



Bangladeshi High Commissioner's Visit,
Sept 2023

Annual Review 2023

WELCOME TO ASHA

Welcome to the Asha Neighbourhood Project's Annual Review 2023. Here is our report celebrating our charity's accomplishments and the South Leeds community we are privileged to support.

ASHA'S VISION

Working to improve and promote the health, education, social welfare and conditions of children and the most hard to reach vulnerable women of the Leeds 11 area. We collaborate with the local authority, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education & aim to provide recreation facilities, advice and guidance concerning health, welfare benefits and welfare rights. Asha's vision is to inspire all women to reach their full potential with confidence, in a safe, kind and just society.

ADVICE, ADVOCACY & SUPPORT SERVICES

One of our aims is to increase the economic and social well-being of women and their families. To raise awareness of their eligibility to benefits and services including dealing with changes to benefits and challenging decisions where appropriate. We help with job searches, writing CV's, domestic issues, signposting to volunteering opportunities and one to one support.

'Hi, my name is Asma Moughal

I've been attending Asha since 2016. They have helped me with my paperwork all the time. I am happy with all the staff and find them all very helpful and welcoming. I attend classes and various events at the centre. I've always found solutions to any problems I've had and always been given good advice. All the staff are brilliant and fabulous. Since coming to Asha, I don't go anywhere else. I tell all my friends about Asha and advise them to go there for any help and advice.'

'Thank you to ASHA centre.

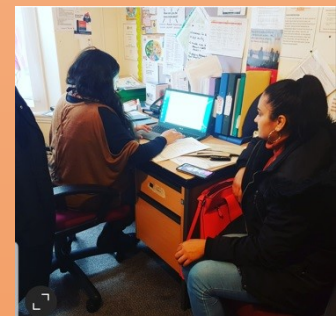
Hi my name is Hanan ASHA has been supporting me for over three years and I could not thank them enough for everything they do to support me. without their help and support I could not cope. They help me with things I am unable to do like sorting my bills, phone calls, filling forms in properly, support letters and help with benefits.

All the staff who work at ASHA are extremely helpful and very professional they do an amazing job with all the help and support they give me.

Without the support from ASHA there is no way I could cope alone I find it impossible to make phone calls, fill forms and deal with problems when they happen.

I would like to thank ASHA for everything they do to help and support me, you all do an amazing job and I'm extremely grateful to all the people that work at ASHA.

*Best wishes
Yours sincerely
Hanan'*



Asha provided advice to 151 individuals (plus other family members).

SANCTUARY SUPPORT

We provide support for vulnerable individuals and families who need 'sanctuary' to keep them safe from Domestic Violence and Abuse. Sanctuary consists of safety and security measures to help people stay safe in their homes.

'When my life was a mess and I was feeling hopeless I met my sanctuary support worker Syedun. Where other people only made me feel helpless and said I can't get any help, she supported me and made me feel better.

The time when I was mentally disturbed, feeling suffocated and was getting suicidal thoughts my support worker was all ears listened to my story and helped me believe that my situation will be better and I will surely get out of this mess my partner had put me in. She gave me hope and started on the application with full confidence, doing everything very fast and every step was successful. She tried her best to help me in every way practically and emotionally.'

'The support worker didn't just do the application but also always checked on me if I am okay. Finally, the application was successful, I can't thank her enough. My support is still chasing housing for me and always checking on me and my new born baby. She has also given me tools to be able to chase up housing and apply for support from other agencies. I don't have anyone in this country so I feel good, safe and brave when she checks in us as if I have a support always.

I feel the Sanctuary Support is excellent and for vulnerable women like myself it is accessible and has immense knowledge and advise to support women who are vulnerable and experiencing domestic violence.'

DIGITAL SKILLS CLASSES



This year we held bi weekly IT sessions for women in the community. This course is incredibly popular with our service users and helps equip women to learn how to navigate the internet & other IT programs. This in turn allows women to transfer these skills into their everyday life for the benefit of themselves and their families.

'Have enjoyed the learning & have fun in class'

'Learnt how to be safe online and use social media'

Last year we had 114 women take part in the courses that we offered including ESOL, IT & wellbeing levels 1–2.

We have a few tutors from the following organisations Vera Media & CECOS who run the classes at Asha and below is a list:

- Saeeda — ESOL pre entry
- Bianca — ESOL pre entry, entry level 1, entry level 2 & entry level 3
- Heather — IT: Computer skills
- Karen — Health & Wellbeing

ESOL CLASSES

At Asha we offer ESOL classes at Entry Levels 1-3. There is a great demand for our ESOL classes. We fill these classes very quickly so keep a waiting list and open new courses where possible.



Asha was awarded a certificate in recognition of our ESOL classes by the LCC, July 2023

'The ESOL course encourage/improve my English skill. Course contents are useful & positive for my life in the UK' Jojo



'I am pleased to study English at Asha. Here I can not only meet friends from different countries & also try to speak more English. The staff & classmates are very nice & helpful.' Mrize Kwam

'Thank you Asha for providing us a safe platform as an English Learning Centre. Staff and people here are always supportive & helpful, that makes me feel like home' Jacey

"I love the sisterhood and the feeling of belonging. I feel less lonely and safe."

HEALTH & WELLBEING CLASS

I have had the pleasure of delivering 3 courses at Asha Neighbourhood Project on behalf of CECOS college. It has been a delightful experience seeing the growth in the ladies who have attended the courses ranging from well-being to career development through other level 2 Health and Social care courses. Self-esteem and confidence are vital when looking to get on in the world and it is so exciting to see this flourishing. The commitment to learning has been phenomenal from ladies who may not have had the opportunity to attend a mainstream college. The good work achieved has been made possible due to the commitment and support of all at Asha. I am inspired every day by the passion and contributions from the ladies who have attended, I can't wait to do more.

PRESCHOOL

We offer funded places for children aged 2 to 4 years at our Ofsted rated GOOD nursery. Our pre school is open during term time every Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday from 9.30am to 2.30pm.

Our children enjoy visits to the parks, libraries, shops and many more places. We do a range of activities which include arts & crafts, music sessions & learning through play.

Our preschool & playscheme have both been awarded a certificate for successfully meeting the SCOPE (Equality for disabled people) Activities for all standards for inclusion.



PLAYSCHEME

Our Ofsted registered playscheme is run for children aged 5 to 12 years old during February half-term, Easter, 4 weeks of the summer holidays and October half-term. We aim for a maximum of 24 children per week of activities. This year the children went on a variety of trips which included, Stockeld Park, Roundhay Park, Scarborough beach, Yorkshire Sculpture park & many more. The play scheme gives children from the South Leeds area an opportunity to develop their communication, social & physical skills. Through these interactions and activities children are able to have fun, make new friends and learn about the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. We have received positive feedback from both the children who took part in the play schemes and their parents, with future suggestions and comments always welcomed by Asha.



My both kids love the playscheme
Enjoy all activities 3 days
Had lots of fun
Enjoyed cinema and staff looked after so good..
Enjoyed mixing with everyone
Really appreciate
Will recommend other my friends

18:56



FAMILY TRIPS & EVENTS

The Asha Neighbourhood Project took Women and children from South Leeds to the Lake District, Windermere - on Thursday 31st August 2023. The day trip was a healthy and revitalising break away from busy lives. People said they liked the lake, mountains, and boat rides they also said they enjoyed the peaceful walks with their family, friends and neighbours.

This trip gave an opportunity for families to create memories with their children during the summer vacation. Community trips can give families time to reassess their lives, contribute to their mental and physical wellbeing and improve their social skills. Activities like these help reduce social isolation and improve community cohesion with families having the chance to interact with people from different faiths and communities.



Lake District Trip, Aug 2023. Funding awarded— Community Committee grant Wellbeing Project

"It was really nice to go somewhere with my family to a new place without the worry of the travel expenses, thanks to the grant from the Inner South Leeds Councillors" Robina

"I'm feeling more confident. I enjoy sharing stories with each other. I feel safe and happy. I like the kindness I experience from others."

We took over 150 women & children to the trip this year.

"I feel that Asha is a safe space. I enjoy thinking about childhood and that Asha has childcare facilities. I enjoy making new friendships, relaxing in class and snacking."

Asha held a Safeguarding Awareness event In July 2023. The session was designed to stimulate discussion and share best practice in supporting people to be safe from abuse and neglect.



Safeguarding Awareness Event, July 2023

Health & Development Projects

Asha provides Health Advice Drop ins, Mental Health & Well-being awareness raising sessions, physical/social activities such as Swimming, Peer Support Group, 50+ Older Women's Group, Social/Gup Shup Groups, Mum & Tots Group and one to one support. As part of the Development Project we also offer a Cultural Food Bank Service, Harm Minimisation: Covid/Flu Vaccine Information, advice and support.

Hate Awareness Event, Oct 2023



Asha organised various Cancer Awareness sessions. Local women learned about the risk factors and the importance of being screened for the disease for themselves and their family members.

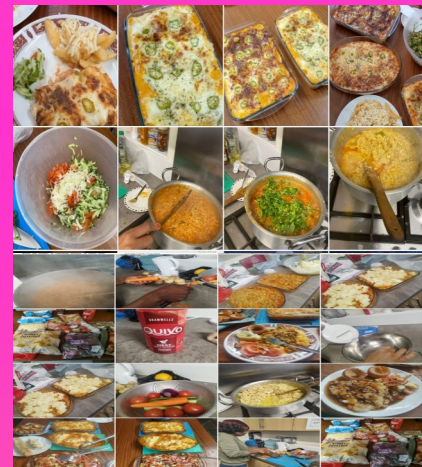


Gup Shup Group, Nov 2023



Our Cultural food bank service has helped over 200 families who are living below the poverty line.

Our weekly healthy cooking sessions for Mums & under 5's funded by Livewell, Sept 2023



50+ Older Women's Group

Asha runs two weekly groups for women aged 50+ on Monday (Friendship) and Friday (Gup Shup group) 1pm - 3pm. The aim for these groups is to work proactively with women in the local area offering a variety of initiatives to tackle issues around isolation and vulnerability while helping them to remain healthy and active.

The project helps them to build their self-confidence and feel empowered in addition to being valued as an individual. Asha helps these women by referring and sign posting them to other services including advice and guidance. We ensure they have access to the correct up to date information that will enable them to make informed decisions regarding their health e.g. having vaccines, boosters and flu jabs etc. that are available to them in the local community.

SERVICE USER'S COMMENTS

"There are a few faces I see and when I do, I just used to smile at them. Since coming on the courses and getting to know them, now when I see them, we have a little conversation."

"Karen our tutor always opens the course with us all sharing something about ourselves, which is great!"

"I'm glad I came on the course even though I had a rocky start. The sharing of stories has made me feel connected and safe to ask questions without the fear of judgement. I have felt judged in the past so this is especially important for me."

"Asha Centre offer good service - provides useful classes"

"I feel safe and happy to be in the group and the group chat we have between classes. I feel confident to be in class specially with the teacher."

"able to mix with other people in the community"

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2023 TIMETABLE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Mum's & Tots Healthy Eating & Baking sessions 10:30am – 12:00pm Tahena	Pre-School 9:30am – 2:30pm	Pre-School 9:30am – 2:30pm	Pre-School 9:30am – 2:30pm	
ESOL Entry 3 9:30am – 1:00pm Bianca	ESOL Entry 1 9:30am – 1:00pm Bianca	ESOL Entry 2 9:30am – 1:00pm Bianca	ESOL Pre-entry 9:30am – 1:00pm Bianca	
ESOL Pre Entry x 2 sessions 9.30am – 12.00pm 12.00 – 2.30pm Saeedah	IT – Computer Skills x 2 sessions 9:30am – 12:00pm 12.00.pm – 2.30pm Heather	Health & Wellbeing course 9:30am – 2:30pm		Food Distribution 10.00am – 12.30pm Shazia
	Advice and Advocacy 9:30am – 2:30pm Appointment Only Momotaj	Advice and Advocacy 9:30am - 2.30pm Appointment only Momotaj	Advice and Advocacy 9:30am – 2:30pm Appointment only Momotaj	
50+ Women's Friendship Group 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm Shazia	Women Only Swimming 12.00pm – 2.30pm Tahena			50+ Gup Shup Group 1.00 – 3.00pm Shazia



Asha is pleased to report that its finances have remained healthy throughout the past year.

QUALITY OF OUR SERVICE MAINTAINED

The Matrix Standard Award: For Information, Advice and Guidance (AIG)

Asha is proud to have been working with women and children from some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities in South Leeds for the past 38 years. Helped by the following this year:

Funders/Partners etc.

Thank you to our funders this year: Leeds City Council, the Hunslet & Riverside and Beeston & Holbeck Councillors, The Lottery, Public Health Trust, Wades Charity, Comic Relief and Hemingways.

And thank you to the following organisations for their support and partnership: Vera Media, Health for All, The Women & Girls Alliance Leeds, Hamara, our local Councillors, Faith Together in Leeds 11 partners, Neighbourhood Police Team, Voluntary Action Leeds, Forum Central, South Leeds Life, Localities team, Leeds Federated Housing Association, St Lukes Cares, CECOS, Sanctuary Housing, Education Development Trust, Holbeck Together, Children's Early Years' Service, SKIPPKO, Leeds Involving People, Leeds Older People's Forum, ABA Association of Blind Asians and Human Being. **And not forgetting our dedicated Management Committee members, Volunteers and Staff —we couldn't do it without you.**

Please contact the ASHA Neighbourhood Project for further information

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