some arrive in tears, asking for help to understand messages saying their benefits will be cut if they cannot show they have actively applied for work. Some become traumatized as they do their best, but are, or feel, chided for failing to achieve the impossible.

Our Advocates might spend hours trying to help women with limited skills search for roles they can try to apply for, or even to get through to appropriate offices for

clarification of what is realistically wanted of them. Most often, no one wants their skillsets. They try again, and again, but are repeatedly defeated.

It is heartbreaking to witness older BAME women with limited physical mobility, at a loss to achieve what is being asked for, trying their best - even as chronic health conditions become exacerbated through efforts to travel to distant appointments and worry.

A Housing Crisis in Sheffield

A housing crisis has also grown in Sheffield. As mortgage rates soar, private landlords end rental contracts without warning. Increasingly, we see whole families become homeless. Being thrown into temporary accommodations far from school, friends, social networks and resources statistically decreases the likelihood of their finding work, sustaining good health and positive outlooks. Poor public transport links means two or three buses might be needed to take children to and from school. Our own Advocacy Outreach Worker found herself in this situation, housed in a small, isolated and inadequate space.

We have, on occasion, stepped in to stop Bailiffs taking away limited household possessions or camped out in offices to help where families have been at risk of finding themselves on the street. Meanwhile children in temporary accommodation often lose school places in spite of being wait-listed for months. A lack of empathy from mainstream agencies can be disruptive for clients and our own staff:

A family of recently displaced refugees was made homeless when the ceiling in their house collapsed. Their carpets were soaked and, after two years of living in perpetual dampness, every single family member, including a severely disabled teen, had to be given ventilators for breathing problems they didn't have when they arrived.

Our team took them to Sheffield's Homeless Department who said to go back to live in the damp and damaged house. The mum said she would rather live on the street. Her teen son had quickly learnt to speak, read and write in English, with additional help from our Homework Club, and was excelling at school - despite managing with a physical disability over repeatedly displacements from Somalia to India to Sheffield. He now speaks multiple languages. But it had all become too much for him. He cried throughout, saying he couldn't carry on living this way.

A member of our team returned daily to the Homeless Office with the whole family for three days, refusing to leave, until at long last, they were awarded temporary hotel accommodations. It was far from the children's school and not ideal for transport links, particularly in light of family mobility issues, but the family hoped that at least their health might improve once they left housing unfit to live in...

A lady came for help when her benefits stopped. She didn't know why this had happened and was extremely distressed. She had children to care for alone, and one was disabled. She had no correspondence or explanation of what was going on.

We loaned her £10 for food and took her to the touch-screen advice service at the Pakistani Muslim Centre so we could go online and make an appointment to speak with Sheffield CAB. An Advisor there contacted the Universal Credit Department who said that when the mum had applied for a Carers' Allowance to help her disabled son, she hadn't send a particular document needed. This meant her existing welfare benefits had been stopped for reassessment and five had weeks passed. Meanwhile she had no money to feed and care for her family.

Being able to pop in and ask for help, she said, to understanding what was going on made all the difference. She said she hadn't known what to do, where to go or what would happen to her and her children if they couldn't pay for rent or food.

She had been advised by neighbours to come to us as because we care about what happens to these women and their children, really trying to help in whatever way is needed. Refugees, finding their feet in a totally alien environment, find their way to us after literally stopping strangers on the street who's physique suggests they might share a common language. We actually understand how it feels, the burden women carry and how they try so hard to help their children.

We are part of this community so we don't turn people away with advice which doesn't consider the reality in which very isolated women find themselves. Last week a woman travelled quite some distance with a disabled child to ask for help; knowing how far she had to come by foot, we told her to wait and drove her home after our sessions finished.

Health & Wellbeing

A principle of self-help informs our sharing of information and resources to empower and embed learning amongst hard-to-reach women and their peer networks. We are effective in moving quickly to address gaps in mainstream services affecting some of Sheffield's most vulnerable residents - often the first to feel the impact of socio-economic and cultural deprivation.

We help women navigate access to what sometimes seems like impenetrable institutions with fast-changing requirements, upon which they depend for their survival. As face-to-face services transit online, isolation, anxiety and depression have also substantially increased.

Given a growing number of women seeking help, we are also working where possible with groups; a need for activities for young people, many reporting increased social anxiety who are often are not in school because of homelessness, displacement, a lack of school places and a surge in post-Covid school drop-out, a need for further local youth activities is evident.

Friday Fitness & Medical Student Health Talks

Thanks to *Elena*, our fabulous fitness tutor who cheers up any room she enters, an average of 20 BAME women join us each week for free, gentle fitness classes. While

they try to keep fit and maintain good health, they also say it offers a rare moment to find peace of mind for a short hour each week and keep worries briefly at bay.

Classes offer a rare chance to socialise so chances are, a visitor to our classes will be greeted by waves of laughter! They are sometimes followed by health awareness talks, facilitated by medical students, on topics such as healthy eating and obesity, cancer-awareness and Emergency and Pediatric First Aid training. First Aid has been particularly popular since lockdown when some learners have had to make emergency decisions on their own and in the absence of timely external support.

Listening and Sharing Craft Sessions

As women struggle to keep families afloat, a growing number are reporting that their GP have put them on anti-depressants. We have therefore launched creative sharing sessions, facilitated by a qualified and experienced BAME community counselor, to help women develop collective strategies to address anxiety, stress and depression.

Mainstream mental health services are rarely available in community languages. Therapists often lack insights into the cultures, social expectations and needs of women from marginalised cultural communities. One of our visitors regularly sits down and silently cries without saying a word while the word 'depression', for instance, does not exist in languages include Somali. This means words and concepts to explore emotional health are very limited.

As direct conversations about poor mental outlooks continue to be social taboos in some of our networks, a craft collective provides a vehicle for women, unlikely to engage in formal 'therapy', to simply come together and share experiences.

Feedback suggests that women coming together to reflect, share trauma and solutions results in collective brighter outlooks at times of financial and emotional crisis. Many say that just getting out of home and joining activities or sharing tips on taking better care of themselves and their families makes a huge difference.

Some women say they wish we didn't have to stop sessions over the Christmas period; this indicates the difference such activities make to particularly isolated women. Where women experience very personal distress which cannot be fully explored in a group. our counselors offers follow up sessions on a one-to-one basis.

Sewing Sessions

Our popular sewing sessions, paused over lockdown, have been revived! Thanks to a generous donation from [Sheffield City Council](#) which enabled us to purchase a further four sewing machines, half a dozen women join us each week to share skills, socialize, design, repair and make clothes. This extends the life of textiles and household goods at a time of financial distress while encouraging more sustainable practices!

Crafts and Family Activities

We brought whole households together over summer while picking litter on our streets and later, sharing refreshments back at our centre. Sessions were run in partnership with Sheffield City Council as were workshops, supported by our volunteers, helping 20+ children aged 5-11 to design, paint and create crafts.

Given the popularity of these holiday activities which build on walks and annual Peak District outings for families, we hope to increase our offering of holiday activities for young people, particularly those who are out of school and can benefit from further skill-building, learning and social connection.

Outings: Exploring Local Public Resources

Sometimes we get calls from young people saying their mothers are seriously depressed. They ask us to visit or take them out to help shift their moods ...

We listen, support and encourage women who might feel on the edge of a breakdown. It's worse when they have come from war zones, faced trauma, displacement and socio-economic isolation. Inviting them to join us for their first ever outings to the Peak District, where most women don't have transport, resources or knowledge what exists out there makes it really special. We walk, picnic and are often greeted by fellow walkers calling out to cheer us on and make us feel welcome. Some say these outings have been the best thing they've done for years and that they feel like a cloud has been lifted.

As the weather improves, we hope to take women and children out again for swimming, walks, exercise in the park and outdoors activities to help get them going again while encouraging women from different cultural communities to share experiences and learn from one another!

Homework Club

As BBC funding finally came to an end in September 2023 we struggled to identify resources to carry on. To our delight, however, such was the outcry from families that Sheffield Council stepped in to fund this project until May 2024 while we seek alternatives.

Four qualified tutors and 2 sessional Administrators who take registers, photocopy worksheets, tests and organise termly parent-tutor reviews to support 30 young people aged 11-16, offer an hour each of GCSE-level Maths, English and Science each Sunday morning. Our Homework Club is particularly helpful for households where parents have limited English language, educational experiences and resources to support children struggling at school.

Increasingly, we have also helped young people who are out of school and lack a structure, social networks and learning links to keep them on track; we also support them during the school week when they come to our Centre with their parents and ask us to provide more youth activities as they are bored at home.

We provide refreshments at the start, break-time and at the end of each Club session to give learners a break and help make learning more sociable. These breaks also offer a pause to meet, share and break down stigmas where students might feel embarrassed by school failure and afraid ask for help. Attempts to address poor academic achievements otherwise come late and parents, lacking skills and financial resources to help, feel helpless. Those left behind by age 11 have a mountain to climb, do not know where to turn for help and often feel the future is bleak.

Former students, now working as lab technicians in local hospitals, in IT and analytical sciences, have become models for a further generation who come with low educational aspirations. This, in turn, draws more people to join!

We interview each young person joining, listen to their personal, academic, emotional and home experiences as we try to gauge how best to help. Volunteers who themselves have attended our Homework Club are available to spend more time with individuals in need of additional support.

Our approach to teaching is shaped by each child's needs. As time goes by, we learn through class feedback, parents and one-to-one conversations arising at breaks about further hidden needs which young people are embarrassed to talk about. We also ask young people about workshop topics they would like to explore.

More than just Academics As we build trust with young people who might feel they have no one to confide in at times of distress, stories of bullying often emerge. After years of shame, fear and isolation, some discover others share similar experiences and visibly become more confident. A lack of motivation and emotional withdrawal slowly melts as kids share with peers and start taking an active interest in learning, speaking out in class for the first time ever!

Celebrations are also key to recognising each learner's achievements. While inspiring generations, who's parents have often not completed secondary school, to aim high, we continue to share learning via peer role modeling, with our own staff team, volunteers and Management members demonstrating how each of us can take small steps and keep going until we do things we never imagined possible.

Talks from former students who are the first in their families to find their way through educational systems, are inspirational to young learners who start believing that they too can go on to gain degrees and make informed choices while enable them to work in sectors which inspire them.

Partnerships and Sharing with Wider Networks

Many of our clients are elderly, have mental or physical health issues and need help to access basic services that are fast migrating online. As services close and civic funding pots shrink, we have been overwhelmed by an increased demand for help.

Thankfully, in the face of financial constraints, partnership programmes have helped us diversify our offer of services, trial new activities and help women and families with nowhere to turn. They also offer a conduit for conversations with organisations

tackling similar social challenges while ensuring we enhance, rather than duplicate our work.

Sheffield College funds our ESOL classes while *Sheffield City Council's Skills for Life* funds *Red Tape* who provide tutors for our Level 1 introductory courses in *Health & Social Care* and *Childcare*.

Over the spring of 2023, the *Centre for Refugees and Asylum-seekers* provided a monthly *Employability Worker* helping women learn to draft CVs and search online for work. The volunteer-led *Food Hall Project* also provided crucial provisions for households simply unable to make ends meet. *Community Wellness Service Group* also has also helped us source a fitness tutor who runs sessions as part of our Friday Wellbeing offer.

We regularly liaise with *Burngreaves Centre* and *Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)* who facilitated face-to-face appointments at our centre post-Covid. *Sacmha's* Corrie Moss, now a Management member, also invites women to visit *Darnall Community Allotments* who share food growing strategies, plants, gardening gloves, trowels, seeds and more. Corrie also facilitates healthy eating, crafts, aromatherapy and fitness sessions to help children and women improve wellbeing.

Local schools continue to signpost young people struggling with academics while *Sheffield City Council* has linked up to trial family rubbish-picking initiatives and holiday activities for young people. We look forward to building on such links to help a younger generation continue to achieve!

Voluntary Action Sheffield facilitates key community engagement hubs including *Sheffield City Council Partnership Board* where we share learning about some of Britain's hardest-to-reach BAME communities and consider linked up strategies for community, statutory and mainstream services. Our Chair also represent excluded voices via the CCG's BAME Health Network and sits with *South Yorkshire Community Foundation's* grants panel to consider the value of projects seeking resources.

Our Work is made possible thanks to the following funders:

Special thanks to the **Big Lottery**, our anchor for so many years, who have enabled us to keep funding our p/t staff, volunteers, core overheads, IT Drop-ins and elements of our Health & Wellbeing programme. Without your support, our services would not be free for women who most need it and your generosity gives us hope!

BBC Children in Need funds made it possible for a proud cohort of young people attending our **Homework Club** to gain re-gain confidence, build friendships, practical and academic skills. We are eternally grateful.

We are also indebted to **Sheffield City Council** who stepped in this autumn to help keep our Homework Club running. Sheffield Council's **Skills for Life** programme indirectly provides our **Childcare** and **Health & Social Care** tutors managed by the wonderful **Red Tape** team. Enabling local women to achieve gives faith to everyone and reminds us that we can all improve our lives!

Sheffield City Council's small grant also enabled a wide range of women to come together, join motivational talks, craft, advice, henna painting, exercise sessions and performances as part of our **Getting Along Open Day** event in June 2023 where we also awarded certificates to **82** proud women achieving **ESOL certification!**

They have also very kindly donated £2,000 for sewing machines and support to enable us to expand our **Health & Wellbeing** capacity to help women come together and gain transferable skills for employment.

Many thanks are also due to **Sheffield College** who fund our ESOL classes.

South Yorkshire Community Foundation enabled us to offer urgent one-to-one advocacy support for women and families facing rising costs while the **Subud Centre's** gives us a space to make it all happen at a time when cuts to public services put hard-to-reach women and families more at risk than ever.

Sheffield's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) covered costs for AWHG community health surveys and helped cover consultation and information-sharing costs.

Last, but not least, our volunteers, Management Committee members and all the wonderful women who make our services vibrant make all of our efforts rewarding.

We look forward to each and every one rising to achieve further untold things.

AFRICAN WOMEN'S HEALTH GROUP

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2023

AZIM & WAKAS
CHARTERED CERTIFIED ACCOUNTANTS
537 ABBEYDALE ROAD
SHEFFIELD S7 1FU
TEL 0114 2588067

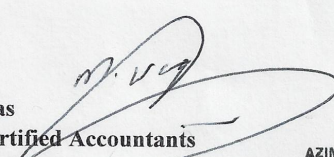
AFRICAN WOMEN'S HEALTH GROUP
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30.06.2023

	£	£
Balance B/F 01.07.2022		23875
<u>Grants Received (Restricted)</u>		
Sheffield City Council	4680	
Sheffield Yorkshire Community	50	
NHS Sheffield CCG	8300	
Main Grants	51296	
NU Community	3302	
Sheffield College	10230	
BBC Children In Need	500	
	78358	
		102233
<u>Payments</u>		
Salaries & Wages, Seasonal Workers, Project Support & Social Workers	51322	
Outreach Support Workers	3385	
Admin Workers	4300	
Consultancy Fees	1412	
Project Support Workers	8209	
Care Workers	5860	
HMRC-Paye	5447	
Event Activities	540	
Foodhall Project	553	
Bank Charges	120	
Premises Rent	11470	
Community Wellness	350	
Telephone & Internet	291	
College Fees	466	
Travel & Refreshments Cost	3815	
Stationary & Equipment Purchase & Repairs	2201	
Accountancy	500	
Survey Charges	680	
Misc	1188	
Total Expenses		102109
Restricted Funds Available As At 30.06.2023		124
BALANCE AT BANK 30.06.2023		124
Less: Cheques presented after date		0
		124

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention 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 accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities 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.

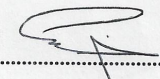
I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


Azim & Wakas
Chartered Certified Accountants
537 Abbeydale Road
Sheffield S7 1FU

AZIM & WAKAS
CHARTERED CERTIFIED ACCOUNTANTS
537 ABBEYDALE ROAD
SHEFFIELD S7 1FU
TEL: 0114 258 8067

CLIENT'S APPROVAL

I approve these financial statements and confirm that I have made available all relevant records and information for their preparation.

Committee member  Dated 26/02/2024

Committee member H. Mohamed Dated 26th Feb 2024

AFRICAN WOMEN'S HEALTH GROUP

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2023

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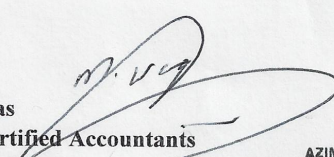
AFRICAN WOMEN'S HEALTH GROUP
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30.06.2023

	£	£
Balance B/F 01.07.2022		Total 23875
<u>Grants Received (Restricted)</u>		
Sheffield City Council	4680	
Sheffield Yorkshire Community	50	
NHS Sheffield CCG	8300	
Main Grants	51296	
NU Community	3302	
Sheffield College	10230	
BBC Children In Need	500	
	78358	
		102233
<u>Payments</u>		
Salaries & Wages, Seasonal Workers, Project Support & Social Workers	51322	
Outreach Support Workers	3385	
Admin Workers	4300	
Consultancy Fees	1412	
Project Support Workers	8209	
Care Workers	5860	
HMRC-Paye	5447	
Event Activities	540	
Foodhall Project	553	
Bank Charges	120	
Premises Rent	11470	
Community Wellness	350	
Telephone & Internet	291	
College Fees	466	
Travel & Refreshments Cost	3815	
Stationary & Equipment Purchase & Repairs	2201	
Accountancy	500	
Survey Charges	680	
Misc	1188	
Total Expenses		102109
Restricted Funds Available As At 30.06.2023		124
BALANCE AT BANK 30.06.2023		124
Less: Cheques presented after date		0
		124

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

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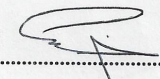
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Committee member  Dated 26/02/2024

Committee member H. Mohamed Dated 26th Feb 2024