

Annual Report 2025

Charity No. 1192766
Registered Office: 60 Orchard Way, Banbury, OX16 0EN

Trustees
Zahid Bhatti – Chair
Elizabeth Horn – Vice Chair
Meryl Smith
Shamim Rehman
Steven Phillips
Ailene Bonner
Ian Harwood

Chief Executive Officer
Maria Holden

Sunrise Multicultural Project CIO

Chair's Overview

Sunrise Multicultural Project has a long history of supporting individuals, families and communities across Banbury.
This has been another busy and positive year, with staff, volunteers and partners continuing to provide a wide range of activities, advice and support to the communities we serve.

Alongside delivering our existing services, we have also spent time thinking about the longer-term future of Sunrise. Trustees, staff and other stakeholders have contributed to discussions about our future direction and how we can build on the strengths of the organisation.

Through this work, we have begun to identify a number of priorities for the next phase of our development: strengthening long-term financial sustainability; improving the quality and reach of our services; ensuring activities continue to respond to changing community needs; developing our facilities and community presence; strengthening governance, safeguarding and organisational systems; and ensuring Sunrise continues to be a strong voice for inclusion, opportunity and community cohesion.

What continues to stand out about Sunrise is the commitment of our staff, volunteers and trustees, alongside the trust and relationships we have developed within the communities we serve.

Our aim is not simply to provide activities. We want to create places where people feel welcomed, supported and connected, where individuals and families can access opportunities, and where those who may otherwise be overlooked can receive the additional support they need.

Zahid Bhatti
Chair of Trustees
September 2026



Structure, Governance & Management

Sunrise Multicultural Project is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), governed by its constitution, which was approved by the Charity Commission and adopted by the Trustees on 31 December 2021.

The charity is governed by a voluntary Board of Trustees. Trustees are collectively responsible for ensuring that Sunrise remains focused on its charitable purposes, is well governed and financially sustainable, meets its legal and regulatory responsibilities, manages safeguarding and organisational risk appropriately, and has a clear strategic direction.

The Board provides oversight of strategy, finances, budgets, reserves, safeguarding, risk, key policies, staffing structures and pay. Trustees also support and constructively challenge the CEO and monitor organisational performance.

Day-to-day leadership and management is delegated to the CEO, supported by the Head of Programmes and the wider staff and volunteer team. The CEO is responsible for service delivery, staff and volunteers, budgets, fundraising, grant management, relationships with funders and partners, safeguarding, organisational development and reporting.

The CEO reports regularly to the Board, enabling Trustees to maintain appropriate oversight of performance, finances, safeguarding, risk and strategic priorities.

Reserves Policy

Sunrise aims to maintain sufficient unrestricted reserves to support organisational stability and manage unexpected financial pressures.
The current aim is to maintain reserves equivalent to approximately six months of operating expenditure, where financially possible.
The level of reserves is reviewed regularly by the CEO and Trustees, taking account of current and anticipated expenditure, restricted and unrestricted funding, future commitments, organisational risks and the sustainability of services.

Public Benefit

Sunrise works primarily within Banbury and supports communities experiencing disadvantage, inequality, isolation and barriers to accessing services and opportunities.
Our work particularly supports ethnic minority communities, refugees and migrants, women and families, children and young people, and individuals who may experience social or economic disadvantage.
Public benefit is delivered through education, advice and advocacy, health and wellbeing support, youth and family activities, community engagement, opportunities for social connection, and support with integration and access to services.
Activities are shaped through engagement with beneficiaries and delivered either directly by Sunrise or in partnership with other organisations.
Trustees have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when considering the activities and future direction of the charity.

Objects

The objects of the CIO are to relieve the charitable needs of ethnic minority families in Banbury and its surrounding area in such ways as the Trustees think fit, in particular through:

1. The advancement of education through nurseries, out-of-school clubs and adult education.
2. The advancement of health through advocacy, advice and support.
3. The provision of recreational facilities in the interests of social welfare, with the aim of improving people's conditions of life.

To support these objects, Sunrise provides Saturday Clubs, youth groups, ladies' and men's groups, ESOL and learning activities, football sessions, refugee and asylum seeker support, specialist IDVA support, Community Help and Information services, and wider community activities.

Volunteers



Volunteers make an important contribution to Sunrise and enable us to extend the reach and diversity of our work. They support programmes, community activities and events and bring valuable skills, languages, lived experience and connections to the communities we serve. During the year, Sunrise continued to review and strengthen volunteer recruitment, safeguarding and DBS arrangements, induction, training, supervision and role clarity. We remain extremely grateful for the time, energy and commitment given by all our volunteers.

Thank you!

Funding



Sunrise continued to receive support from a range of funders during the year.

Key funders included the National Lottery Community Fund, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley and Cherwell District Council.

New or additional support was received from Oxfordshire Community Foundation, Postcode Society Trust, Rail Partnership and Good Food Oxfordshire.

We are grateful to all our funders and partners. Fundraising and income diversification remain important priorities as we seek to strengthen Sunrise's long-term sustainability.

Achievements & Performance

This has been another very active year for Sunrise.

Organisational developments included appointing an internal member of staff to support fundraising, increasing support for refugees and migrants, moving internal communications to Google Workspace to improve systems and data security, updating the website, establishing a monthly Over-50s Breakfast and Social Group, working with Bridge Street Community Garden to deliver the Thriving in Nature programme, and participating in local events including Canal Day, the Town Mayor's Fun Day and school fêtes.








LOVE ALL YOUR CREATIVE IDEAS FOR EVENTS AND THE PRODUCTS THAT COME OUT OF THEM EVEN ON A COLD AND RAINY NOVEMBER DAY LIKE TODAY! WELL DONE ALL INVOLVED."









Children & Young People

Saturday The Saturday Clubs continued to provide a safe, welcoming and enriching environment for children across Orchard Way and Britannia Road.

Activities included arts and crafts, outdoor play, cooking, group games, music, construction play, quizzes, digital activities and park visits. Children also celebrated Ramadan, Eid, Mother's Day, Diwali, Halloween and Christmas.

The programme supported confidence, creativity, wellbeing, positive relationships and a sense of cultural identity and belonging.

A highlight of the year was a trip to the pantomime.



Girls' Youth Group

The Girls' Youth Group continued to provide a supportive and empowering space for young women.

Sessions included healthy relationships, personal safety, honour-based abuse awareness, emotional wellbeing, career inspiration, confidence building, cooking, creative activities, podcasts, Iftar celebrations and social activities.

Partners included People's Theatre Collective, Thames Valley Police and Oxford Brookes University. A particular highlight was a confidence-building railway trip to London.

Boys' Youth Club

The Boys' Youth Club delivered a varied programme of football, sport, outdoor activities, cooking, quizzes, music, group games, digital activities and cultural celebrations.

Activities supported physical wellbeing, confidence, teamwork, creativity and positive relationships. Attendance remained steady throughout the year, with a trip to Thorpe Park being a particular highlight.



Women, Families & Wellbeing

The Tuesday Ladies' Group provided a mix of learning, wellbeing, practical support and social connection. Sessions included legal advice, meditation, parenting workshops, health awareness and trips to Oxford and Sulgrave Manor. Participants also contributed to consultation work around local cancer services.

The Thursday Ladies' Group focused on health, wellbeing and practical information, including dementia, diabetes, wills, power of attorney, healthy cooking, exercise, Pilates and yoga. The group also enjoyed a trip to Upton House.

The Monday Cooking and Craft Group continued to bring people together through food, creativity and social connection. Participants cooked a wide range of dishes and took part in embroidery, knitting, crochet, sewing and seasonal craft activities. External sessions covered diabetes awareness, wellbeing, stop-smoking support and Alzheimer's awareness.

Refugees, Migrants & Community Inclusion

The Thursday Asylum Seeker and Refugee Drop-In, delivered in partnership with Cherwell District Council, continued to grow.
People attend for food, clothing, emotional support, practical advice, help navigating UK systems and support with integration.
Sunrise also provides free drinks, kitchen facilities, Wi-Fi, computers and printing.
Additional activities have included Tai Chi, mindfulness and monthly cook-and-share lunches.

The service continues to provide an important and welcoming space for people who may otherwise experience isolation or difficulty accessing support.

Men's Group



The Men's Group continued to provide a welcoming and consistent space for men to share meals, cook, socialise and build relationships.
The group particularly supports men experiencing loneliness, isolation, financial hardship, unemployment or living alone.
A highlight was a series of practical cooking and healthy-eating workshops with Rosalia Barresi, helping participants develop confidence and affordable cooking skills.

One participant commented:

"It's the best meal I've had in a long time."

Older People

The Over-50s Breakfast and Social Group launched in December 2025, with 15 people attending the first session.



The group provides a friendly opportunity for older residents to enjoy a hot breakfast, meet others, play games, take part in crafts and reduce social isolation.



Support & Information

Domestic Abuse Support

Our IDVA service continued to grow during the year.

More than 50 new people were referred, with approximately 70 clients supported overall.

The service provides practical and emotional support to women experiencing domestic abuse and their children.

Families also took part in trips to Stratford-upon-Avon, Oxford and Cotswold Farm Park.



Community Help & Information

500

Enquiries

The Community Help and Information Officer provides free one-to-one support to people who may struggle to access services independently, particularly those with limited English or difficulty understanding UK systems.

During the 12-month period, the service responded to more than 500 enquiries, providing an important bridge between individuals and wider public, voluntary and community services.

SUNRISE
MULTICULTURAL PROJECT

LOOKING AHEAD

Sunrise enters the next year with both opportunities and challenges.

Our focus will be on developing and implementing our strategic plan, strengthening financial sustainability, improving the quality and impact of services, s
trengthening safeguarding and governance, supporting staff and volunteers, considering future premises needs, increasing our community presence, and continuing to respond to the changing needs of Banbury's diverse communities.

Sunrise remains committed to listening to the people we serve and developing services alongside our communities rather than simply for them.

Our Ambition

Is to remain a welcoming, trusted and inclusive organisation while continuing to strengthen the quality, sustainability and impact of everything we do.

