



Nottingham
Muslim Women's
Network

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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**CELEBRATE OUR
SUCCESSSES OF 2022!**

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WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT, COVERING JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2022

ABOUT NOTTINGHAM MUSLIM WOMEN'S NETWORK (NMWN)

NMWN is a diverse network of Muslim women, sharing knowledge and voicing the needs of Muslim women in a safe environment, providing a platform to ensure they are included in decision making processes to influence local policy and strategic development of services.

We endeavour to bring about effective change through lived experiences, knowledge and develop and deliver appropriate workshops around unaddressed issues affecting Muslim women. Our target group is primarily Muslim girls and women aged thirteen and older, however we welcome all women.



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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRS

**Every policy pushed, every decision made,
every campaign delivered.**

Well, what can we say other than it has been a busy and exciting year for the Network.

During 2022, we managed to secure funding from the Ministry of Justice, Reaching Communities, The Office of the Police Crime Commissioner. The funding will secure services for three years which will enable us to continue supporting Muslim Women. Due to the passion, commitment and hard work from our team of workers we were able to have a Nasheed Night, take women and children away to a hostel in Buxton, day trip to London, raised funds for women with no recourse to public funds, encourage women to attend our wellness winter walks and get involved in sport. Our drop-ins and legal surgery remains, very busy and are a much-needed service.

This year the outreach service provided support to fourteen women with no recourse to public funds. They required emergency accommodation, food and out of hours support. We continue to provide a sign-posting service also advocacy and support well beyond our 9 to 5pm working hours.

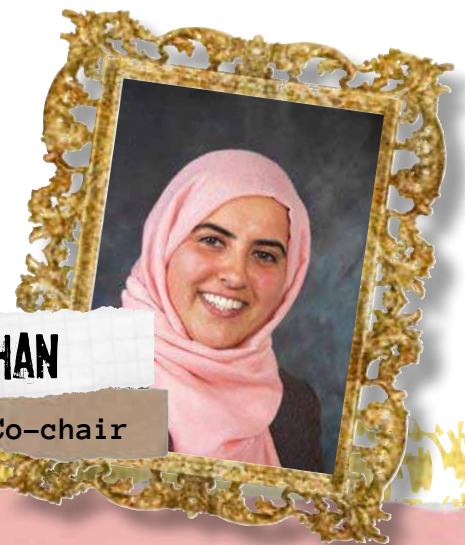
Our Urdu and Mirpuri Freedom Programme still remains very popular so much so we have been approached from further afield to deliver it online to other Muslim Women and by doing this it will empower engage inform and give them the tools to make informed choices.

We would like to thank all of our donors and partners for their valuable support and effort in taking our campaigns and events forward.



MARSHA BROWN

Co-chair



NEGHAAT KHAN

Councillor & Co-chair

**WE ARE HERE FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY TO CHALLENGE
ATTITUDES THAT HOLD MUSLIM WOMEN BACK SO ALL MUSLIM
WOMEN IN NOTTINGHAM CAN SUCCEED.**

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ABOUT NOTTINGHAM MUSLIM WOMEN'S NETWORK (NMWN)

WE PROVIDE:

- Legal advice surgeries
- Drop in sessions
- Training and workshops
- Community events to promote well-being
- Opportunities to encourage inclusion and cohesion
- Awareness raising and campaigning on unaddressed issues affecting Muslim Women
- Information, advice and guidance
- Referral and signposting to specialist services

THE NETWORK PROVIDES BESPOKE SERVICES IN NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE PROVIDING A PLACE FOR MUSLIM WOMEN IN THE CITY AND COUNTY TO ACCESS INFORMATION, GET NON-JUDGEMENTAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND POTENTIALLY TAKE THEIR PLACE AS COMMUNITY ADVOCATES AND ACTIVISTS.



OUR MISSION



**Every policy pushed, every decision made,
every campaign delivered.**

Nottingham Muslim Women's Network is a grassroots community organisation. We ensure local Muslim women's voices are heard, and their needs are met.


We speak to women about important issues that matter to them, such as harmful cultural practices, honour-based abuse, FGM, hate crime and discrimination.

We are deeply trusted throughout the community and our understanding of these critical issues means we're uniquely positioned to offer the best support and advice. Listening to these voices, we act as a bridge, channelling the experiences and opinions of our community to inform policy makers, mainstream services, and frontline professionals to create positive change.

Every policy pushed, every decision made, every campaign delivered is directed by the lived experiences of Muslim women.

We want Muslim women of all ages to achieve their full potential. That is why we work hard to support the next generation of Muslim women, empowering them as role models who can shape the lives of those around them.

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THE TEAM AND FUNDING



Every policy pushed, every decision made, every campaign delivered.

2022 was both an exciting time for the Network but also a time of change and reflection. The board of Trustees grew with the addition of three new members, Shagufta Khan, Nayab Patel and Simah Hussain. At the same time we had to say goodbye to Shazia Khan, our trustee and founder member. However, the staff team also saw the sad departure of Tahira Kauser. Tahira joined the team last year however left due to ill health and family commitments.

During the tail end of 2022, Zaynab Asghar, the Co-ordinator of the Network for the past five years was promoted to the position of Manager.

Shanaz Din, 'the back bone' of all of the Network's internal operations was promoted to the position of the Office Manager. Shanaz continues to provide NMWN with human resourcing support and overlooks the overall finance of staffing and office on costs. She was also instrumental in negotiating an additional office space at the Nottingham Women's Centre.

Sam Cooper, continued to provide the Network with design support by creating promotional art work for external communications. She also continued to maintain a strong presence of the Network online.

Ifat Mahmood, the Black and Minoritised Ethnic (BAME) Domestic Abuse support worker continued to provide a high level of support to Muslim women leaving abusive relationships. The Awards4All grant made it possible for Ifat to attend the three day Freedom Programme Practitioner training. This enabled the Network to continue offering the Freedom Programme in community languages.

The strategic development of the organisation was continued under the leadership of; Councillor Neghat Khan, (Co-Chair and Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, Safety and Inclusion) Marsha Brown (Co-Chair, Founder of Bambuu) Dr Sobia Qazi (Lecturer at Nottingham University) Maxine Cockett (Founder of Breaking Barriers Building Bridges).



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PROJECTS

THE FREEDOM PROGRAMME

The Network continued to deliver the Freedom Programme in Urdu/Mirpuri Pashto with twenty women having successfully completed the project by the end of June 2022.

The Freedom Programme was followed by a 12 week equipped2succeed confidence building programme in Urdu. This programme was successfully completed by 10 women.

The Network was approached by the Nottingham Refugee Forum during the Summer of 2022 and requested us to deliver the Freedom Programme in Dari and Pashto. This was successfully delivered during the Autumn of 2022 with Afghani Women, who were living in Nottingham under the UK resettlement Scheme.

The Awards4All funding made it possible for the Network to train another member of staff in delivering the Freedom Programme. This has been a great development as it has allowed the Network to increase it's capacity to deliver a culturally competent Freedom Programme. The Network is looking forward to further diversifying the Freedom Programme into other community languages such as Arabic.

THE FREEDOM PROGRAMME REFERRED BY:

- 8 NMWN DV service
- 6 Refuge referrals
- 5 Other supporting agencies
- 1 Juno Women's Aid



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PROJECTS

LEGAL ADVICE CLINICS

Set up in 2014, the legal advice clinics continued to offer free legal advice with a professional about delicate issues such as divorce, domestic abuse, child contact, sexual exploitation, forced marriage and other family law related matters.

During 2022, we offered 12 free legal surgeries in partnership with Family Law Group. As it can be seen by the statistics, our legal surgery clinics are open to all women not only Muslim women.

IMMIGRATION ADVICE

The Network continued to provide an appointment based access to free immigration consultations with a concession towards the legal costs of submitting DDVC (Destitute Domestic Violence Concessions) applications.



DROP-IN ADVOCACY AND SIGN POSTING

The Network continued to offer a drop-in service from both the Mary Potter Health Centre in Forest Fields and from Sultania Masjid in Sneinton. The drop-in service offers advice and advocacy on welfare rights, housing, hate crime in Urdu/Mirpuri, Pushto and for this reason is very popular as it helps Muslim women regain some of their agency in life.

Both the legal surgeries and drop-ins enable the Network to capture lived experiences of Muslim women and from this develop projects through identifying gaps and issues.

The Sultania Masjid drop-in was developed after speaking to Muslim women in Sneinton and the Mosque committee. The Mosque committee was keen on engaging more women to use the Mosque so for this reason we decided to start the drop-in there.

The small Make Notts Safe grant made it possible for the Network to deliver workshops from the Mosque around keeping safe online, drug awareness and hate crime awareness and reporting.



SUPPORTING NEW MUSLIMS

During this year, the Network received three referrals to support women who had recently converted to Islam. In all three cases there was a similar pattern, who were learning about Islam online and had little interaction with local Muslims. There also were concerns about the women becoming exploited online.

The Network supported these women by providing them with advocacy and support around the Islamic faith and the Muslim Community. Supporting these women highlighted a gap in provision for newly converted Muslim women.

One of these women wanted to visit a mosque, but didn't know how to do this. The Outreach Worker co-ordinated a mosque visit for her. Another was supported into looking into her different options to buy ethnic food.



SUPPORTING WOMEN WITH NO RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS

In 2022 we supported fourteen women with no recourse to public funds, this was funded by the donations we collected from the community.

Five of these cases were referred to Ashiana, in Sheffield. A refuge with allocated funding from Central Government to support domestic abuse survivors with no recourse to public funds.

Supporting women with no recourse to public funds includes supporting them with emergency accommodation, food and access to an Immigration specialist solicitor.



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PROJECTS

SUPPORTING WOMEN AND CHILDREN EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC ABUSE

The DV support service supported over fifty women in the last year. Many of these women came over from another country that were dependent on their spouses and in-laws to remain in this country. Throughout the year a pattern has been noted by the DV Support Worker of younger women getting married to much older men

On this occasion, with this being his third or even fourth wife who he has only married on the basis that the woman would look after him and his elderly parents.

We have rolled out the Freedom Programme in English and in a South Asian Language to help women become more aware of the different types of perpetrators and to become familiar with the types of abuse that is out there as most women associate DV only with physical violence only. The women have then been referred to 'Equipped to Succeed' which is a partner agency and we have assisted in helping the women get their self-confidence back and learn some life skills which will empower them to move on and become successful in life. The DV Support Worker has teamed up with Nottingham City Council and the Refugee Form and carried out the Freedom Programme in Dari with the Afghan refugees.

The DV support role consists of liaising with solicitors, which has helped almost twenty women get their indefinite leave to remain in this country. These women have been supported by the Network finding them a safe place to stay, support in claiming benefits and the ability to live their life without having to be in consistent fear.



GIVING MUSLIM WOMEN A SPORTING CHANCE

From June 2022 till March 2023, we secured funding to deliver different sports session for Muslim women that we were supporting in the domestic abuse service. Funding from Sports England made it possible for Muslim women to enjoy archery, soft ball cricket, yoga in the park and a series of walks exploring Nottingham's beautiful parks.



EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2022

The Network celebrated International Women's Day on Friday 11th March 2022, with three local women sharing their experiences of breaking the bias. Attended online by twenty women, Samiah Haleem, Saimah Zaharha, Founder of Lov Exclusive (Ladies' Own Vacation) and Uroosa Ahmed, First Hijabi Firefighter.

All three of the speakers shared their stories and motivations for their careers, and life experiences. They definitely were breaking the bias and the cultural barriers that were preventing most Muslim women to break away from their cultural norms and expectations.



BUXTON RETREAT

For the first time, ever! We took a group of women and their children to Buxton for a three days and two nights retreat. It was a completely new endeavour for the Network however we took on the challenge and provided a wrap around service which included everything from meal preparations, well-being activities for women and outdoor activities for their children.

Activities included:

- Archery
- Guided nature walks
- Movie night for the children
- Pampering night for the women
- Social media detox
- Creative activities



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EVENTS

TRIP TO LONDON

We took our second trip to London in September 2022, a trip that has become an annual event. An opportunity for women accessing our services to have an affordable and fun day out with their families.

Through our work with Muslim women, we noticed these families had never travelled to see the capital because of the costs and the lack of knowledge and confidence of how to get there. Due to popular demand for the trip, we ended up taking two coaches rather than one.

NMWN NASHEED NIGHT

In October 2022, we hosted 'NMWN Nasheed Night', a night of remembrance and praise. Hamza Khan and Prince Naseeb were invited to perform at the Excelsior Suite. Again, a first for the Network. An event which was attended by over two hundred people. During this event we gave Shazia Khan (the Founder and former member of the Trustees) flowers as a sign of appreciation for spear heading the Network. Not only did we raise over **£800** but we also raised the profile of the Network within the wider Muslim community.



CAMPAIGNS

RAMADAN CAMPAIGN

The month of Ramadan was celebrated online with a social media campaign that provided messages of encouragement for our online friends and supporters who were fasting. As Ramadan is the month of giving the Network launched an online campaign – Supporting destitute Muslim women in Nottingham. With this campaign we raised £3726.65 from 237 supporters. Of the £3726.65 raised, £2,919.65 was donated as Sadaqa and £690 as Zakat.

Monies raised from this will go towards the costs incurred supporting women with no recourse to public funds. The funds will also be used towards helping Muslim women and their children resettle in the community by helping them purchase essential items such as beds and or other house hold items. During 2020, money from this fund paid for school uniforms for destitute families too.

FOCUS GROUPS

Gathering Muslim women together for the purpose of focus groups has always been an integral part of capturing Muslim women's lived experience in Nottingham. During 2022, the Network facilitated three focus groups:

- 1 A group of Muslim women attended a focus group with Sharon Rose, the Community Engagement Officer at Notts sexual Violence Support Services (Notts SVSS). This focus group discussed the barriers preventing Muslim women from accessing sexual violence support services.
- 2 Ten women who had experience of giving birth in Nottingham's two hospitals voiced their grievances at a meeting with Donna Ockenden (the chair of the independent review of maternity services at Nottingham University Hospitals).
- 3 Ten women completed the 'Listening Circle' Focus group with Nottingham Women's Centre about the rising costs of child care in Nottingham. Muslim women expressed their concern at the lack of suitable culturally appropriate child care provision in Nottingham. They also said the traditional model of using extended family was no longer a viable option. Two women said they had to give up their teaching careers as they struggled to meet the expenses of child care.

THE FOCUS GROUPS HAVE ALWAYS PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DIFFERENT MUSLIM WOMEN TO COME TOGETHER TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES.



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FUTURE PROJECTS

PLANS FOR 2023

We are excited to announce new projects for the coming year...

THE TEAM IS EXPANDING!

Having secured three years of funding from the National Lottery – Reaching Communities, we are hoping to recruit two new members to the team. The Community Campaigns Officer's role will help develop the Network's capacity to find out and highlight issues affecting Muslim women and girls living in Nottingham and beyond. The Events and Programmes Coordinator will continue to organise informative and empowering projects to engage Muslim women and girls of Nottingham.

During 2022, we have been in talks with Nottingham City Council's This Girl Can – partnership coordinator and are really excited by the prospect of having a Physical Activities Outreach worker join our team in 2023.

RAMADAN RECHARGE!

We are excited to be a part of the Ramadan Recharge campaign. A campaign to encourage the Muslim Community to remain active throughout Ramadan. For next year's Ramadan we shall be actively promoting physical activity by organising a walk and by disseminating the Ramadan Recharge promotional material.

VOLUNTEERING WITH THE NETWORK!

The five Week Community Activism Programme will be starting in January 2023, a programme designed to equip ten community activists with counter messages to challenge oppressive and harmful traditional to support women to take control of their lives. This project takes a zero tolerance stance on five issues: honour based abuse, force marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), domestic abuse and hate crime. We hope the community activists can become the first point of call for women in their communities.

We aim to develop and deliver a twelve week volunteer programme for Muslim women, equipping them with insight into working in the women's sector. We hope the volunteers will organise the Network's next Nasheed Night and two other information and engagement projects in the community. We hope to further develop our volunteer programme by negotiating work placements for our volunteers with other key women's organisations in the City.



THANKS AND APPRECIATION

THANK YOU

NMWN would like to thank all women, children, young people and men who have got involved and participated in Network activities over the last year. We would also like to thank our partners. Partnership working is critical to effective and efficient delivery of our services and we are better for working with you. We are also grateful to our funders.

FUNDERS 2022

During 2022, we secured the following funding:

Ministry of Justice via the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for funding the Domestic Abuse Support service for the next three years.

The Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for funding the Community Activism Programme under the hidden harm thematic three year funding.

The Reaching Communities/National Lottery for funding the next three years of Network expansion and development.

Nottingham City Council/Communities of Identity and Sexual Orientation for funding the drop-in and outreach support throughout Nottingham.

Sports England for funding sporting activities in Nottingham

Awards4All/National Lottery for funding the training of staff and delivery of the Freedom Programme.

Women's Resource Centre – Black and Minoritised Women's Fund. The funding helped cover the core costs for staff salaries and office facilities.



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FUNDERS

- Ministry of Justice
- The Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Reaching Communities - National Lottery
- Nottingham City Council/ Communities of Identity and Sexual Orientation
- Sports England
- Awards4All/National Lottery
- Women's Resource Centre
- Imkaan and Rosa
- Rosa Small Grants

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