

Annual Report



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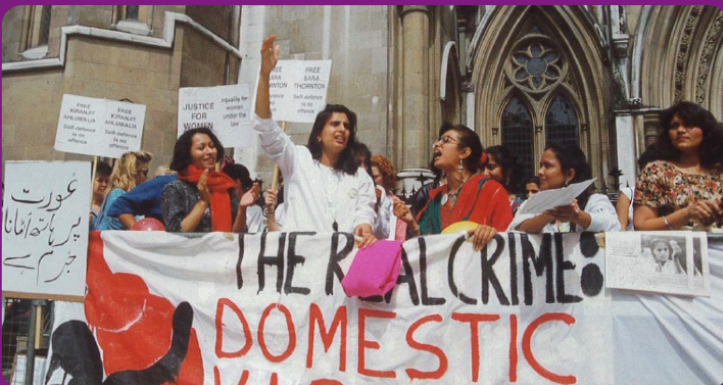
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Who we are

An introduction to AWRC

AWRC is a led **by-and-for** women's organisation based in the London Borough of Brent. We specialise in supporting Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women and their children affected by domestic abuse and harmful practices.

We **exist** because BME women and girls are **more likely to die** from domestic abuse and harmful practices. This is because structural inequalities prevent them from accessing the help they need to escape abuse and live safely, especially women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).



Our purpose

Our **purpose** is to enable survivors to lead thriving, self-determined lives and our **vision** is for them to live free from the fear of domestic abuse and harmful practice.

Our specialist-led, by-and-for approach delivers holistic, **trauma-informed services** that address the diverse and complex needs of BME survivors across London.

We provide culturally competent, anti-racist services that recognise the critical role that structural racism plays in shaping BME women's **access to safety, justice and support.**



Celebrating 45 years of service

The year 2025 marked 45 years of service for AWRC.

From humble beginnings as part of the ASRAA refuge project in the 1970s, to becoming an independent organisation in 1980, AWRC has remained a constant for thousands of domestic abuse survivors, with **upwards of 1,000 women supported each year**.

AWRC has resisted injustice and demanded change, organising campaigns and challenging discriminatory institutions and practices to support survivors.

Our history charts **persistent advocacy, activism and landmark contributions** to women's rights in the UK.

This milestone was recognised and celebrated by a visit from Her Majesty Queen Camilla in February 2025.





Message from our Chair

As we mark our 45th anniversary, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment, one filled with renewed energy and opportunity to drive meaningful change in pursuit of our mission.

Over the past year, we have continued to work collaboratively with partners, policymakers, funders, and key stakeholders to address the systemic challenges facing our sector. At the same time, we have remained deeply committed to delivering the high-quality services that define us.

Our working model has been redefined through a new Theory of Change, designed to increase our efficiency and effectiveness. This has allowed us to integrate systems and processes more seamlessly, and to empower our staff to maximise their skills in delivering exceptional support to women.

A highlight of the year was the visit from Her Majesty Queen Camilla, who officially opened our new Healing Garden, a peaceful space for reflection and renewal at the heart of our Centre. As she met with staff, survivors, trustees, volunteers, supporters, and friends, she described AWRC as a *lifeline for women*. Her words reminded us all of the vital role we play, and of the lives we continue to change each and every year.

I am deeply grateful to everyone who contributes to this work. Your dedication, compassion, and tireless efforts, especially in such a challenging climate are the foundation of our strength.

With your continued support, our commitment remains unwavering. We will keep pushing forward, upholding our values, championing our principles, and providing strong leadership in the sector, to help achieve the transformative change we all know is possible.

N. Patel

Nithee Patel, Chair of Board of Trustees



Director's statement

I am proud to present AWRC's Annual Report for 2024–2025, marking **45 years** of delivering vital, specialist services for Black and minoritised women and girls affected by domestic abuse and harmful practices.

This year, we supported **over 1,000 women** in **23 community languages**, including many with **No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)**, through holistic, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive services. We also launched the **UK's first accredited Harmful Practices IDVA programme**.

Our work is grounded in a **by-and-for model**, shaped by survivors' voices and an intersectional understanding of violence. Through partnerships with organisations such as London Violence Against Women & Girls consortium and women's sector organisations, we expanded access to housing, legal support, health, and crisis services.

We hosted the **Unlocking Doors Conference** to address housing barriers for NRPF women.

While we've made significant progress, **fundraising continues to be a critical challenge**. Sustained investment is essential to ensure that by-and-for organisations like AWRC can continue meeting rising demand.

We remain committed to building safety, dignity, and justice for BME women. My sincere thanks to our funders, partners, staff, Trustees, and to the women who trust us every day.

Sarbjit Ganger, Director



A word from our Patron

"AWRC epitomises the vital and unique role led by-and-for organisations play in supporting BME women experiencing domestic abuse and harmful practice, by addressing inequalities and representing the communities which they serve. I have seen first-hand how women's lives have been transformed."

Baroness Helena Kennedy of The Shaws LT KC



We support women who are experiencing domestic abuse and harmful practices.

How we do this:

AWRC deploys a multifaceted strategy, supporting women through frontline services and building capacity, knowledge and understanding within service organisations.

Direct intervention and prevention

We support women to rebuild their lives, and secure long-term safety and stability.

Specialist training and professional development

We work to build capacity and knowledge within public and voluntary services, so that professionals know how to respond effectively to harmful practices and support women with insecure immigration status.

Advocacy and policy engagement

We amplify voices of BME survivors and issue informed responses to government policies in a way that is equitable, inclusive, and shaped by lived experiences.

We lead **three pan-London projects** and collaborate on multiple partnerships with organisations focused on ending domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.

Our impact

In the year 2024-25 we have:



Supported upwards of **1,000 women**



Provided services in **23 community languages**



Directly supported **216 women** with advice, advocacy, and crisis response via our **No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) Helpline**



Supported more than **250 migrant women** (who have NRPF) via the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation and Support (DASA) programme and London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS)



Provided **emergency financial aid** to **40 women**, enabling safe exits and access to essentials



Delivered training to **116** local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Coordinators in England and Wales



Delivered our **accredited Harmful Practices Advocate Training**, enhancing specialist capacity in the Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVA) workforce

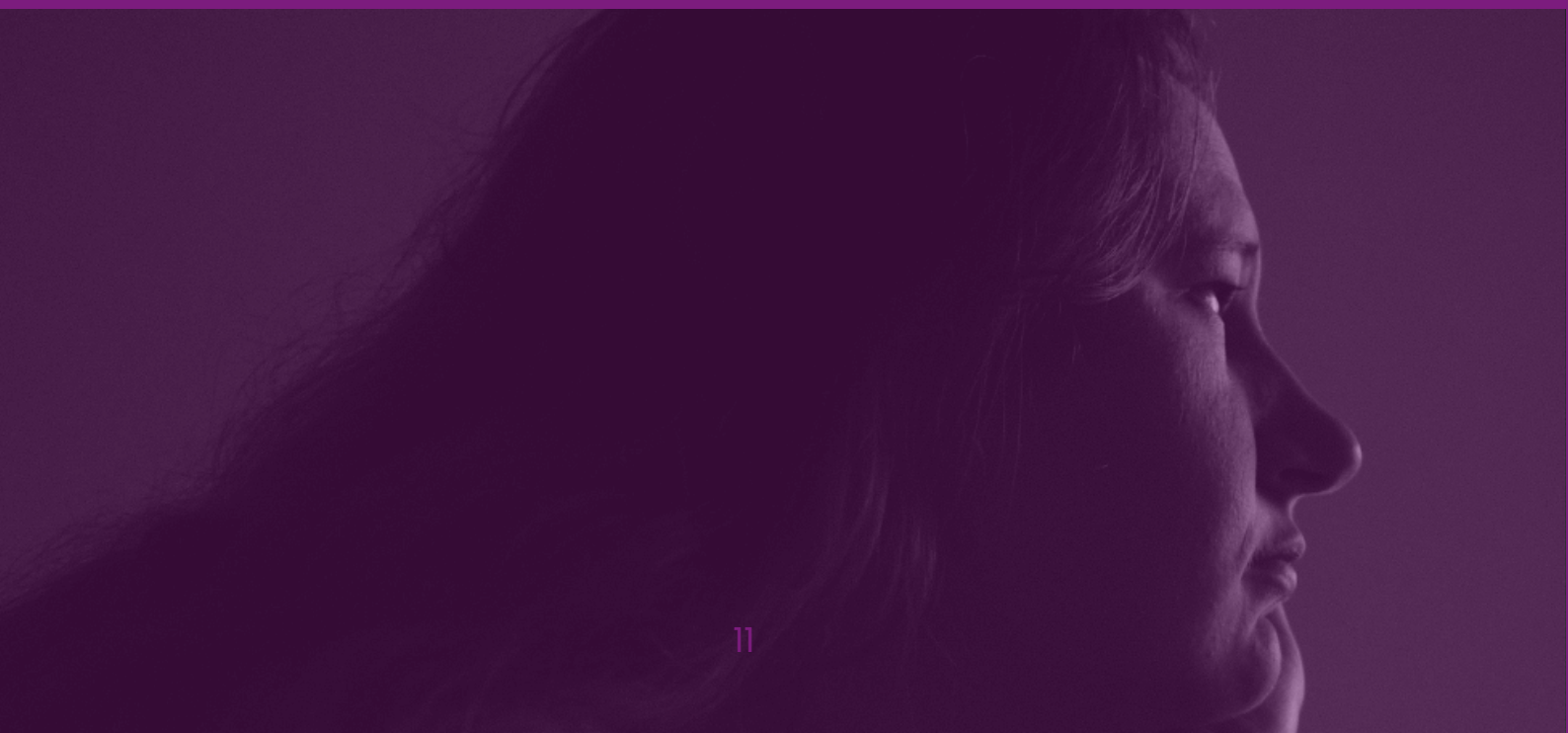
Our work in action

*"After leaving a domestic violence situation two years ago, I felt completely lost but, with my caseworker's help, **I was able to slowly rebuild my life.***

*They guided me through every step, from accessing benefits, managing homelessness, and securing stable accommodation, to getting **support with my immigration status.** Their knowledge, patience, and compassion made a huge difference at a time when I didn't know where to turn.*

Thanks to their support, I am now settled and in a much better place emotionally and physically."

– **Survivor who received support from AWRC**



Changing women's lives

Frontline services

Our frontline services and partnerships focus on preventing homelessness and providing women with access to safe accommodation, support and the resources they need to escape domestic abuse and harmful practices.

Safe accommodation for women with NRPF status

Facing homelessness is one of the biggest barriers to escaping abuse, as many BME survivors have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).

What is NRPF?

NRPF means that a person is not allowed to claim benefits, tax credits, or housing help from the government because of their immigration status.

Leading the Greater London Authority (GLA) Safe Accommodation NRPF Project, AWRC provides support to improve access to safe accommodation for domestic abuse survivors with NRPF.

The project also provides a Pan-London NRPF Helpline which offers a direct point of entry for survivors with NRPF to access the support and services they urgently need.



AWRC is also part of the London Whole Housing Service Partnership (LWHSP), led by ADVANCE Charity, and Pan-London Floating Support, led by Refuge. These projects aim to enhance pathways to housing support for women experiencing domestic abuse.

The partnerships work to remove immediate harm, provide safe, sustainable and borough-specific housing support, and aid recovery and resettlement of women.

“Thanks to my case worker’s exceptional support, I am now able to focus on my future and am thrilled to share that I will be starting university this September.”

– **Ms H, a survivor supported by LWHSP**

Supporting women who have no recourse to public funds

The majority of women we support have NRPF status, which places them in an impossible position where they must choose between homelessness or abuse.

We support them to gain access to secure accommodation, financial support and the services they need in order to escape abuse.

AWRC is a partner of the London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS) which supports women with NRPF status.

The project aims to meet the needs of women with NRPF and insecure immigration status who are survivors of domestic, sexual, and other forms of gendered abuse (including prostitution, trafficking, and harmful practices).



Tackling harmful practices

Harmful practices are forms of gender-based violence and domestic abuse where escalation happens due to notions of power and control. In these cases, religion, culture and perceived ideas of 'honour' are used as an excuse for coercive control, threats and abuse.

AWRC delivers two projects that offer tailored, holistic support within a **culturally competent framework**, addressing gaps often left by mainstream services.

Prevention and Action Through Community Engagement and Training (P&ACT) is **one of the largest by-and-for collaborations** tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in the UK, bringing together 11 specialist organisations.

The project provides trauma-informed services for BME women experiencing harmful practice abuses such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), and 'honour'-based abuse.

After receiving support from P&ACT:



Of survivors **felt safer**



Of survivors **felt empowered** to know their rights and make decisions



Of survivors reported **improved wellbeing**



AWRC also leads the Ascent Ending Harmful Practices Partnership, which aims to improve service provision for women affected by harmful practices.

Funded by London Councils, the partnership supports survivors by providing high quality front-line and support services to voluntary and statutory organisations.

A Survivor's Story

Ms. B, a 22-year-old woman from Turkey, arrived in the UK in September 2024. She immediately experienced emotional, physical and financial abuse from her husband and his family. She was also a victim of modern-day slavery and forced into marriage.

As the abuse worsened, she eventually fled the family home in April 2025 and was referred to AWRC where her case was assessed as high risk due to threats to kill her.

Support provided:

- One-to-one case worker support to manage her immigration status and financial needs
- Asda vouchers for necessities and financial support
- A comprehensive safety plan and referrals to other support services

Outcome:

With AWRC's support Ms. B was given safe emergency accommodation and her Migrant Victims of Domestic Abuse Concession was approved.

"I am really pleased with the support I have received – I can't thank you enough. I don't know what I would have done in this country without your service. Thank you for checking in on me regularly."

– Ms B on receiving support from AWRC

Professional training

Our professional training programmes and partnerships equip practitioners with a detailed understanding of the needs of BME and NRPF survivors, teaching them to take an intersectional approach and to spot the signs of domestic and harmful practice abuses so that more informed action can be taken.

Harmful Practice Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate (HPIDVA) Programme

The HPIDVA Programme was launched in March 2024. This pioneering training programme equips practitioners with the specialised knowledge and skills essential for navigating the challenges associated with harmful practice.

The only training course of its kind in the UK, HPIDVA is accredited by the Association for Accredited Learning and endorsed by the Northern Council for Further Education.

Rooted in a **Black feminist perspective** and an intersectional approach, HPIDVA is designed to enhance the skills of frontline workers working within the ending VAWG sector and beyond.

“Discussions around intersectionality and how it affects people, ourselves and our clients [...] made me realise the value of reflecting on my own experiences and biases, and how I can use this lens to apply in my own practice.”

– Programme participant

Identification and Referral to Improve Safety Project (IRIS)

The IRIS project, a collaboration between AWRC and Advance, offers free training to GPs and practice staff in the London Boroughs of Hillingdon, Harrow, Westminster and Hammersmith and Fulham to spot and respond to signs of domestic abuse.

The project's mission is simple: Bridge the gap between healthcare professionals and domestic abuse and VAWG services, ensuring a coordinated and compassionate response to those in need.

Impact in 2024-25:

90

Clinicians trained



15

Practices received training



45

Administrative staff trained



A Survivor's Story

AWRC supported a 25-year-old woman who arrived in the UK on a spousal visa to join her husband. She spoke very little English and had a one-year-old son.

She was subjected to physical, verbal and emotional abuse by her husband who isolated her from her family and friends, cutting her off from any support network.

Support provided:

- Advising and assisting in obtaining a court injunction for protection
- Enabling access to legal representation to initiate divorce proceedings
- Supporting her to secure safe accommodation through a housing association

Outcome:

Although this took place nearly 30 years ago, the woman continues to have strong ties to AWRC.

"Thanks to AWRC, today I am emotionally and physically in a much better place. And my son, once a toddler, now has a successful career with Goldman Sachs."

The AWRC community helped me to find strength, stability, and belonging."

– Survivor on receiving support from AWRC

Providing opportunities

At AWRC we recognise that offering a healing environment and a space for self-expression are key to aiding recovery from the trauma of domestic abuse. We work to rebuild women's confidence and provide opportunities through workshops and volunteering.

From surviving to thriving

As well as providing women with direct assistance, AWRC's **Surviving Abuse and Thriving Project (SAAT)** works with survivors to rebuild self-esteem and develop skills. We host a range of creative group workshops which provide:

- A safe environment for social interaction and building friendships
- Opportunities for personal and professional growth
- A therapeutic outlet for self-expression and creativity

Our events span **mental and physical wellbeing** workshops, arts and crafts sessions, and employability-focused activities such as CV support and volunteering opportunities.

"Thank you so much for organising these wonderful workshops – they've been incredibly helpful and inspiring. Through them I have been able to evolve and realise my potential."

– Workshop participant



Research: Influencing policy & prevention through engagement

Beyond training and frontline services, we also work to influence government policy to better recognise the needs of BME survivors. We are continually working with professionals in the sector to raise awareness of training opportunities and strengthen commitment to better supporting BME survivors.

Collaboration is key

Working in collaboration with other organisations is fundamental to achieving our mission. The **Coaction Hub** is a unique partnership between AWRC and the Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse charity.

The project centres the needs of BME survivors – which have been largely overlooked within Coordinated Community Response.

As part of this project Coaction Hub coordinates the pan-London **Harmful Practices Strategic Partnership** (HPSP), a space for agencies to work strategically and collaboratively to create change in response to harmful practices.



Events & engagement

This year we celebrated a series of landmark moments with events which recognised and celebrated our achievements and looked ahead to how we can continue meeting the needs of BME women.

A visit from Her Majesty the Queen

On 20th February 2025 Her Majesty Queen Camilla visited our newly renovated Centre to mark our 45th anniversary and to open our Healing Garden, a safe space for survivors to spend time in nature and help support recovery.

The Queen met staff, volunteers, supporters and survivors who shared their stories of resilience.

"This visit was a momentous occasion for AWRC, and a profound recognition from Her Majesty of the challenges faced by BME women affected by domestic violence," said Sarbjit Ganger, Director of AWRC.

"We are proud of the impact that AWRC has had over the past 45 years, but our work is far from over".



The AWRC Conference 2025

Unlocking Doors: Sustainable Solutions to the Housing Crisis Facing BME Women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

In March 2025, AWRC convened a landmark 'Unlocking Doors' conference to highlight the housing crisis faced by the many BME survivors who lack access to government funds due to their immigration status.

More than 85% of women supported by AWRC in 2024-25 had NRPF status.

These numbers reflect a human rights crisis: a surge of survivors locked out of benefits and housing support, forced to choose between abuse and homelessness.

Keynote speakers at the conference were:

- Nicole Jacobs, Domestic Abuse Commissioner of England and Wales
- Pragna Patel, Co-Founder and Co-Director of Project Resist





"A hostile immigration environment fuelled by growing racism intersects with entrenched patriarchal control to effectively trap women with NRPF."

Pragna Patel, Co-Founder and Co-President of Project Resist

A powerful consensus emerged: no woman should be denied safety and support because of her immigration status.

Speaking on the systemic challenges that BME NRPF women face, Zarreen Mohi, Contracts Manager at AWRC, said:

"These barriers are not accidental. They are the direct result of structural and institutional racism. And they demand change."

The Outcome

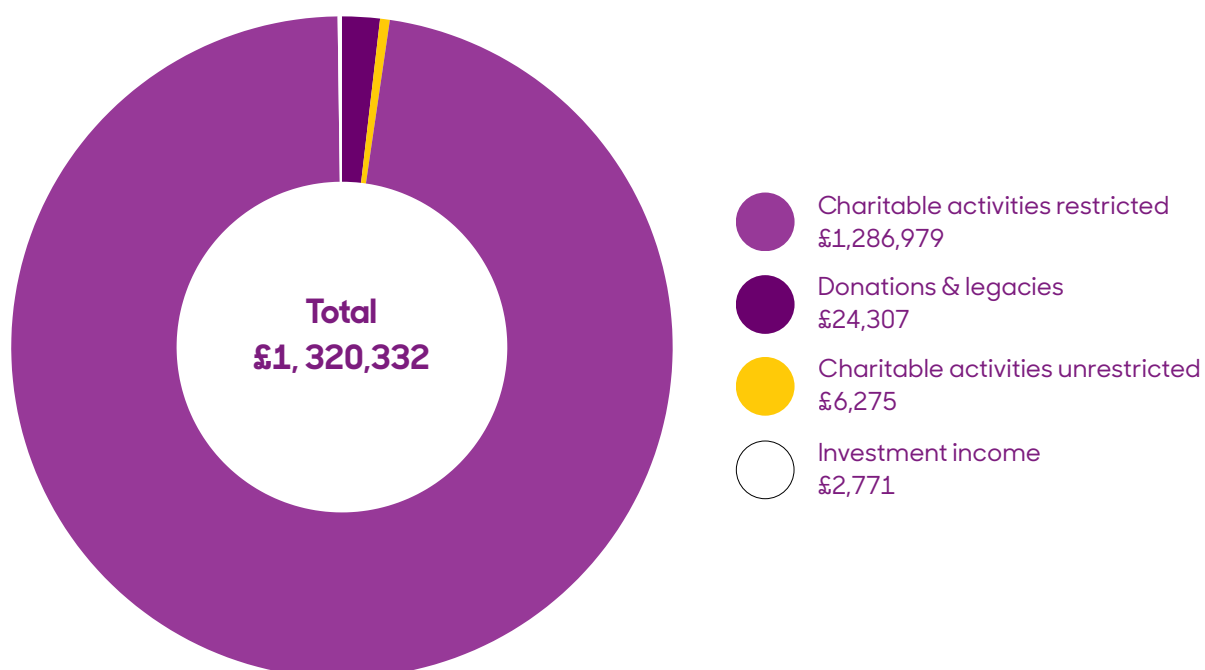
The discussions reinforced the need for both immediate solutions and long-term systemic change to ensure all women, regardless of immigration status, have access to safety, shelter, and support.

Going forward, the role of by-and-for organisations in bridging gaps and enabling access to safe housing remains critical.

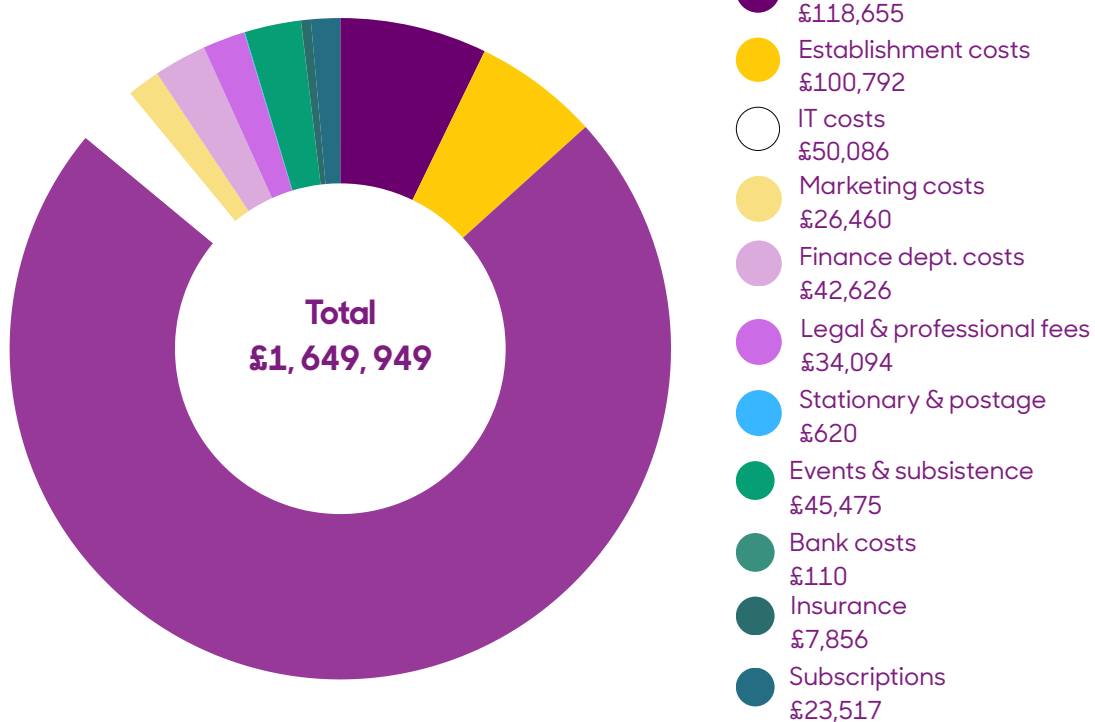


Financials

Income 2024-25



Expenditure 2024-25



Financials

Asian Women's Resource Centre

(Registration number: 01942925)
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	12	24,817	20,944
Current assets			
Debtors	13	492,493	730,666
Cash at bank and in hand	14	395,522	489,364
		<u>888,015</u>	<u>1,220,030</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	15	<u>(455,434)</u>	<u>(453,962)</u>
Net current assets		<u>432,581</u>	<u>766,068</u>
Net assets		<u>457,398</u>	<u>787,012</u>
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds			
Restricted funds		-	252,955
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted funds		<u>457,398</u>	<u>534,057</u>
Total funds	16	<u>457,398</u>	<u>787,012</u>

The financial statements on pages 15 to 34 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 20 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

N. Patel

N Patel
Chair and trustee



T Siddiqui
Trustee

The notes on pages 19 to 34 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Our funders

We gratefully acknowledge our funders for their crucial support to our work in the year 2024-2025.



Our accreditations



The work of the AWRC would not be possible without the enormous efforts of our dedicated and committed trustees, staff, senior management team, volunteers, partners and stakeholders and above all, the women who access our services.

We would sincerely like to thank everyone who has been involved in making a positive impact on the lives of some of the most marginalised women in our society.

Glossary of terms

By-and-for organisations

Organisations which are run by the community they service. In this report we are specifically referring to services run by-and-for BME women with the aim of ending violence against women and girls.

Coordinated Community Response (CCR)

CCR is an approach where agencies and specialist services collaborate to address domestic abuse and other forms of violence. It prioritises survivor safety, ensures consistent responses across sectors, and seeks to hold perpetrators accountable through joint working and shared protocols.

Domestic Abuse (DA)

Domestic abuse is any behaviour by a partner, ex-partner, or family member that harms or controls someone. This can include physical or sexual abuse, threats, emotional or psychological abuse, controlling or coercive behaviour, and financial abuse. Children can also be affected if they see, hear, or experience the impact of the abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is defined by the World Health Organisation as “all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.” More information on FGM can be found [here](#).

Harmful Practices (HP)

Harmful practices are: forms of gender-based violence and domestic abuse where escalation happens due to notions of power and control within intersectional contexts of oppression. In these cases, religion, culture, patriarchal codes of behaviour and perceived notions of honour are used by one or more perpetrators as an excuse for coercive control, threats and abuse.

‘Honour’-Based Abuse (HBA)

Abuse which is committed because there is a misguided notion around ‘honour’ and ‘dishonourable’ behaviour in a relationship, family and/or community. It often occurs in response to individuals trying to break away from constraining ‘norms’ that their family or community are imposing.

We use quotation marks around the term ‘honour’ to indicate that, whilst honour is used as a justification for abuse, there can never be honour in abusive behaviour. More information on HBA can be found [here](#).

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

NRPF means that a person is not allowed to claim benefits, tax credits, or housing help from the government because of their immigration status.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)

A coordinated meeting where local agencies (such as police, health, social services, housing, and domestic abuse services) share information and collaboratively plan actions to safeguard victim-survivors identified as at high risk of serious harm or homicide from domestic abuse.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

VAWG refers to forms of gender-based violence that are directed at women and girls or disproportionately affect them. It encompasses domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking, harassment, forced marriage, so-called ‘honour-based’ abuse, and female genital mutilation (FGM).

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