

#### **MUSLIM WOMEN'S NETWORK UK**



Muslim Women's Network UK (2024)

Charity Number: 1155092

Company Limited by Guarantee Number:

06597997

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### **Contribute • Explore • Network**

See our member platform

member@mwnhub.com

www.mwnhub.com

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### TRUSTEES /

This year, women's safety has been an even greater priority than ever before. Violence against women and girls (VAWG) continues to rise despite ongoing efforts to combat abuse. Minority ethnic women, particularly Muslim women, face unique and disproportionate challenges.

For instance, data indicates that domestic homicide rates are approximately 20% higher for minority ethnic women. Additionally, anti-Muslim hate crime and hostility, both online and offline, continue to escalate, as highlighted in our research report Anti-Muslim Hate: Concerns and Experiences. Our research on the experiences of minority women attempting to enter local politics also shows the persistent hostility and abuse they encounter.

Tackling misogyny and abuse against women and girls is a collective responsibility. Over the past year, we have engaged with the new government ministers, connected with diverse women's groups, and expanded our outreach to a broad range of stakeholders, including those in the arts, culture, sports, and social media sectors, to explore collaborative solutions.

We are particularly proud to have launched the Amal Safety App, a vital resource that offers information, tools to document evidence, and direct access to our helpline. This milestone reflects our ongoing commitment to ensuring women's safety and support.

Together, we must continue to work towards a future where all women and girls can live free from fear, violence and discrimination.



Dr Iram Sattar MBE (Co-chair)



Nazmin Akthar (Co-chair)



Faeeza Vaid MBE



Sophie Garner



Ibtisam Belola



Angela Dainton





- CEO
- 🖒 Shameem Hussain Operations Director
- 💮 Salma Latif Hamid
- Neelam Rose Advocacy Officer
- 🗘 Rizwana Bi Partnership Manager

- Communications
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- Affaf Nasrullah **Executive Assistant**
- Sumaira Mehmood IDVA

### Helpline

- Nasseam Akhtar
- Bibi Fatima Esakjee
- Neelam Hussain
- Farah Iqbal

- Ruksana Khatun
- Shamim Akhtar
- Shanaz Akhtar
- Shazia Qureshi

We are also grateful for the support given by our regular volunteers, Faris Gohir (communications) and Mona Khan (helpline).



### **ABOUT MWNUK**

Muslim Women's Network UK (MWNUK) is a national membership charity based in Birmingham that works to improve social justice and equality for Muslim women and girls nationwide.

### Vision

A society where Muslim women and girls fully utilise their rights, choices and voices.



To achieve equality and justice for Muslim women and girls through support, education, research and advocacy.



Strategic Objectives



### Safety

Upholding the right of Muslim women and girls to be and feel safe



### Inclusion

Upholding the right of Muslim women and girls to be and feel included



### **Solidarity**

Building a solidarity movement for Muslim women and girls

### CELEBRATIONS

### Sophie Garner (Trustee)

Sophie, who is a Discrimination Law Barrister, has been recognised for her expertise and the wider work she undertakes in communities, particularly in the area of diversity, equality and social mobility. Sophie won the prestigious "Barrister of the Year" award at the Birmingham Law Society Legal Awards. She was also the highly commended runner up in the "DE&I Champion of the Year in a Legal Role" category at the Women and Diversity in Law Awards.



### Nazmin Akthar (Trustee)

Nazmin, who is a solicitor, was a finalist for the Biz Women Awards in the Women in Law Excellence category. She was shortlisted because of her achievements in residential development and promoting corporate social responsibility and diversity, equality and inclusion within the legal profession and wider communities. Nazmin was also listed as one of the most influential South Asians in the North East in 2024 by the Asian Standard.

### HUGE CONGRATULATIONS

to our trustees on their achievements!

**MUSLIM** 

C WOMEN'S

MANIFESTO

### MWNUK ONLINE

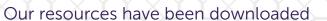








@Muslim Women's Network UK



an increase of

377,606 times | 15%

The Muslim Women's Manifesto has been dowloaded

870 times





TYPE OF MWNUK RESOURCE	DOWNLOADS UNTIL DECEMBER 2023	DOWNLOADS UNTIL DECEMBER 2024
Annual reports	20,426	26,124
Consultation reports	62,973	72,788
Evaluation reports	7,900	9,540
Information booklets*	118,716	126,925
Media statements	82,929	102,564
Research	35,271	39,665
Total	328,215	377,606

<sup>\*</sup>includes downloads from the MWN Helpline website



### **MWN HUB**

www.mwnhub.com

The MWN Hub is a space for members to express their views and share notices of events or promote their own initiatives.

















Isra Mohamed: The Basketball Role Model for Muslim Women

Being a Muslim woman playing sports is something I take pride in because it is something that was written for me. Allah chose me and my On becoming a Magistrate

Khadija, a 28 year-old doctor, has been a magistrate in a criminal court for five years.
Speaking to WWNULK, the discusses how she

hecame a manistrate



Meet Midwife Waheeda Abbas, who is on a mission to make healthcare equitable for all. Determined to improve maternal health inequalities, she has developed a digital multilingual maternity resource.









To receive updates from MWNUK, you can register on the platform **www.mwnhub.com/register** 





### MWN HELPLINE





**9** 07415 206 936

info@mwnhelpline.co.uk

www.mwnhelpline.co.uk

1380 individuals helped

Contacted 3895 times

**428** counselling sessions provided to **61** service users (7 sessions each)

Open Monday-Friday (10am-4pm)



### **Case Study**

A woman who was a spouse from Pakistan was controlled and abused by her husband and his family. She was not allowed outside unless she was chaperoned. She was made to do chores, not allowed friends, not allowed money and was not allowed to communicate with her family in Pakistan. After she gave birth, the family threatened to keep her baby and throw her out of the house. The MWN Helpline arranged for the woman to be rescued with her baby and placed in safe accommodation.

**ANNUAL REPORT 2024** 

of depression."

"You have helped me greatly - thumbs up for taking me out

"Your support over the phone is the kindest care I have received since moving to the UK."

"I felt trapped in a situation that seemed inescapable.
You gave me the courage to acknowledge the toxicity of my relationship. It was your guidance that illuminated the path to safety and recovery, showing me the light at the end of a very dark tunnel."

"The empathy, resources and encouragement I received made an immeasurable difference in my life. I am now in a place of safety and healing. I owe this new chapter in my life to the team at Muslim Women's Network Helpline."



The Amal Safety App is dedicated to **Fawziyah Javed** who was a victim of domestic homicide.
She was murdered by her husband in 2021.









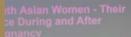
### **EVENTS**

Some of the events we participated in...



Federation of Muslim Women's Association (May 2024)

Sharing experiences of leadership with Muslim women of Nigerian heritage.



ness Shaista Gohir, OBE – CEO 8 Inding Member of the Muslim fomen's Network UK



Im, irwinmitche



**South Asian Maternal Health** (June 2024)

Sharing experiences of South Asian women's maternity experiences at an event organised by Irwin Mitchell Solicitors.

Raising concerns about hate crime experienced by Muslim women on public transport.

**Travel Watch Personal Security Summit** (Nov 2024)



Sikh Women's Aid Conference

(Dec 2024) Showing solidarity with other women of faith working to tackle domestic abuse.

Muslim Women's Awards (Dec 2024)





We have been building relationships with stakeholders across a range of sectors including sports, arts,

finance and social media. We are asking companies about the role they can play to challenge the negativity towards Muslim communities.



**ANNUAL REPORT 2024** 



**X** Social Media Platform



Premier League

HERITAC. MONTH

Aston Villa Football Club

### **PROJECTS**

### **Muslim Heritage Month**

www.muslimheritagemonth.org.uk



In response to growing concerns about the increasing normalisation of anti-Muslim bias in Britain, we developed the Muslim Heritage Month website and published it on 15th March 2024 to coincide with the UN International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

### The project aims to:

- establish an annual tradition of celebrating and recognising the contributions and cultural richness of Muslims in Britain.
- challenge negative stereotypes, foster improved understanding, and cultivate greater empathy and inclusion towards Muslim communities.
- develop a centralised repository of information, bringing together a wealth of fantastic resources spanning the history of Muslims from the past to the present, particularly about Muslim history in Britain.

We will be involving organisations to mark Muslim Heritage Month in March 2025 and aim for it to become a tradition that is marked annually.

If you want to participate or get your organisation / employers involved contact us on **mhm@muslimheritagemonth.org.uk** 



The toolkit can be downloaded here https://www.muslimheritagemonth.org. uk/muslim-heritage-month-toolkit





### We have received the following testimonials about Muslim Heritage Month



**Sir Sadiq Khan** (Mayor of London)

"It is important we acknowledge and reflect and celebrate the vital contributions that British Muslims make from business, culture, academia and public services to the success of London and the UK, which is why I am proud to be supporting Muslim Heritage Month."

### **Baroness Sayeeda Warsi**

"Muslim Heritage Month provides an opportunity to celebrate the rich cultural, intellectual and creative contributions of Muslims throughout history to the present day. It will serve as a catalyst for building bridges between different communities and cultures."





**HRH Prince Khalid** Saudi Arabia Ambassador to the UK

"The contribution of Muslims to the world's literature, arts, science, culture and everyday life is rich and varied and too often gets lost in lazy stereotyping of Muslims and ill-informed debates about 'otherness'. This is an excellent and timely opportunity to set the record straight."



### **Muslim Family Law Project**

MWNUK began a project with Dr. Rajnaara Akhtar from the University of Warwick (lead partner), which involves developing an information resource aimed at supporting Muslim <u>families in navigating marriage</u> and divorce, empowering them to make informed decisions.





### How will Muslim Women Vote in the 2024 General Elections? (June 2024)

This study investigated the voting intentions of Muslim women to understand the factors influencing their choices, their perceptions of major political parties and their ability to address Islamophobia.

**85** Muslim women took part in the survey

89%

Gaza situation likely to influence voting decision 88%

distrust / strongly distrust the Conservative Party 76%

distrust / strongly distrust the Labour Party 82%

Conservative
Party taken
no action
to address
Islamophobia

62%

Labour Party taken no action to address Islamophobia



### Anti-Muslim Hate: Concerns and Experiences (Sept 2024)

The research was conducted immediately after the racially and religiously aggravated riots in July / Aug 2024.



### 191 Muslims responded

experienced online / offline hate incidents in previous five years

very worried about their safety after

the riots

did not report hate incidents

had trust and confidence in police

24%

had experienced hate incidents 5-10 times

34%

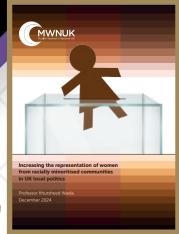
had trust and confidence in hate crime reporting

## Women from racially minoritised communities in local politics (Dec 2024)

Only **3%** of local council seats are held by minority ethnic women - falling far short of the **9%** needed for proportional representation. The research examined the challenges that minoritised women encounter when trying to become a local councillor.

- 27 aspiring, incumbent and former local councillors were interviewed.
- The report made **15** recommendations to address on data, recruitment, rules, structural barriers and discrimination.







ADVOCACY

### Women's Health Focus Group

(Jan 2024)

A roundtable meeting was organised by the Cabinet Office Equality Hub / Department of Health in partnership with MWNUK, to find out about Muslim women's experiences of engaging with health professionals and what improvements could be made. The meeting with around 20 women took place in Birmingham on 26th January 2024.

# O SAFETY O WOMEN'S WINGLIM O SAFETY INCLUSION O MANUSLIM O SAFETY

### Annual MWNUK Event (Feb 2024)

We held our annual event in parliament on the 6th February 2024, which was attended by MPs and Peers from across the main political parties.

### UN VAWG Rapporteur Roundtable (Feb 2024)

UN VAWG Rapportuer, Reem Alsalem visited the UK to assess how well the UK government is doing to tackle violence against women and girls.

MWNUK hosted a roundtable meetings in Birmingham on experiences of minority ethnic women of faith.



### Muslim Women's Safety (June 2024)

MWNUK helped to facilitate a meeting in Birmingham's Yardley constituency with a group of Muslim women to discuss Muslim women's safety with Jess Phillips MP and Yvette Cooper MP. Muslim women expressed concerns about the rise in anti-Muslim hate crimes.



### Muslim Women's Safety (Nov 2024)

MWNUK CEO Baroness Gohir met with Minister for Women and Equalities Anneliese Dodds and Minister for Faith and Communities Lord Wajid Khan. She raised concerns about gendered Islamophobia, hate crime and its under reporting, discrimination in the workplace and health inequalities such as poor maternity outcomes.

### Maternity and Women's Health Team Away Day

(April 2024)

Baroness Gohir spoke at the government Department of Health's Maternity and Women's Health Team Away Day about the work of MWNUK, domestic abuse, inequalities in maternity and women's health.



### Muslim Women's Advisory Group

We would like to thank our advisory group members who provide valuable insights and advice on a range of issues to inform our work:

Niparun Nessa, Siyyara Bakhsh, Farah Farzana, Shalina Litt, Shukri Mohammed, Aisha Adam, Lina Charki, Roxana Rias, Huda Jawad

### **Consultation Responses**

- Civil Society Covenant Framework (DCMS)
- The 10 Year Health Plan for England (DHSC) Dec 2024
- Strengthening Statutory Sick Pay (DWP) Dec 2024
- Summer 2024 Disorder Inquiry (Home Affairs Committee) Dec 2024
- MWNUK CERD Parallel Report (UN) July 2024
- VAWG Experiences of Minority Women in Britain (UN VAWG Rapporteur) Feb 2024

### IN PARLIAMENT

In her role as a Crossbench Peer, MWNUK CEO, Baroness Shaista Gohir, contributed over 20 times through questions and participating in debates to shape Bills. Some examples are listed here:

- Gaza: Healthcare System Support (debate) Dec 2024
- Home Schooling (question) Dec 2024
- Non-Consensual Sexually Explicit Images and Videos (Offences) Bill Dec 2024
- Domestic Abuse: Victims and Survivors (debate) Dec 2024
- Get Britain Working White Paper Nov 2024
- Home Education Registration and Support Bill Nov 2024
- Anti-Muslim Prejudice and Hate Crime (question) Sept 2024
- Maternal Mortality Rates (question) Jul 2024
- Hate Crimes Against Muslim Women (question) May 2024
- Victims Prisoners Bill Apr 2024
- Extremism Definition (question) Mar 2024
- Domestic Homicide Rates (question) Jan 2024

### **Sexually Explicit Audio Abuse**

Baroness Gohir highlighted a gap in the law concerning sharing of sexually explicit audio without consent and urged the government to strengthen law to prevent this.

### **Domestic Homicide Rates**

Baroness Gohir highlighted the over representation of minority ethnic women in domestic homicide rates and urged the government to conduct a public consultation / inquiry to better understand the contributing factors to better safeguard women.

Find the clips here https://www.mwnhub.com/videocat.php



### INTERNATIONAL /

### Celebrating Bollywood Actress Shabana Azmi

House of Lords (May 2024)

We hosted Shabana Azmi at the House of Lords on 8th May 2024 to celebrate her 50 year film career, her work championing women's rights and her London Freedom of the City Award in recognition of these achievements.

Her advice to her younger self was

"Keep doing what you are doing and do more of it





### Sheikh Mohammed Al-Issa

London (June 2024)

MWNUK CEO Baroness Gohir met with Saudi Sheikh Al-Issa, the Secretary General of the Muslim World League during his visit to London. She discussed the progress being made on women's empowerment.

### **Humanitarian Diplomacy**

Parliament (Oct 2024)

We worked in collaboration with the World Humanitarian Forum and hosted a panel discussion with Lord Ahmad (former Foreign Office Minister) and HE Lolwah Al Khater (Qatari Minister) to discuss the role of diplomacy during crisis, such as during conflict situations.



### MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

### Print, Online and TV

MWNUK are regularly mentioned or quoted in the media. Here are 22 media mentions in 2024:

#### **Asian Voice**

9 January 2024

A new faceless enemy for women?

#### Guardian

26 February 2024

Were two Muslim women in East London run over because they were wearing hijabs?

#### **BBC Radio 4**

2 March 2024

Week in Westminster

#### Guardian

10 March 2024

This time it's really hard': British Muslims reflect as Ramadan begins

#### **BBC Radio**

13 March 2024

The World Tonight

### **Hyphen Online**

8 April 2024

Doulas helping to tackle inequality in maternity care

#### **Sky News**

13 May 2024

Bollywood star Shabana Azmi on Democracy

#### **BBC News (Online)**

23 June 2024

Election candidate sorry for 'misogynistic' remarks

#### Guardian

24 June 2024

Election candidate apologises for disturbing remarks

#### **BBC News (Online)**

5 July 2024

Female MPs call harassment an assault on democracy

#### **Sky News**

18 August 2024

Muslim women safety concerns after the UK riots

#### Sky News (Online)

18 August 2024

Three-quarters of Muslims worried about their safety

#### **The National**

30 August 2024

British Muslim women living in fear as hate surges after riots

#### The National News

12 Sept 2024

Hate crimes against Muslims go unreported despite surge in cases after **UK** riots

#### **Third Sector**

1 November 2024

Covenant represents 'vital opportunity' for sector

#### **BBC Asian Network**

11 December 2024

Sara Sharif

#### **Hyphen Online**

17 December 2024

Why did their community take his side?

#### The Times

18 December 2024

How the UK became 'western capital' for sharia courts

#### **GB News**

18 December 2024

Britain becomes 'western capital' for sharia law courts

#### **BBC World Today**

18 December 2024

Shariah Councils

#### I BC

18 December 2024

Shariah Councils





### MEDIA STATEMENTS

We issued 20 statements in 2024, which can be downloaded from our website www.mwnuk.co.uk/media-statements

- Muslim Women's Network UK hosts meeting with UN VAWG Special Rapporteur (Feb 2024)
- Meeting with Parliamentary Delegation from Morocco (Feb 2024)
- Grooming victim Shamima Begum should be allowed to return to the UK (Feb 2024)
- Divisive Politics is Endangering Muslim Communities in Britain (Feb 2024)
- Concerns of government using false allegations of extremism to silence Muslims (Mar 2024)
- Muslim Heritage Month to help combat Islamophobia (Mar 2024)
- Inquiry needed on over-representation of minority women in domestic homicide rates (Apr 2024)
- We call upon Saudi authorities to release Manahel Al-Otaibi (May 2024)
- Anti-Muslim prejudice during General Election campaigning must be condemned (May 2024)
- Safety of Muslim women discussed with Labour Party's Shadow Home Secretary (Jun 2024)
- Deep concerns about misogynistic comments by Parliamentary Candidate (Jun 2024)
- Muslim Women's Manifesto Levelling up for Muslim Women (Jun 2024)
- Congratulations to the Labour Party on winning the General Election (Jul 2024)

- Manchester airport incident concerns over Police use of excessive force (Jul 2024)
- Far right extremists exploit Southport tragedy (Jul 2024)
- Decisive action needed to combat anti-Muslim hatred (Aug 2024)
- Amal safety mobile phone App launched in memory of Fawziyah Javed (Sept 2024)
- MWNUK Report shows that 80% of Muslims do not report hate crime incidents (Sept 2024)
- Muslim Women's Network UK's response to Labour's first budget statement (Oct 2024)
- Sara Sharif suffered unimaginable cruelty (Dec 2024)



# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	$c \times x \times x \times z$	2024 (£)	2023 (£)
$\times$	INCOME		
X	Voluntary Income (grants and donations)*	414,948	369,706
X	Activities Generating Funds	840	4,623
	Investment Income (Interest Receivable)	0	0
X	Total Income	415,788	374,329

EXPENDITURE		
Cost of Running Charitable Activities	407,046	362,241
Total Expenditure	407,046	362,241

RESERVES		
Retained Surplus for the Financial Year	8,742	12,088
Total Reserves Brought Forward	224,642	212,554
Total Reserves Carried Forward**	233,384	224,642

<sup>\*</sup> Of the £414,948 voluntary income, £4,473 is donations

<sup>\*\*</sup> Of the £233, 384 reserves, £94,721 is restricted

### HELP US

There are many different ways you can support MWNUK so we can continue to help women and girls, and achieve an equal and just society.

### **Donate**

As a registered national charity (1155092) your donations go a long way. You can:

Donate via our website
 Go to www.mwnuk.co.uk
 and click DONATE.

 Donate by cheque, made payable to: Muslim Women's Network UK, and send to: MWNUK, First Floor 1190- 1192 Stratford Road Birmingham B28 8AB

### **Fundraise**

There are many ways you could fundraise for MWNUK, the MWN Helpline, or the MWN Hardship Fund:

### **Organise an Event**

You could raise funds by organising a local charity dinner, bake sale, or show.

#### Do a Sponsored Activity

You could try something new, have fun and carry out a range of activities such as marathons, fun runs, cycle races, mountain climbing, sky diving etc. and get people to sponsor you!

### **Spread the Word**

Help spread the word about our work:

- MWNUK
- The MWN Helpline
- The MWN Hub

### You can raise awareness through:

- Sharing and using our work
- Disseminating our resources
- Inviting others to join in
- Connecting and sharing on social media

If you are interested please email contact@mwnuk.co.uk





### OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you to all of the organisations that have provided grants and the individuals who have made donations which make our work possible.























The Coutts Foundation







STRIPE & STARE









Thank you to **Stripe and Stare** for sending 25 boxes of loungewear and underwear for domestic abuse victims which we also distributed to other women's charities who work with survivors.





Research • Advocacy • Campaiging

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Connecting Voices for Change