



www.apnagharwomenscentre.com



2025-2026

ANNUAL REPORT



YEAR 2025- 2026

MEET THE BOARD

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Deputy Chair : Asia Uddin
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Member : Joanna Lajmi
Member : Laila Abdullah
Member : Drupy Senanayake



MEET THE STAFF

Centre Manager : Monika Panufnik
Finance & Family Support : Nasrin Begum
Domestic Abuse Lead : Eram Javid
Volunteer Lead & DA worker : Farida Ansari
Project Lead, Admin & Volunteer support : Shellina Begum
Project lead & Tutor : Aysha Daya
IAG & Project Lead : Aleya Begum
Youth Worker : Anila Maqbool
Youth Worker : Sabera Ali
Housekeeping Assistant : Razia Sultana





A WORD FROM THE CHAIR



This year has been a period of steady growth and meaningful impact for Apna Ghar Ethnic Minority Women's Centre. As Chair I am pleased to present this annual general meeting report, outlining progress throughout the year—particularly the achievements made through partnership, dedicated delivery, and, most importantly, the continued trust and engagement of the service users.

DR SAIRA MALIK

The Centre is pleased to report success in its funding applications. This financial support strengthened the ability to deliver consistent services, improve learning resources, and expand provision in ways that reflect local needs. Funding success has enabled the continuation of structured, supportive activities for women, young people, and families. I am eternally grateful to our funders and supporters who have enabled and empowered us to continue performing the vital artery of community support and services that we are able to offer our service users..

A key development during the year has been the appointment of our new Centre Manager, Monika Panufnik. Her capable presence has brought renewed energy, improved coordination across programmes, and continued reinforcement of the Centre's commitment to safe, inclusive, empowering spaces.

Apna Ghar has continued effective working relationships with local charities and community partners. By collaborating collectively rather than in isolation, the Centre has been able to widen access to advice, support, mentoring, and additional services—helping participants feel more connected and supported beyond the Centre itself

Most importantly, the Centre's work has delivered tangible success through learning and wellbeing activities. Strong attendance and engagement were maintained across Cookery Sessions, Youth Group Activities, IT and Computer Classes, and English Skills Provision and one of our most vital services which is the Domestic Support Service. These programmes supported participants to build practical skills, confidence, and supportive peer networks, contributing to improved independence and greater opportunity.

For the coming year, the Centre's aims and objectives remain focused on continuing to empower and enable women, strengthen integration within the local community, and maintain the multi-generation approach support services spanning youth to elderly. Health and wellbeing will continue to be a priority, supporting participants to flourish through wellbeing-focused learning, confidence-building, and encouragement to access safer, healthier and community integrating pathways.

In closing, sincere thanks are extended to all our funders for their continued investment, to staff and volunteers for their commitment and professionalism, the Trustees for their unwavering commitment, support and generosity of time and most importantly to our service users for trusting Apna Ghar with their time, experiences, and aspirations. This trust is valued and deeply respected. We continue to offer support and safety in what often feels like turbulent community times and we stand strong and tall with our partners in providing a safe, secure and integrating space for our ethnic minority service users.

"When women are inspired, they rise—bringing strength, hope, and lasting power to healthier, happier communities."

Dr Saira Malik



Our Commitment

For nearly four decades, Apna Ghar has remained true to the vision on which the organisation was founded. As the only Minority Ethnic Women's Centre in South Tyneside, we continue to provide dedicated, culturally appropriate services that empower and support Minority Ethnic women within our community.

At the heart of our work is a commitment to listening, learning, and responding to the changing needs of the women we serve. By continually reviewing and developing our services, we strive to ensure that the support we provide remains relevant, accessible, and of the highest quality.

Apna Ghar values the strong partnerships we have built with our members, clients, funders, volunteers, and community organisations. These relationships enable us to deliver effective services and create lasting, positive outcomes for women and their families.

Throughout this report, we reflect on the achievements, activities, and impact of the past year. We hope these pages demonstrate not only what we do, but also the difference our work continues to make in improving lives, strengthening communities, and empowering women to reach their full potential.

Our Mission

Apna Ghar is a charity led by and for Minority Ethnic women in South Tyneside. We are committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where women feel valued, supported, and empowered. Through a wide range of services, activities, and opportunities, we help women build confidence, develop new skills, and achieve their aspirations, while celebrating and respecting the diverse cultures, experiences, and identities that make our community unique.

Our Priorities

- Raising awareness of the wide range of services, programmes, and opportunities available through Apna Ghar.
- Reaching and supporting more women and families across the community.
- Strengthening partnerships with local organisations, community groups, and stakeholders to maximise our impact.
- Expanding access to both accredited and non-accredited learning, training, and personal development opportunities.
- Celebrating diversity and promoting understanding, respect, and appreciation of different cultures.

Our Objectives

- To provide accessible outreach services and dedicated support through our community link workers.
- To continue promoting Apna Ghar's services throughout South Tyneside, ensuring those who need our support know how to access it.
- To maintain a welcoming, culturally sensitive, and safe environment where women can connect, learn, and thrive.
- To improve accessibility and opportunities for older members of the community, enabling them to participate fully in our services and activities.





Interim Centre Coordinator

From April to November 2025, I served as Interim Centre Coordinator, overseeing the delivery of a diverse programme of projects and activities supporting Apna Ghar.

During this period, I oversaw the Domestic Abuse Project, Volunteer Project, Elderly Group, Carers Project, fitness and wellbeing sessions, IAG sessions, Warm Space, basic literacy and ESOL courses, and the Food Fair Project. I also supervised university student placements, supported the organisation's participation in the Mela, and coordinated the distribution of household support vouchers.

Together, these initiatives provided practical support, learning opportunities, improved wellbeing and opportunities for social connection, helping to reduce isolation and strengthen community engagement.

In November 2025, I handed over the Coordinator role to Monika Panufnik, who has since taken on the position of Centre Manager. I have now returned to my substantive role as Finance Officer and continue to support the organisation in this capacity. I am proud of the work achieved during this period and grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Centre's continued development and the communities we serve.

Nasrin Begum



Monika Panufnik Centre Manager

I joined Apna Ghar Minority Ethnic Women's Centre as Centre Manager in October 2025. Since taking up the role, my priority has been to support the effective day-to-day running of the centre, strengthen internal systems and ensure that our services continue to respond to the needs of minority ethnic women and families across South Tyneside. During my first months in post, I worked closely with staff, volunteers and trustees to review project delivery, funding commitments, communication and monitoring arrangements.

I also began introducing clearer processes for project planning, evidence collection, staff responsibilities and reporting. Throughout the year, Apna Ghar continued to provide a safe, welcoming and culturally sensitive environment for women experiencing social isolation, language barriers, digital exclusion, financial hardship, caring responsibilities, poor mental wellbeing and domestic abuse.

Our programme included English Conversation, Basic Literacy, Basic IT, sewing, fitness and wellbeing activities, support for older women, volunteering opportunities, the Luncheon Club, carers support, food and nutrition sessions and specialist domestic abuse services. These projects helped women build confidence, develop practical skills, improve wellbeing, reduce isolation and move towards education, volunteering and employment.

The Carers Project supported women to improve their English, gain recognised care qualifications and access practical experience. The Volunteer Project also provided an important pathway into employment, with several volunteers progressing into paid work.

Apna Sahara continued to provide confidential and culturally sensitive support to women and children affected by domestic abuse, including assistance with safety planning, housing, welfare benefits, immigration matters, emotional wellbeing and access to specialist services.

The Food Fair Project, delivered in partnership with WHiST and Hospitality and Hope, promoted healthy eating, affordable nutrition and practical cooking skills while bringing families and community members together.

Apna Ghar also continued to provide daily information, advice, advocacy, interpreting, translation and signposting. This practical support remains essential for women who face language, cultural or administrative barriers when accessing services.

Partnership working remained central to our approach. Since joining the organisation, I have worked to strengthen relationships with local organisations, statutory services, funders and community partners, helping to improve referral pathways and extend the reach of our support.

Securing sustainable funding remains a significant challenge as demand for our services continues to grow. Looking ahead, my priorities are to strengthen project monitoring, improve internal procedures, support staff and volunteer development, expand partnership working and improve the organisation's long-term sustainability. I would like to thank the Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers,

funders, partners and service users for their continued commitment and support.

Their contribution enables Apna Ghar to remain a trusted, inclusive and empowering space for women across South Tyneside.





Basic Literacy

This year, I have had the privilege of teaching around 40 incredible women from a variety of backgrounds, including Afghanistan, Yemen, Kuwait, Egypt, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Iraq.

Although they come from different cultures and speak different languages, they all share a remarkable strength and determination to build better lives for themselves and their families.

Many of the women I teach have experienced unimaginable hardship. Some are survivors of domestic abuse, while others have escaped war and conflict, leaving behind everything they once knew. They carry stories of loss, trauma, and resilience, yet they continue to show up every week with courage, hope, and a willingness to learn.

Aysha Daya

For many of them, Apna Ghar Women's Centre is much more than a place to attend classes. It is a sanctuary where they feel safe, valued, and listened to. It is somewhere they can relax without fear, make friends, laugh together, and begin to rebuild their confidence. Seeing them support one another, celebrate each other's achievements, and grow in confidence has been incredibly moving.

Being part of their journey has been one of the greatest honours of my career. I've watched women who were once too shy to speak gradually find their voices, gain independence, and believe in themselves again. Every small achievement—whether it's speaking English more confidently, making a new friend, or simply smiling with pride after accomplishing something they never thought possible—is a reminder of why this work matters so much!

These women inspire me every day with their resilience, courage, and determination. I feel incredibly grateful to play a small part in their journey, and I am constantly reminded that sometimes the greatest impact we can make is simply by creating a safe space where people feel seen, heard, and empowered to believe in themselves again.

Case Study

One of the women in my class has never attended school at any point in her life. Before joining the class, she had never had the opportunity to learn to read or write, making the experience of learning English particularly challenging. Even the simplest classroom activities, such as recognising letters, holding a pencil, or writing her name, were completely new to her.

Despite these challenges, she attends regularly with determination and a positive attitude. She knows that learning is difficult for her and often takes much longer than it does for others, but she has never given up. Instead, she continues to persevere, asking questions, practising what she has learned, and celebrating every small achievement along the way.

Watching her confidence slowly grow has been incredibly rewarding. While her progress may seem small to others, every new word she learns, every letter she recognises, and every sentence she attempts is a significant milestone. Her commitment and resilience are truly inspiring.

Her story is a powerful reminder that education is not just about gaining knowledge—it is about building confidence, creating opportunities, and giving people the belief that they are capable of achieving more than they ever imagined. Seeing her continue to attend and refuse to give up, despite the obstacles she faces, has been one of the most inspiring experiences of my teaching journey.



Volunteer Project



SIR JAMES KNOTT TRUST

Volunteers play a vital role at Apna Ghar, helping to create a safe, welcoming and supportive environment for the women and families who use our services. During the reporting period, 16 volunteers supported administration and reception, the Luncheon Club, activities for older women, Warm Space sessions, Basic Literacy and other practical duties across the centre.

Volunteers accessed training in areas including First Aid, Safeguarding, Healthy Relationships, Online Safety, Grooming Awareness, Food Hygiene, IT, English Conversation and Adult Care Levels 1 and 2. These opportunities helped women develop confidence, practical skills and experience that could support future education or employment.

Four volunteers progressed into paid work during the year: two secured jobs in schools and two gained employment as care workers. This demonstrates how volunteering at Apna Ghar can provide a valuable pathway towards employment and greater independence.

The Luncheon Club is run entirely by volunteers and gives women an opportunity to leave their homes, reduce isolation, meet others and enjoy meals together. As a small charity, Apna Ghar relies greatly on volunteers to help projects and services run smoothly.

One volunteer joined Apna Ghar while experiencing depression, isolation and low confidence. Through supporting the Luncheon Club and reception, she gradually rebuilt her confidence, developed new skills and became a valued member of the team. Her journey highlights the positive impact volunteering can have on wellbeing, purpose and community connection.



Farida Ansari
Project lead



**Active
volunteers:
16**

**Progressed
into
employment
4**

Participant feedback

"I love coming to Apna Ghar. Meeting new people gets me out of the house."

"Volunteering at Apna Ghar has really improved my mental health. I wake up with a purpose."

"I come to help, but this is also helping me with my loneliness."





CARERS PROJECT



Shellina Begum - Project Lead

Our vision is to empower women to realise their full potential while celebrating and preserving their cultural identity. We strive to foster confidence, enhance self-esteem, and combat feelings of isolation and loneliness. By creating opportunities for meaningful connections, personal growth, and skill development, we support women in building confidence and embracing positive change. Through connecting with like-minded individuals, women gain the encouragement, support, and empowerment needed to move forward with purpose, resilience, and strength.

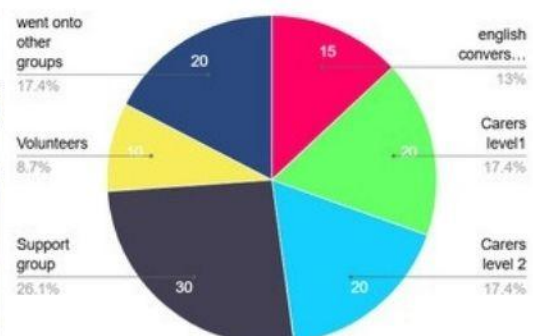
The Carers Project has provided a supportive pathway for women to develop their confidence, improve their skills, and gain recognised qualifications while also looking after their own wellbeing. Many of the women who accessed the project were unpaid carers who experienced isolation, low confidence, language barriers, and limited opportunities to engage in education or employment.

To ensure that women felt prepared to begin their learning journey, we first delivered English Conversation Classes. These sessions helped participants improve their spoken English, build confidence in communicating with others, and prepare for the Carers Training courses. The relaxed and supportive environment enabled women to practise everyday conversations, ask questions without fear of judgement, and develop the confidence needed to progress onto formal learning.

Following this, participants were supported to enrol onto the Carers Level 1 course. The course introduced the fundamentals of caring, helping women gain knowledge, practical skills, and a better understanding of the responsibilities involved in a caring role. Many participants reported feeling more confident in supporting family members and understanding the needs of those they care for.

Women who successfully completed Level 1 were encouraged to progress onto the Carers Level 2 course. This provided a more in-depth understanding of care and enabled participants to further develop their knowledge and practical skills.

As part of the Level 2 qualification, learners were required to complete placement hours. Apna Ghar supported this by offering volunteering opportunities within the organisation. These placements allowed participants to gain valuable hands-on experience while completing their required hours. Volunteering also helped women develop transferable skills, increase their confidence, and prepare for future employment or further volunteering opportunities. Apna Ghar also signposted them to other organisations where needed.



WE celebrated one of our carers birthday as she turns pensionable age. She shed a tear and said 'you girls are like my daughter, i feel like im celebrating with my family'



Alongside the accredited courses, the Caring for Carers Support Group played a vital role in supporting the emotional wellbeing of unpaid carers. The group provided a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment where women could connect with others who understood the challenges of caring, helping to reduce feelings of loneliness and social isolation.

Throughout the year, participants took part in a range of wellbeing activities, including visits to museums and local libraries, walks in parks, and other social outings. These activities gave carers the opportunity to take time for themselves, enjoy new experiences, build friendships, and improve both their physical and mental wellbeing. They also encouraged participants to access community resources, develop new interests, and feel more connected to their local community.

'I have found work in a care home all thanks to Apna Ghar, they gave me the support i needed'

HB says, 'thank you to you girls who are always ready to help. i feel heard and looked after'

"I feel more confident about my english and want to go onto carers class now' NS

HP said' I dont get a chance for myself, coming to Apna Ghar has helped my confidence and now i visit every week as i enjoy it'

Throughout the project, carers were encouraged and supported to access a range of additional classes and activities at Apna Ghar that reflected their individual interests and aspirations. Signposting participants to further learning opportunities enabled them to continue developing new skills, build confidence, and become more engaged within their local community.

Caring for carers support session



As part of our continued commitment to supporting unpaid carers within the community, we successfully delivered the Caring for Carers Support Group throughout the year. The group continued to provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment for individuals caring for family members, friends, or loved ones.

To ensure that carers who were unable to attend sessions still felt supported, regular one-to-one wellbeing telephone calls were provided. These calls offered an opportunity to check on participants' wellbeing, provide emotional support, share information and signpost to relevant services where appropriate. Many carers said that these conversations helped them feel valued, listened to, and reassured that support was available whenever they needed it, enabling them to remain connected to the project despite the demands of their caring responsibilities.

Key Activities

- Facilitated confidential peer support sessions where carers could openly discuss the challenges and rewards of their caring roles.
- Continued to signpost carers to relevant services, including respite care, mental health support, benefits advice, and local community resources.
- Delivered a range of wellbeing activities, including mindfulness sessions, creative arts, relaxation techniques, and social outings to promote positive mental health.
- Shared practical coping strategies and self-care techniques to help carers manage stress, build resilience, and maintain their own wellbeing.

Outcomes

- Carers consistently reported feeling less isolated and more emotionally supported through regular attendance.
- Participants developed stronger peer networks and an increased sense of belonging within their local community.
- Many carers accessed additional support services following referrals and signposting provided through the group.
- Feedback continued to highlight the value of the sessions, with many describing them as an important source of encouragement and "something to look forward to" amidst the demands of their caring responsibilities.
- Attendance remained steady throughout the year, demonstrating the ongoing need for dedicated support for unpaid carers.

Challenges

Although engagement remained positive, some carers continued to experience barriers to attendance due to the demands of their caring responsibilities and limited access to respite care. To address this, we maintained flexible meeting arrangements where possible and continued to explore additional options, including virtual participation and alternative session times, to improve accessibility.

Conclusion

The Caring for Carers Support Group remains a vital element of our community wellbeing programme. By providing emotional support, practical information, and opportunities for social connection, the group continues to improve the wellbeing and resilience of unpaid carers. Ongoing investment in this service will ensure carers continue to receive the recognition, support, and sense of community they need while carrying out their invaluable caring roles.

18 WOMEN

registered their names for Adult care course
with 13 women who completed the course

25 WOMEN

have moved onto paid employment in
the past year

100% WOMEN

who registered for level one have completed
Level 1 adult care course

80 % WOMEN

of the ladies who attended the carers class
were then successfully signposted to other
classes within Apna Ghar to build their skills
and confidence

English Conversation Classes



Tutor: Mary Thompson Owen-Smith

This year marked the fifth successful year of the English Conversation Classes at Apna Ghar. Delivered alongside the Level 1 and Level 2 Adult Care courses, the classes provided a welcoming and supportive environment in which women could improve their spoken English, confidence and communication skills.

Learners ranged from beginner to intermediate level, broadly covering ESOL Entry 1 to Entry 3. The group included women from Bangladesh, El Salvador, Colombia, Romania, Brazil and Turkey, creating a diverse and multicultural learning environment.

Sessions explored topics including education, healthcare, current affairs, nutrition, motherhood, women's health and women's rights. Guided discussions, practical language exercises, reading activities and pair and group work helped strengthen speaking, listening, reading, grammar and vocabulary skills.

Medical students from the University of Sunderland visited some sessions, giving learners an opportunity to practise English and compare healthcare experiences. During the third term, learners also took part in an educational visit to Newcastle, where they explored local landmarks and used English in a wider community setting.

The classes supported much more than language development. They helped women build friendships, learn about one another's cultures and feel more confident communicating with people from different backgrounds.



Participant feedback

"Thank you for making the classes enjoyable and understandable."

"I really liked the classes and made many friends."

"We hope that next year we will have these wonderful classes again."

"These classes have helped my confidence. I find it useful. I have been practicing talking everywhere now"

"I come regularly and hope that I can better my speech so I can continue the carers course"





Anila Maqbool

Sewing tutor

Project- Sewing Bees



The Apna Ghar Sewing Bees project provided women with a supportive and creative environment in which to develop practical sewing skills, build confidence and connect with others. Sessions were delivered every Wednesday in two groups, from 9.30 am to 11.30 am and from 12.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

Throughout the year, learners developed skills in measuring, marking and cutting fabric, using sewing tools safely, threading and operating sewing machines, following simple patterns and completing a range of hand- and machine-sewing techniques. Participants practised running stitch, backstitch and hemming, as well as sewing straight and curved seams and using fastenings such as buttons, zips and Velcro.

Women applied these skills to practical projects including cushions, bags and simple garments. As the course progressed, learners became increasingly independent in setting up equipment, organising their workspaces, resolving common sewing-machine problems and completing projects to a good standard.

The sessions supported more than technical learning. They encouraged creativity, patience, problem-solving and attention to detail, while giving women an opportunity to socialise and develop new friendships in a welcoming environment.

SH says 'I come here since i have retired and really enjoy coming here. The women in the class are all friendly and im really enhancing the skills i already have'

CC says 'oh i really enjoy this class. i have made a dress and skirt this term. Staff are very friendly'

AS says 'I come every week and learn something new. i can make my own clothes now. I am confident in helping others too'



The project was completed successfully, with learners showing clear improvements in confidence, sewing ability and independence. Many participants are now better equipped to continue sewing for personal use, further learning or possible employment-related opportunities.





COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR OLDER WOMEN AND FITNESS PROJECT



Aleya Begum - Project Lead

The Community Support for Older Women and Fitness Project supports the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of women aged 50 and over. Now in its second year, the project has engaged more than 60 women through activities designed to improve mobility, build confidence, reduce isolation and encourage active participation in community life.

The programme included weekly fitness sessions, walking groups, arts and crafts, baking, wellbeing discussions, cultural celebrations, games, social outings and relaxation activities. Sessions were adapted to different abilities, allowing women to take part safely and at their own pace.

Participant feedback

"I no longer need physiotherapy treatment because my leg injury has improved since joining the walking and fitness sessions."

"The fitness sessions are delivered at the perfect pace for my abilities."

"Without these sessions, I would have been sitting at home doing nothing and feeling bored."

Participants reported improved confidence, fitness and mobility, as well as stronger friendships and reduced feelings of loneliness. Regular walking sessions helped women achieve approximately 6,000–10,000 steps, while tailored fitness activities supported strength, balance and overall wellbeing.

The project also introduced memory and sensory activities, including board games and cognitive exercises, to encourage mental stimulation and social interaction. Outings and celebrations created further opportunities for women to enjoy new experiences and feel more connected to their community.

The project continues to demonstrate the value of accessible, culturally sensitive activities in supporting healthy ageing, emotional wellbeing and social inclusion.

More than 60 women were supported





South Tyneside Council



Funded by
UK Government



Food Fair Project

Project Lead: Aysha Daya

The Food Fair Project, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delivered in partnership with WHiST and Hospitality and Hope, promotes healthy eating, practical cooking skills and community engagement through accessible and inclusive food-based activities.

Sessions were delivered at Apna Ghar and in community outreach locations, enabling the project to reach adults, children and families. Activities included live cooking demonstrations and practical cook-along sessions, giving participants opportunities to try new recipes, develop useful cooking skills and increase their confidence in preparing meals at home.



All ingredients were provided free of charge, helping ensure that financial circumstances did not prevent participation. Throughout the sessions, participants received practical guidance on healthy eating, food safety, balanced nutrition and preparing affordable meals on a budget.

The project also celebrated cultural diversity by sharing traditional ingredients, herbs, spices and cooking methods. Demonstrations and shared meals encouraged cultural exchange, reduced isolation and helped participants build relationships within the wider community.

During the reporting period, eight food-related events were delivered, engaging a total of 270 participants. The project increased confidence in cooking, improved awareness of healthy eating and strengthened community connections through shared learning and participation.

**Food related
events held**
8

**Total
participants**
270

**Improved
awareness of
healthy eating**



Participants feedback

NB said 'i normally dont attend as i work, Aysha gave us a chance to do the sessions in the evening and i could not miss it. Im so glad i got to participate'

SB said ' I really enjoyed the demostration given. I have learnt a few things'





Apna Sahara Domestic Abuse Support Project



SUSAN DUNGWORTH
NORTHUMBRIA
POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER

**Project Team: Eram Javid and
Farida Ansari**

Apna Sahara is Apna Ghar Women's Centre's specialist domestic abuse support service, providing confidential, culturally sensitive and holistic support to women and their children affected by domestic abuse.

The project worked alongside women to help them understand the impact of abuse, recognise their strengths and make informed decisions about their safety, wellbeing and future. Support included emotional reassurance, advocacy, safety planning and practical guidance relating to housing, welfare benefits, budgeting, immigration, child arrangements, mental health and access to specialist services.

Alongside one-to-one support, Apna Sahara delivered awareness and wellbeing sessions on healthy relationships, mental health, online safety, grooming awareness, hate crime, nutrition, relaxation and self-care. Mams and Children sessions also provided safe opportunities for women and children to spend positive time together and strengthen family relationships.

Women were encouraged to access wider opportunities at Apna Ghar, including English classes, IT training, volunteering, employment support and wellbeing activities.

One client who had left a long-term abusive relationship and relocated with very limited support received ongoing emotional and practical assistance. Over time, she began attending group activities, improved her wellbeing and confidence, built social connections and expressed an interest in volunteering. Her journey demonstrates the importance of safe, consistent and person-centred support.

**Reduced
Isolation**

**Increased
Confidence**

**Strengthen
community
connections**

"I felt very comfortable after talking to the Domestic Abuse staff at Apna Ghar. I received the emotional support that I was looking for."

"Apna Ghar was a complete lifeline and I will always be grateful."

"My sons are always excited to attend and really enjoy the activities."



**VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN STOPS HERE**



Basic IT Project

Tutor: Eram Javid



**COMMUNITY
FUND**



The Basic IT Project supports women from minority ethnic communities to develop essential digital skills, increase confidence and become more independent in everyday life. Weekly two-hour sessions were delivered every Tuesday, with average attendance of 8–10 women.

Participants came from Arab, South Asian, African and Eastern European backgrounds. Women joined the project to improve their confidence using computers, access online services, support their families, explore education and employment opportunities and manage everyday digital tasks independently. Learners developed practical skills in keyboard and typing practice, desktop navigation, files and folders, email communication, internet browsing, online forms, CV preparation, job searching, password security and online safety. Sessions were practical, supportive and adapted to individual learning needs. One participant, a single mother rebuilding her life after domestic abuse, progressed from relying on others for online tasks to using email, completing forms and applying for jobs independently. Another participant developed the digital skills needed to complete a Food Hygiene qualification, enrol on a college course and establish herself as a mobile baker.

The project has helped reduce digital exclusion and supported women to access information, education, employment and self-employment opportunities with greater confidence and independence.



Participant feedback

“Now I can use email, complete online forms and apply for jobs by myself.”

“The classes have helped me work towards my dream of running my own business.”



Building digital
confidence &
independence

8–10 women
Average weekly
attendance

2 hours of digital
skills training
delivered weekly

Youth Group



Anila Maqbool & Sabera Ali



Over the past year, our youth group continued to provide a safe, supportive and engaging space for girls aged 11–18 to socialise, learn and build positive relationships.

Throughout the year, we delivered a variety of sessions designed to encourage participation, creativity, confidence and wellbeing. The girls took part in a range of activities, giving them opportunities to try new things, develop new skills and spend positive time together.

We also organised trips to the cinema, providing opportunities for the young people to enjoy experiences outside of their usual sessions and create positive memories together. Alongside these trips, we held fun and relaxing pamper sessions, which gave the girls an opportunity to focus on self-care, wellbeing and spending time with their peers.

The programme has continued to provide young people with opportunities to express themselves, make new friendships and feel part of a positive community. We are proud of the enthusiasm and engagement shown by the girls throughout the year and look forward to continuing to develop and expand the youth group programme in the year ahead.

30+ girls registered and 20+ girls actively engaged in the programme, with staff observing increased participation, confidence and positive peer interaction throughout the year.



**More than 20 girls
actively attended**

**100% of the
girls said they
enjoyed the
session**

**90% of the girls
said they felt
more confident**

**75+
Youth sessions
delivered**

**20+ girls had
positive peer
relationship**



Ocean Road Mela

We participated in the annual Ocean Road Mela, where we engaged visitors with fun activities such as henna and face painting. We also sold delicious cupcakes and Bombay mix cones, which were very popular with attendees. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with the local community and enjoy a vibrant day together.



We partnered with Sangini, CREST and WHIST to form a group called the United Women's Group, created to help reduce isolation and promote connection among women. Each organisation held its own individual sessions, followed by a collaborative session where everyone came together to share experiences, build relationships and support one another. Together we celebrated International Women's day as well as hosted our own events..

We celebrated Eid

We celebrated Eid together, with women wearing beautiful ethnic clothing. We enjoyed playing games, sharing delicious food, and spending quality time together in a warm and festive atmosphere.



Information advice and guidance



Apna Ghar Women's Centre provided information, advice and guidance to support women in addressing a range of personal, social and practical needs. One-to-one support helped women access relevant services, understand their options and make informed decisions about issues such as benefits, housing, employment, education, health and wellbeing. The service also offered signposting and referrals to specialist organisations where further support was required, helping women build confidence and take positive steps towards their goals.

SU 'Apna Ghar has helped me with my Universal credit application and without them i wouldnt know how to manage it

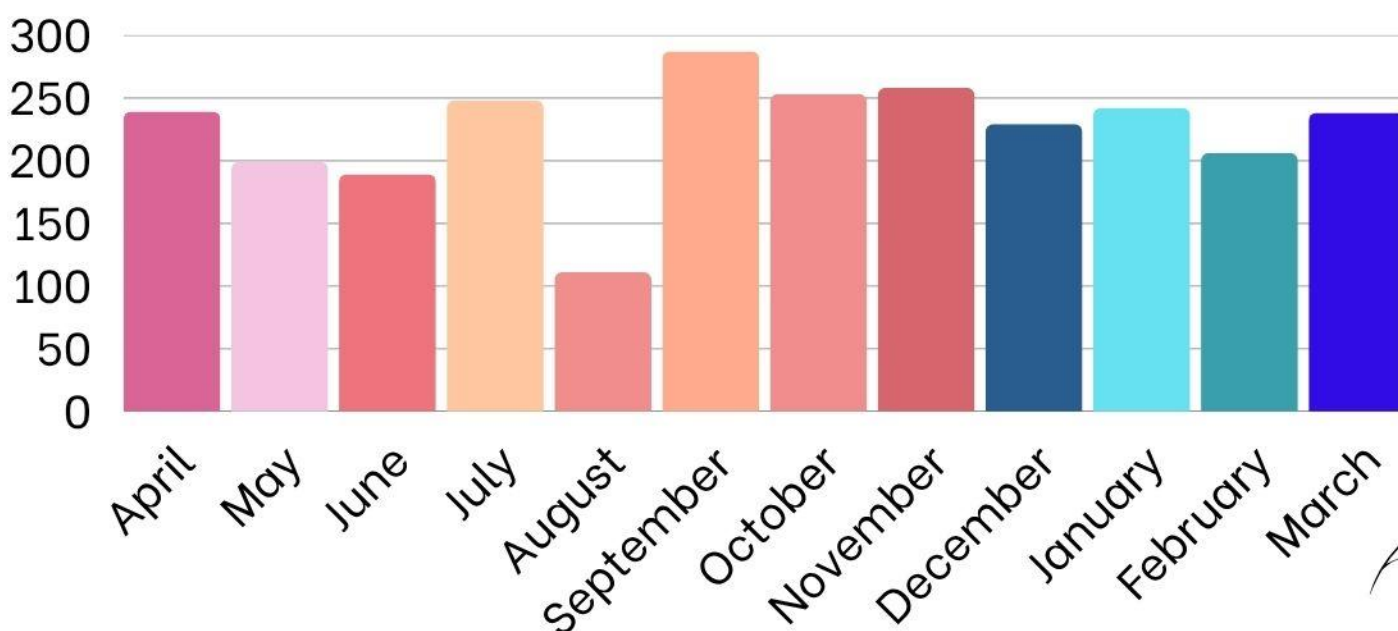
HU ' I live alone and Shellina helps me every week with my bills, reading my letters and recently my pension

BV 'The girls here are always helping me with a smile. I feel welcome and looked after. Thank you for this service Apna Ghar



Number of ladies coming to the centre on a monthly basis

Total number of members - 311

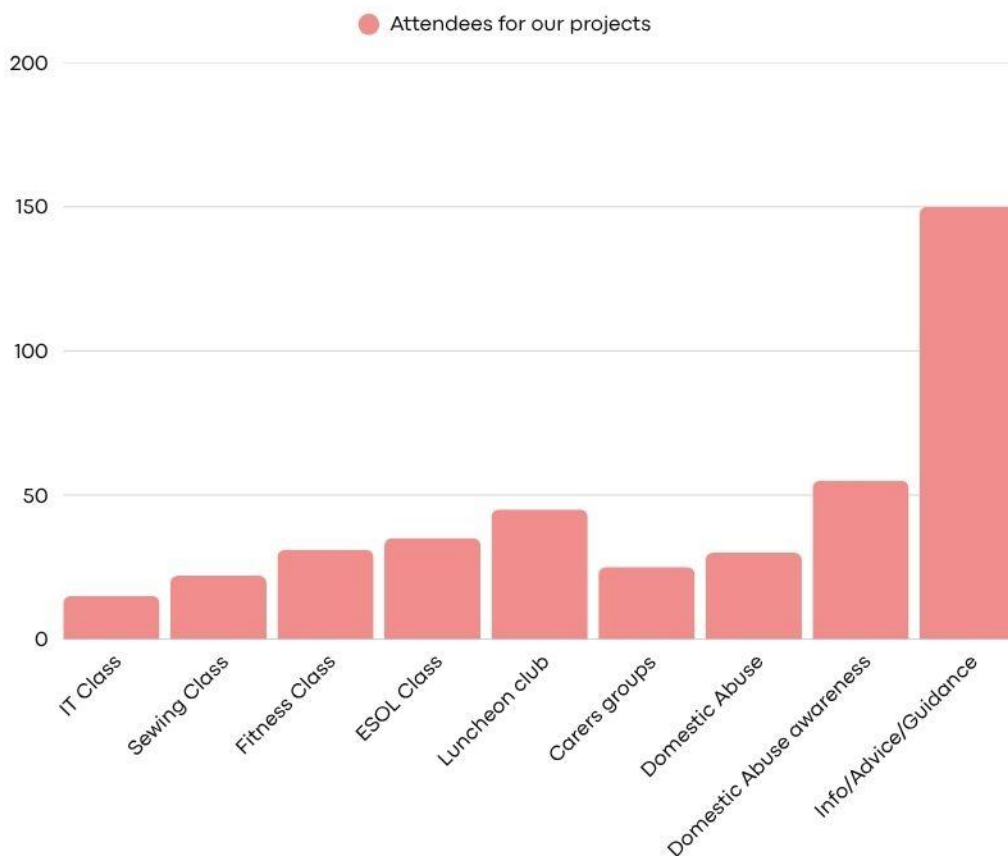


YEARLY OUTCOMES 2025-2026



Total Members : 311

Year-on-Year Growth: +29%



Insights And Analysis

➔ What Worked

- Festival-led promotions increased awareness
- More ladies were signposted to correct groups
- More ladies were attending more than one class

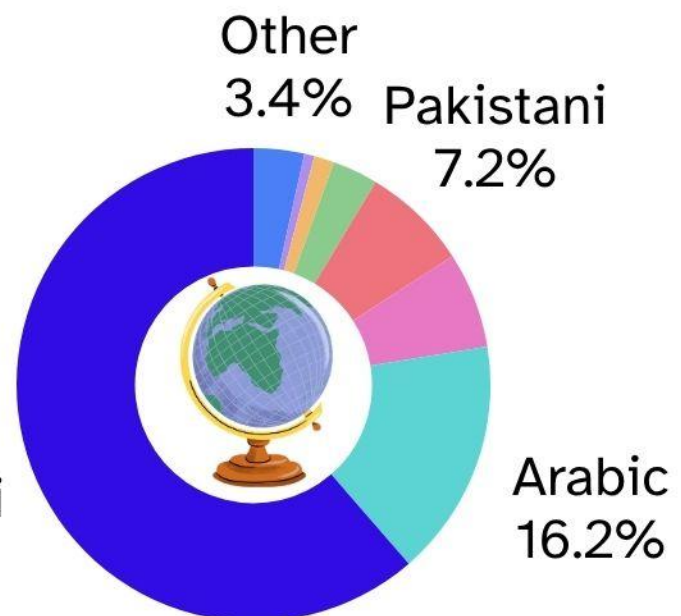
➔ Challenges

- More volunteers required to assist with translating

NEXT STEPS AND FOCUS

Steady growth driven by festive activities, improved inventory planning, and focused sessions.

Bangladeshi
61.4%



Treasurers report

Amina Hyder



Funding received by source and funded activity



National Lottery Community Fund	£43,328 31.2%
Carers Project Year 2 delivery	
Community Foundation	£29,806 21.5%
IT and literacy classes, youth group, IT upgrades and urgent repairs	
Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner	£15,200 11.0%
Domestic AbuseProject	
WHIST / UK Shared Prosperity Fund	£14,199 10.2%
FoodFair Project	
Crest	£13,825 10.0%
Household SupportFund	
Ballinger Trust	£10,000 7.2%
Support for Apna Ghar's work	
South Tyneside Council	£5,485 4.0%
Continued support of services	
Sir James Knott Trust	£5,000 3.6%
Three-year Volunteer Project grant for training and employment	
United Womens Partnership	£1,110 0.8%
Community support funding	
Rise North East	£800 0.6%
Community support funding	

The Treasurers Report 2025 -2026. Percentages are calculated from total reported funding of £138,753.

This year I am happy to report that Apna Ghar has gone from strength to strength and we are able to celebrate its success in providing services to the Community through the continued support of our funders.

The National Lottery Community Fund grant of **£43,328** towards our Carer's Project and a major funder for year 2 has enabled us to deliver the outcomes of the Project.

The Community Foundation has continued to support us with various grants of **£29,806** to enable us to deliver IT classes and Literacy classes as well as for our Youth group which has been very successful. We are also grateful for the unrestricted grant which has enabled us to upgrade our IT equipment and urgent repairs to the Centre.

£15,200 from **Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner** for our Domestic Abuse project.

£14,199 from **WHIST** for the Food Fair project funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

£13,825 from **Crest** for the Household Support Fund.

£10,000 from the **Ballinger Trust** that have been very generous to us over the years, and we are very grateful to them for their support and faith in our work.

£5,485 from **South Tyneside Council** for their continued support of our services.

£5000 from the **Sir James Knott Trust** for a 3-year grant towards our Volunteer Project to support our volunteers to access training and employment.

We are also grateful to –

£1,110 - United Women's partnership

£800 - Rise North East

Finally, the trustees and I are extremely thankful to our funders for their support. The contribution of all our trustees, dedicated staff and volunteers is greatly appreciated. A special thank you to Joanna Lajmi for supporting me in my role as Treasurer.



Amina Hyder - Treasurer