

BIRMINGHAM ASIAN RESOURCE CENTRE

Annual Report 2023



“PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING,
INSTILLING DIGNITY AND RESPECT”

Annual Report 2023

Contents:	Pages
Our Team	2 - 3
Chairs Forward	4
Project Managers Update	5-6
Project and Activity Update	7-19
Planned Work	20
Testimonials and Case Studies	22

Board of Directors



Muhammad Imtious Sheikh, Haroon Majid, Nighet Nisa, Sobur Khan, Muhammd Idrish

Meet the Team



Mohammed Jobbar (left in March 2024), Aliur Rahman, Juma Begum, Reshma Rahman, Feteha Hoque, Farrat Parveen.

Champions and Volunteers

Raima Begum
Humaira Chandiwal
Abdus Salam
Jahanra Munir
Labu Miah
Robina Kousar
Ruksana Munir



Chairs Forward : Muhammad Imtious Sheikh

Birmingham Asian Resource Centre has had another successful year.

The Centre assisted more people this year than in the last few years with matters such as debt, welfare, housing, and health by facilitating activities and programmes in consultation with our beneficiaries.

2022/2023 was filled with many challenges and obstacles, from selling the building to securing alternative accommodation. In 2022, the Centre relocated to three different premises, which impacted how much funding we could secure and how much work we could deliver. However, with tremendous grit and determination, our resilience and commitment have led us to a path of growth and success.

I am proud of our achievement and that every individual has remained committed to BARC and its ethos, ensuring that the voices of the most vulnerable are heard.

The community of Lozells and Handsworth has evolved; however, that has not come without its challenges, the harsh impact of loss of lives during the 2020 pandemic, the rise in inflation and the cost of living leading to loss of home, family breakdown and relationship breakdown. The pandemic has also affected schooling and learning for younger children in Lozells, Handsworth and its surrounding areas. BARC remained a constant place for their community to turn to and will remain a continuous at such times.

Project Managers Report: Juma Begum

It is an absolute honour and privilege for me to be working here today. I have a career spanning over 31 years and 26 of this has been with BARC.

Birmingham Asian Resource Centre (BARC) has always been a beacon of hope for many members of the BME community in Handsworth and its surrounding areas. Since the inception of the charity, BARC has always been defiant in tackling and talking about very difficult and sensitive topics affecting the BME community.

In that time I have seen how BARC has championed and campaigned on topics such as violence against women and young girls, mental health issues, highlighting the number of unpaid hidden carers within the BME communities saving millions of government money, immigration and Asylum and supporting older people in later life.

The positive work of BARC has paved ways for other organisations to pick up the reins today.

BARC has always fought and stood up for people when they had no one to stand up for their rights, ensuring voices were carried and heard across all platforms.

Some of the biggest past achievements for BARC was campaigning against Anti-deportation for genuine asylum seekers and refugees fleeing persecution, to running sheltered accommodation for older people from the South Asian community, managing one of the largest refuge spaces in Birmingham for South Asian Women and young girls. BARC held one of the largest legal aid contracts for debt welfare and housing.

2022 and 2023 has not come without its challenges. Coming out of a pandemic that affected everyone, especially the most marginalised members of the BME community as well as small and medium charities such as BARC. The increase in cost of living has had a massive impact on the organisation and its beneficiaries. No surprise to the ever-increasing demand to our welfare, and debt advice service.

Even with all its challenges we have found a way to move forward. With support from beneficiaries, funders, volunteers and BOARD members we had some fantastic achievements as highlighted by this report.

We adopted a motto back in 2028 "Improving health and wellbeing, instilling dignity and respect" I am tremendously proud of the team for their exceptional hard work empowering people, helping to build resilience and confidence with individuals, to improving the lives of our beneficiaries. To tackling inequalities in health, housing, finance and improved access to services by being the bridge for the community. Since 2022 we have been offering Kids, Men and Women's Badminton session, Yoga, Cycling, Swimming, and water sports.

Birmingham Asian Resource Centre. We have several projects that we have been working on either by partnering or collaborating with funders and organisations. We continued to tackle poverty through our advice and advocacy service, tackling health

inequality by running workshops and inviting guest speakers, dispensing advice around housing, food, fuel and food poverty, and inequality of health and well-being by offering various activities for free and continue to tackle loneliness and isolation, all of which incumbents to prioritising tackling mental health.



Groupwork makes success like ingredients make food



Project and Activity for 2022-2023

Thanks to our Funders and partners, we managed to delivery range of activities and programmes through our funded projects:

You me mind and body: Funded by Lottery Community Fund:

Working with Elders and hidden Carers from the BME community, to support older people in later life, by facilitating programmes to help them to become more financially stable, to live happier, healthier and longer.

Supporting hidden carers to value their self-worth and help build up confidence, hidden carers save millions for the government by taking caring of friends, relatives loved ones and neighbours.

Warm Hub- Funded Independent Age Grants:

Warm spaced created for BME elders to come together without any judgement, able to have access to immediate advice and help support them in their darkest hours with debt matters, access to cooked meals three times a week, safe warm place to come together.

BVSC, Birmingham City Council Public Health Birmingham, help with food project and Long Covid workshop.

We are cycling UK men's learn social ride and women learn to ride sessions, Canal and River Trust water sports and fishing, Diabetes UK to better understand and mange diabetes in the community.

Some of the Activities that have taken place 2022-2023:

**Women-only yoga class – By Augmented
Instructor Maureen Howell**



Men-only Yoga Class by Chris Callaghan



Men's Badminton



Introduction to Gym for Carers





Mixed cycling group.



Men's Cycling Club (For Carers)



Getting Ready for our Diabetes awareness workshop



Diabetes myth busting sessions



Eid party July 2022, Diwali party and Christmas party took place in 2022



Mixed group Bell boating during the summer of 2022, with Canal and River Trust.





Beneficiaries learning about Diawali from Kulwant and Devinder.

Beneficiaries learning about Diawali from



Trip to watch Squash at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, and visit Pollinations.

Trip to watch Squash at the 2022



Well over 100 women attended our many women and menopause sessions, age range from 45 to 65, many older ladies where upset to learn that they too could have been made aware about menopause if it was made available to them, but appreciated this talk, they were sad that no one had explained to them what they had gone through as a result of menopause they were mainly labelled by family and society as being depressed.

Weekly Food Parcel handed out to older adults of our project.



These are just some of the activities that have occurred between April 22 and March 2023.

We have hosted multiple workshop around cost of living, this has more or less dominated most of our sessions, the genuine fear of struggles paying fuel bills, food, and prescription charge is very worrying to see.

ESOL and IT, and NHS:

ESOL and spoken English for beginners has been taking place since January 2023, we feel this has helped empower number of the Elders accessing our services. A new class will commence from May 2023

Hosted IT for beginners with WEA.

We have worked with the NHS about Integrated Care partnership, the session was attended by Elders as they are most affected due to lack of access to health care and the NHS.



ESOL for women only.



Our Mixed IT for beginners class.



Session with NHS BCHC



Discussion took place around what Services for the Elderly should be made available in the community.



Women only ESOL session.

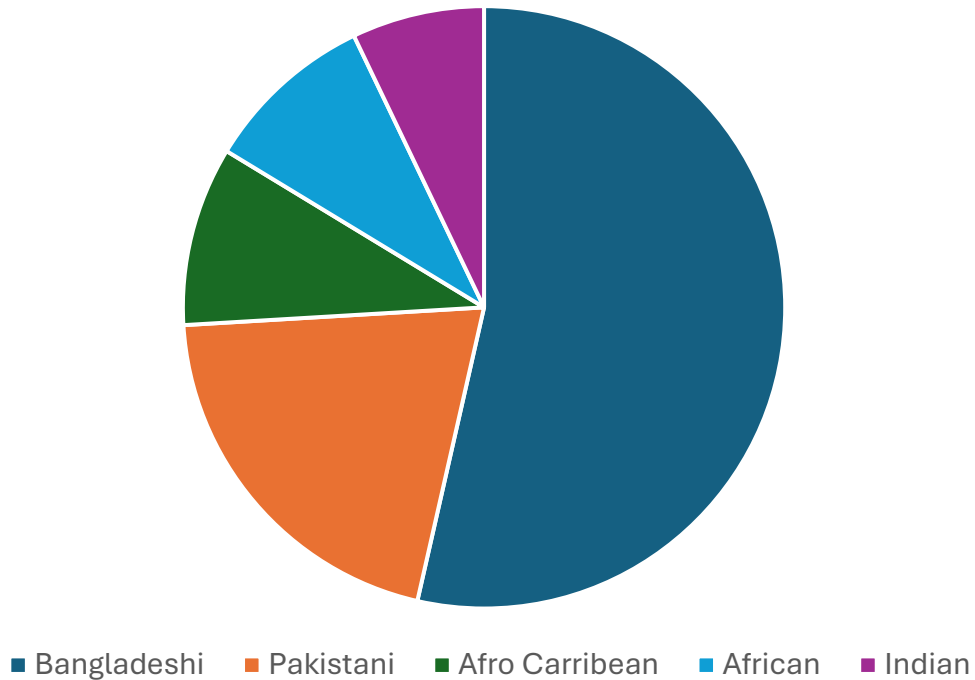
Clients Seen in 2022-2023 total 1163

Gender Breakdown	
Male	540
Female	623

Total Number of Advice Session	
Total Number of Advice Sessions	190

Activity and Session	
Badminton	26
Cycling	23
ESOL	24
Workshops – Diabetes-Menopause-Budgeting-Long Covid	14
Yoga	25
Bell Boating with Canal and River Trust	6
Arts and Crafts	6
Learn to Sew	6
Walking with Canal and River Trust	6
Introduction to planting and table top gardening	6

Ethnicity Breakdown



The demographics of the group has been predominantly from the Bangladeshi background, from low socio economical background. Followed by Pakistani, Afro Caribbean, African and then Indian.

Most of our beneficiaries living in poor living standard, disrepair property privately rented or social housing.

People living in private rented accommodation are experiencing massive increase of their rent by private landlord which not at all affordable for our clients. As a result some are experiencing homelessness, or threatened with homelessness. Our intervention has prevented 5 cases of unlawful eviction.

Long Covid Work Shop:

We had also facilitated 4 work shop to our elders and Carers group around long Covid, symptoms, affect and management and access to long covid clinic this was attended by 40 people in total from the Elders project. Delivered in collaboration with the NHS, and BVSC.

It was evident the lack of information available to those suffering from long-term side effect of long covid is not accessible to members of the BME community due to language needs, literacy needs, IT needs, and digital property.

The Elders participating in the group discussion, made a very valid point during the group sessions. They felt that with information available to hand to the decision makers, knowing that the first round of the pandemic worse hit the BME community, why did it take them to do these workshops to understand that BME members cannot access the online information on long COVID? GPs are overworked and need more time to spend on patients. The workshop identified some beneficiaries possibly having suffered from long-term covid symptoms and side effects in silence.

There is a part of our work we wished we had not have to see, and that is the abuse exploitation of older adults by some members of the community and their own family. We have referred two cases of financial abuse to adult safe guarding team. One case resulted in social services removing the older person from the home and secure them in a safer accommodation.

Debt Welfare and Housing advice:

2022 to 2023 we were inundated with request for appointments for Welfare and Debt advice. We saw an increase in family breakdown due to the rise in cost of living, this has also attributed to verbal altercation towards older people by family members.

Financial abuse exploitation of older adults by some members of the community and their own family is real. We have referred two cases of financial abuse to adult safe guarding team in 2023. One case resulted in social services removing the older person from the home and secure them in a safer accommodation.

As much as we hoped such issues do not exists we cannot ignore the fact some vulnerable group in all communities are at risk of abuse. That is why we run regular sessions around safe guarding with our groups. Discussing who and were to go for help, recognising signs of different forms of abuse.

Total Number of Advice Session	
Total Number of Advice Sessions	190

Delivered 190 advice sessions via appointment of which 83 cases related to debt.



Advice Session appointment based.

Income Maximisation:

Generated additional income for beneficiaries through benefits, trust funds and Grants. In addition to all our work, we were invited to become a trusted partner with peoples plus, to issue out Household Support fund payment for Round 2 and Round 3. **Total payment issued out £29.800.**

We became a trusted partner with BVSC and distributed the Household Support fund to some of the most vulnerable groups in the community, especially the elderly and households with disabled children. In conjunction with the work of our advice surgery, **we generated an income of £229.000** for our beneficiaries.

Debt managed

We saw 83 Debt cases, of which we managed a debt of **£39.732**

2023 saw an increase across all activities, advice, and telephone support; in total **1163** accessed our services who met the projects and programme criteria.

Total Income Generated
£229.000
Total Debt Managed
£39732
Homelessness Prevented
5

BARC Asian Older peoples Forum:

We have a mix of men and women who have come together and talk about what they want to do as a group, as a group they will organise trips to museums and heritage places, the group is not exclusive to people in this locality but open to all over the age of 55 living in Birmingham. Due to access issues the group is hoping once they are established an fully operational their model will be adopted and used throughout out the city.

For 2023-2024

We have facilitated more activities and improved access to services for older people.

Started the kids homework club, kids badminton and much more to come.

Upcoming planned work:

May 2023 we start our peer support session for Diabetes, in collaboration with Diabetes UK, all staff and volunteers will have been trained up as Diabetes champion, we have a MOU with Diabetes UK to work 6 months in delivering and promoting reducing type.

New partnership work with innovative minds, Thrive Together.

Following discussion with Beneficiaries Staff and Volunteers, various trips organise, botanicals gardens, beach trips, fruit picking, museums and heritage sites, and fishing sessions.

One of the important aspect that we have to understand is that older Asian people do not have a secondary income unlike white older people or Black older people.

Asian Elders are surviving off State pension or just pension credit. This has caused serious financial hardship for the Asian older people at a time were by cost of living has had a devastating impact on their life.

Our aim is to build meaningful friendship amongst peers of all background, and we are happy to say so far this has been taking place quite successfully.





“You Me Mind and Body, Promoting Health and Wellbeing, instilling Dignity and Respect”



Craft and Qawali session participated by BARC hidden carers group in partnership with Culture Central.

Client Testimonials

Mr Afzal aged 68

“I never thought I would take part in any type of physical activity, since starting Yoga last year, I really enjoy attending the weekly sessions, and meeting my new friends”

Raima age 39 Carer

“ As a full time unpaid carer to my mum and my dad the yoga and the outdoor bell boating sessions has been so good for my mental health, I feel happy for many hours after each session”

Mrs Begum aged 73

“ I have very limited mobility, but I look forward to attending group session, as I have an opportunity to meet and speak to people of similar circumstances, I live on my own, and become very lonely, I know now, that two to three times a week I have somewhere to go and socialise without being judged”.

Mrs Khatun aged 51

“The Craft and Qawali session helped me to step out of my house, feel alive, felt a sense of belonging made a really good friend and gave me confidence to try new things”

Mr Chowdhury aged 67

“I have Parkinson’s, this has reduced my mobility, I am determined to stay active, because of BARC I am able to do this as it is affordable to me”