

PROGRAMME IMPACT REPORT

Our Sisters Our Space

July 2025

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Impact and Analysis Team

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#WeStandTogether



The Foundation received the 'We Stand Together' affiliate award in 2023 and 2024 for outstanding contribution and commitment in bringing communities together in North Manchester.

Sisterhood



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Report Type: End of Programme Evaluation

Investment Body: We Love MCR Charity

Town/City: North Manchester

Programme Duration: September 2023 – June 2024
Continues to run currently

Why was the Investment needed?

For several months, the Foundation had been running 'Our Sisters, Our Space' sessions at Oasis Temple in Cheetham Hill, North Manchester. These sessions provided a safe, culturally sensitive space for Pakistani women aged 40–75 to come together, share their experiences, and access informal support through our "chat and chai" format. While the sessions have been well-received, their informal structure has limited our ability to meet the growing and complex needs of participants.

Through a mix of arts, crafts, welfare drop-ins, and health-related discussions, the sessions have begun to uncover deeper issues affecting these women. These ranged from isolation and mental health to navigating welfare systems and managing chronic health conditions. However, without formal structure, trained facilitators, or consistent resources, we were unable to fully respond to these needs or scale our impact. This investment was essential to strengthen and sustain the project. It allowed us to:

- Formalise the structure of sessions to deliver more targeted and impactful support
- Recruit experienced facilitators with relevant cultural and community knowledge
- Provide appropriate materials and resources to enhance session quality
- Promote the programme effectively to reach more women in need

With this support, we could transform 'Our Sisters, Our Space' from a valuable grassroots initiative into a sustainable community lifeline for some of the most vulnerable women in North Manchester.

Expected Outcomes

→ Confidence and self-esteem

→ Develop hobbies and interests

→ Reduced isolation

→ Support with cost of living crisis

→ Learning new skills

→ Access our counselling service

Output - Data Dashboard

sessions delivered
33

total hours of delivery
66

participants target:
45

participants engaged
38

% of targets met
85%

% CERi backgrounds
100%

engaging in such activities for first time
90%

satisfied with sessions and programme
83%

Impact

The Our Sisters Our Space programme had a profoundly positive impact on South Asian women by creating a safe and supportive environment that nurtured confidence, improved mental health, and encouraged personal growth. Through group activities, creative workshops, and shared hobbies, participants developed strong interpersonal bonds and a renewed sense of self-worth. The programme empowered women to express themselves more freely, engage in teamwork, and explore new interests, all while fostering a sense of community and belonging. This holistic support not only boosted individual wellbeing but also strengthened collective resilience and mutual support within the group.

Outcomes



76%
reported improved
confidence and
self-esteem



83%
learnt at least two new
hobbies or interests



56%
received support with
cost of living crisis



90%
reported lower levels or
stress, anxiety, social isolation



8
referrals made to our
counselling service

What worked well?

Female only instructors.

Range of activities.

Refreshments, snacks, informal atmosphere.

What we learnt?

Demand for arts and crafts was significant.

There is stigma attached to admitting mental health issues within the diaspora.

Trusted venue like school supports attendance.

How has the investment positively impacted community cohesion

The Our Sisters Our Space programme actively fostered community cohesion by bringing South Asian women together in a shared, culturally sensitive space where they could connect over common experiences, challenges, and aspirations. Through collaborative activities and group discussions, participants built trust, mutual understanding, and solidarity, breaking down social isolation and barriers that often exist within communities. By encouraging dialogue, teamwork, and the celebration of diverse skills and backgrounds, the programme helped to strengthen intergenerational and intercultural relationships, laying the foundation for a more unified, supportive, and empowered community.

Legacy

The programme had strong outcomes and evidence. It has secured investment from other sources and continues to run.

Case Study

Rehana, 48 has been attending the our sisters our space programme since the beginning. She came across an advertisement about the programme as her school sent the poster around to all the parents. She has had low-mood and anxiety since the passing of her elderly mother. She enjoys the arts and crafts sessions; especially sewing. It has given her the confidence to pursue a sewing course so she can begin working from home to sew south-asian clothes for the local community.

‘Shaheen has been so helpful and warm. I really enjoy the conversations I have with the ladies. They are my long-term friends now and invited them all to my house for Eid. I always look forward to the sessions. Thank you Flowhession.’

Rehana, 48, Our Sisters Our Space, Beneficiary