

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



WELCOME TO SUNRISE MULTICULTURAL PROJECT.

The aim of the Project is to 'enable children, young people and adults in minority communities to achieve their full potential at home, in education and in their communities.' Sunrise continues to strive towards this goal and we are very proud of all that has been achieved by teams past and present.

Sunrise provides play sessions, youth groups, adult drop-ins, a dedicated domestic violence and abuse service, and a range of services for the refugees housed in the town.

First of all we need to note Assia Bibi's decision at the beginning of the year to move on from Sunrise after 17 and a half years as Project Manager. During her time with us Assia supported and developed significant growth in our work and the impact of the organisation and we wish her well for the future.

The charity, its staff team and the scope of its work had grown on an ad hoc basis over the years and there was a need to review the structure, funding and work-place policies of the organisation as well as its governance to see if improvements were needed.

The Trustees took professional advice and recruited a Change Director for a period of 9 months in order to carry out the following work:

- Identify what changes were required in order to enable the charity to maintain a stable and solid footing for the future
- With the agreement of the Trustees put in place and deliver a plan to quickly and successfully implement these changes.

As a result, Sunrise has

- Appointed a new CEO, Maria Holden.
- Completely restructured the staff team.
- Adopted a new system of financial management which enables easier tracking of funds.
- Increased the range of support to local refugees.
- Improved avenues of consultation with beneficiaries
- Engaged an independent fund-raiser to help diversify funding streams.
- Appointed a Community Engagement Officer to boost our public profile.
- Improved GDP compliance.

We continue to use both bases at Orchard Way and Britannia Road.

We now feel energised and ready to formulate Strategic Plans for the next 3 - 5 years.

Meryl Smith
Outgoing Chair

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

SATURDAY CLUBS

Sunam Shan manages the
Saturday Clubs

74 Children attend Saturday Clubs with a
further 14 currently on the waiting lists.

Activities have included park visits, sports
days, creative activities, themed activities
and celebrations from around the world,
library visits, cooking and baking and
healthy lunches / snacks.

In July 2024 the children visited Umberslade
Adventure outdoor centre, accessing high
ropes, zip line, archery and woodland play
and 2 forest school sessions in Charlbury
woods with den building, fire lighting,
bushcraft and cooking on a fire. The clubs
also went on canal boat trips put on by
Tooley's Boat Yard. We were also very
fortunate to receive funding for a special
Christmas event at the Community Garden
in December.



OUR CHILDREN SAID

"I love all the staff members, they're caring.
And I really love baking".

"I enjoyed it a lot because I love nature.
Some leaves were very tropical. I loved it so
much 10/10 for sure. I loved the
challenges".

"It was really fun because we had a nice
time on the boats and I've never been on a
boat before".

**"WE WENT ON AN
ADVENTURE IN THE
WOODS
AND IT WAS SOO
MUCH FUN".**



YOUTH GROUPS

Taraji Ogunnubi manages the Youth Groups which comprise a weekly session for boys and another for girls. Around 25 young people attend, and further 15 boys attend a football academy



PROJECTS

DETAILS

Boys Only Football – Building Brotherhood, Discipline & Healthy Habits

Our Boys Only Football sessions are about more than just sport. Designed to engage boys aged 14–18 in Banbury, these weekly FREE sessions give young people a physical outlet, while also promoting respect, teamwork, and mental wellbeing. The sessions have helped turn strangers into teammates and teammates into friends – all while keeping young people active, engaged, and inspired.

Girls and Boys Youth Clubs – Safe, Fun Spaces to Grow and Belong

Our separate Girls and Boys Youth Clubs at Sunrise Multicultural Project offer a welcoming, structured space for children and young people to relax, socialise, and learn outside of school hours. Held weekly in Banbury, the clubs are open to all youth aged 13-18 years in and led by trusted staff who create a fun and respectful environment.

These clubs are often the highlight of our young people's week – a place where they feel seen, heard, and valued.

The boys enjoyed many different sessions including an art session, confidence and self esteem workshops, a trip to Go Ape and visits from the police to discuss knife crime and county lines. The girls enjoyed a karaoke evening at The Light as well as music sessions with Community Albums, decorating t-shirts and a number of revision sessions to help with GCSE's


OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SAID:


1. K: "I am looking forward to making slime next week. I really enjoyed the session today."
2. D: "Thank you – I want tutoring for Maths, English, and Science for my GCSEs."
3. S: "Coming here every week has helped me feel more confident about myself."



BOYS
YOUTH CLUB
EVERY TUESDAY AT BRITANNIA ROAD
7.00PM-8.45PM
AGE: 12-18 YEARS
FREE CLUB: ALL BOYS WELCOME!

REGISTER ONLINE OR DM FOR MORE INFORMATION

 **SUNRISE**
MULTICULTURAL PROJECT
Lighting Up Lives

 **COMMUNITY FUND**

YOUTH CLUB

REGISTER ONLINE TODAY OR DM US FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Every Thursday 6.30pm-8pm
Location: 60 Orchard Way
All girls aged 13-18 years

JOIN US FOR FREE SESSIONS,
EXCITING ACTIVITIES
FUN TRIPS AND EMPOWERING
PROGRAMMES!



THURSDAY WELLNESS DROP-IN LADIES



Our Wellness for Women Drop-In is a compassionate, culturally sensitive space that supports women's wellbeing—physically, emotionally, and mentally. Regularly, attended by up to 20 ladies each week.

What We offer:-

- Gentle yoga and movement sessions to promote physical wellness and relieve stress.
- Mindfulness and relaxation exercises to calm the nervous system and support mental clarity.
- Cultural and creative wellness workshops such as journaling, art therapy, and women's circles.
- Open discussions and peer support where women can share experiences, challenges, and ideas.
- Parenting and family wellbeing guidance, especially for new mums or those raising children without extended support networks.
- Community-building activities to foster trust, belonging, and integration.

Our facilitators are skilled, trauma-informed, and culturally aware. They create a space where all women can engage in their own healing journey in a way that feels empowering and safe.

Quotes from Participants:

"I find it is a supportive, friendly community of women. My son feels comfortable and I feel supported. I love yoga and healthy cooking sessions... I loved the parenting classes too. They have a really good crèche facility that makes mums feel at ease and take part in the sessions with peace of mind."

"I came to this country from Pakistan in 2022.At Sunrise, I met Shabnam (IDVA). She booked my doctors appointments, gave me information, support and advice. I can't thank her enough for her help and support. I come to the ladies' drop in and they really make my heart full. I don't feel isolated and lonely anymore."

Louise: Yoga Instructor

"The ladies are a fabulous group, all join in and are really warm and welcoming. We are trying to build up movement and build strength. They really seem to enjoy the Yoga sessions so far".

Our Tuesday Ladies Drop-In at Orchard Way offers a variety of activities tailored to the needs of the community.

TUESDAY LADIES DROP-DROP IN

Running from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm, these sessions provide a relaxed and inclusive environment where women can come together to participate in engaging activities, learn new skills, and connect with others. Each session is unique, reflecting the interests and needs of those attending, making it a great opportunity to build friendships, share experiences, and be part of a supportive community.



MONDAY WOMEN'S COOKING & CRAFT WORKSHOP

OUR MISSION

These sessions provide a warm, welcoming space for women to connect, learn, and share experiences.

Held at Britannia Road, these sessions are open to all women, including those with babies or toddlers up to the age of five. Women join us for cooking sessions, interactive activities, and a chance to relax. It's an opportunity to meet new people, build friendships, and be part of a vibrant community. We especially welcome women who are asylum seekers in temporary housing who have no other access to a kitchen.

QUOTES

"The Monday session is a lovely way for women and children to gather in a safe space. It gave me the opportunity to share food, share conversation and take part in creative activities with people of different ages, cultures, and countries.

I particularly enjoyed The Bridge Street Garden initiative where we could enjoy the taste, smells and sights of the beautiful gardens."

"The group helped me meet new friends who were very nice to me, and you helped me with many things for me and my children".



Highlights

Sharing recipes and creating a cook book
Funded by Cherwell District Council

Cooking classes with Rosalia Barresi
Funded by Well Together Programme - Community First Oxfordshire

"THE GROUP HELPED US A LOT.

It made us understand what teamwork is. It made us learn to interact and coordinate. It made us understand that it is possible to work together for a single goal from different countries and countries with different languages. "

THURSDAY ASYLUM SEEKER/REFUGEE DROP-IN

In late 2022, we saw a huge increase in refugees and asylum seekers approaching us for help.

Many were facing poverty, isolation, legal uncertainty, and language barriers.

People came to us for food, emotional support, housing guidance, and referrals. Since August 2024, in partnership with Cherwell DC we have run dedicated sessions to provide guidance and support for all refugees and asylum seekers, practical help with integration and understanding of UK systems.

As well as access to food and clothing donations, free drinks/snacks in a warm, welcoming environment We also provide access to our fully equipped kitchen, free WiFi, computer and printing facilities at no cost and comfortable space for rest, connection, and support

- We also provide professional support available on-site from various partners including:
- NHS Asylum & Refugee Services
- Library Services – books in multiple languages
- MIND – mental health and wellbeing support
- Home-Start – family support services
- Community Dental Health
- Banbury Cross Health Centre – Social Prescriber
- IPS Employment Specialist – job readiness and employment
- Supporting Learning & Integration
- Host multicultural events to promote understanding and unity in the community.
- Banbury & Bicester College, EMBS, Sunrise ESOL classes
- Referrals to: Home-Start, Britannia Road Drop-Ins, MIND, Job Club

At the start of Autumn we held a 'warm winter for all' event where refugees could come along and access donated warm clothes and coats.



INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVISOR (IDVA) SUPPORT

An impact report is a way for organizations to communicate the issues they are trying to improve, as well as Our IDVA service provides crucial support for individuals affected by domestic abuse and violence.

Our IDVA can help and support those affected by standard and medium risk cases. IDVAs play a key role in empowering those affected by domestic abuse by providing emotional support, risk assessments, and personalised safety plans.

They also work closely with other agencies, such as the police, social services, and housing providers, to ensure clients receive comprehensive, tailored support. Whether it's navigating the legal system, accessing safe accommodation, or connecting with counseling services, our IDVAs are here to provide practical and compassionate help.

Over 40 people have been referred to our services for support in these cases in the past year alone.

In the August some of the ladies and families who we have supported had a day out in Stratford-upon-Avon and went on a boat trip.

COMMUNITY HELP & INFORMATION OFFICER

This is a new service we started offering in June 2024, providing FREE one-to-one support – a lifeline for those navigating complex systems especially who can't speak or understand English.

How We Help:

- Housing Support, Benefits Guidance, Form Filling & Letters
- Immigration and Legal Signposting
- Accessing Healthcare
- School & Children's Services
- Support for Isolated Individuals
- Crisis Support

In the first six months we helped over 40 individuals, making a real difference to people's lives.

THE FUTURE



Looking ahead, our focus is on broadening inclusion and deepening community engagement. We are committed to working with a wider range of ethnic groups across Banbury to better reflect the diversity of our town and ensure our programmes respond to varied cultural experiences. Plans are underway to increase open access for all—removing practical and perceptual barriers to participation through targeted outreach, multilingual resources, and co-designed activities. By nurturing trust and belonging across all communities, we aim to create more equitable opportunities for well-being, connection, and collective impact.

THANKS to:-

Trustees

Meryl Smith (Chair)

Trustee of Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

Liz Horn (Trustee)

Ex-Social Worker and Lecturer in Health and Social Care

Shamim Rehman (Trustee)

Independent Therapist

Staff

Maria Holden - CEO

Michelle Pollard – Head of Programmes

Candy McCourt - Business Support Officer

Taraji Ogunnubi - Team Leader Young People

Shabnam Malik - Independent Domestic Violence Advice

Naseem Hussain - Adult Activity Worker

Tahera Saeed - Community Help and Information Officer

Finance Officer – Magda Reitmer

Sunam Shan – Young People's Team Leader

Play Worker/ Leaders – Shazia Khan, Aisha Ghfare, Zainab Ahmed,

Gill Russell, Narinder Dhillon, Sabran Bibi, Rashida Parveen

Youth workers – Amina Aslam, Anila Malik, Shabnam Malik,

Ahmer Ahmed, Sunam Shan

Supporters

Cherwell DC, Bridge Street Community Garden, Sunshine Centre, The Hill,

Banbury Larder, Oxfordshire Mind Sundial, Citizens Advice, Community Albums, Playful

Funders

Lottery Community Fund, BBC Children in Need Ministry of Justice, Cherwell District Council, Brighter Futures,

Connected Communities, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Banbury Town Council,

Banbury Charities, Well Together, International Tree Federation, Sanctuary Housing Group, Little Wild Things

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Volunteers

Almas Shied

Gurkbash Kaur

Noreen Marham

Sorbia Farhat

Afsana Hussain

Yasmeen Hussain

Saif Rehman

Hafeez Rehman

Marcus Holden

Rebecca Atkins

Lynne Cheetham

Jo Badger

Zohreh Boluoghia

Jane Johnson

Bernadette Cummings

WE THANK YOU

FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR PROJECT