

2023/24

Impact Report



Women's
Inclusive
Team

Welcome

Women's Inclusive Team is a medium-sized grass-roots charity founded by Somali women that has been supporting Black and ethnic minority women and their families in Tower Hamlets since 2003.

“Midnimo waxay horseedaa xoog”

“Unity brings strength”



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Foreword

Our incredible CEO and her work with the community and beyond!

- | Event facilitator
- | Public speaker
- | Trustee for local charities
- | Mentor & Coach for future leaders
- | Advocate for the BME Communities



Safia Jama MBE
WIT CEO & Founder

2023: A Landmark Year for the Women's Inclusive Team

In 2023, Women's Inclusive Team played a crucial role in supporting the most vulnerable and marginalised members of our community, affirming our commitment to crisis relief. Our work focused on four pillars: Education, Health and Food, and Advice & Guidance.

As a community-led organisation, most of our staff, volunteers, and trustees are local residents with lived experience of the issues we address. Our team speaks community languages like Somali and Bengali/Sylheti, and we prioritise hiring relatable peers to strengthen community connections. Holding the Queen's Award for Voluntary Services since 2021 has also boosted volunteer engagement and expanded our impact.

The rising cost of living has amplified hardship, increasing demand for our services. We're strategically targeting our support where it's most needed and are grateful for the generosity of supporters and dedication of our volunteers, staff, and trustees, whose efforts ensured that all our projects are codesigned with input from community members.

Our four key service themes—Food, Health, Education, and Advice & Guidance—remain strong, with a review planned in our upcoming 5-year business plan. Through partnerships with local stakeholders, we continue to provide wrap-around support for our members. We depend on our allies' funding and support to expand this positive impact.



Highlights from Our Projects:

Developing Potentials: IT and CV-building courses to enhance BME women's employability.

Community Kitchen: Nutritious meals for the vulnerable, in partnership with local elderly care homes and free school meals programmes.

Domestic Abuse Awareness: Our Hawaa project educates the Somali community on recognising, preventing, and seeking support for domestic abuse.

Mental Health Support: Initiatives to help women access cervical and breast screenings.

As we look forward, we're focused on a five-year strategy to diversify funding, advocate for BME women's health screenings, support Somali families with children with SEND, and combat food inequality in Tower Hamlets.

A special thanks to WIT's board, senior management team, outgoing trustee Sara Custer, and our incredible staff, volunteers, and supporters. Your commitment has been invaluable in helping Tower Hamlets' most vulnerable community members.

Thank you all for your support last year.

Safia Jama, MBE
CEO



At WIT, we understand that our women's needs and aspirations form an interconnected journey. Our "holistic hug" approach, adapted from Maslow's hierarchy of needs, recognises that women can best achieve their full potential when their fundamental needs are met and they have proper support at each stage of development:

Vibrant Communities: Creating active, enriching, and mutually beneficial communities around women

Hooyo East

Serves traditional Somali food with all proceeds invested back into our programmes that support women, children and young people. Enjoy a perfectly fried sambussa, succulent lamb hilib or Somali-spiced veggie curry knowing that it is the takeaway that gives back to its community.

Thriving Families: Supporting women to nurture family relationships that bring stability, growth and joy

Chicksand Preschool & Maangaar (unique child) We are committed in delivering services that nurture children and strengthen the family unit in a culturally sensitive way.

Voice & Influence: Developing the individual and collective capacity of women to shape decisions and influence change

Hiddo Girls Youth Group & Flourishing Communities

Ensure that we are not only training future female leaders, but also ensuring our current clients are at the forefront of having their voices heard.

Economic Prosperity: Empowering women to build sustainable financial security and create pathways to prosperity

Developing Potentials, Tower Hamlets Housing & Community meals and Food banks

Act as stepping stones towards our clients building stability, confidence and independence.



Health & Wellbeing: Enabling women to achieve and maintain good physical and mental health

Advice, Information and Guidance, Community Connectors & Haawa

We support our clients in taking steps to improve their wellbeing, our services also act as the building blocks for a secure foundation that will develop into strong roots as they grow and reach their full potential.

Highlights



800+

People engaged with our Haawa Domestic Abuse services and workshops



5000

Families were supported in schools with communication, translation, workshops and advice



200

SEND families engaged and were supported across several schools, which included stay and play sessions for children and spa sessions for parents



1600+

Through our Community Connectors project, we have had 1600+ appointments and wraparound services for clients

Referrals for **Community Connectors** has **DOUBLED** since last year



3500+

We have assisted and supported 3500+ clients through our Advice & Guidance services



1800

As part of our Flourishing Communities project, we ran 12 successful events around women's health and GP care. Engaging and reaching 1800 people across the borough



236

Young girls were engaged with and attended 45+ sessions over the year



78

We taught 78 hours of personalised ESOL classes over the year



30

We delivered 30 cycling classes to develop women's confidence with learning to cycle on roads



Our Hubs and Centers

Our delivery model provides a comprehensive holistic hug of wrap-around support, addressing community needs by seamlessly connecting activities and services across two centers. The two centers we operate from are Mayfield Well-being Hub and Chicksand Nursery; and we provide the following services:

Mayfield Well-being Hub

- Advice, Information and Guidance for local residents
- Women's Skills and confidence building
- Personalised support in the community (including GP and NHS visits)
- Support with housing, debt, money, employment and more
- Advice and access to support services for those experiencing domestic abuse
- Providing research on health inequalities for minorities accessing and using health care services
- Community meals and food bank for the vulnerable living in Tower Hamlets
- Hooyo East community food enterprise to tackle food inequalities



Young learners' education and well-being

- Children's center providing pre-school learning and development for children aged 2-5
- Hiddo Girls Youth Club providing weekly sessions to young females aged 10-19 to learn and develop new skills
- Young People's programme providing coaching, educational services, sports, arts, creative activities for children and young people as well as information sessions on keeping safe
- Summer scheme activities to inspire young learners, helping them to make friends and be active and eat healthy in a safe space



Young learners' education and well-being

Chicksand Preschool & Nursery

Chicksand has experienced impressive growth, seeing an increase of intake of 467%, of which is 29% with SEND, with plans to welcome more by September 2024. In response, we're preparing to recruit additional staff and transition to full-time operations. Our innovative approach includes themed age groups, a thriving Forest School Curriculum, and a beautifully enhanced learning environment with new resources and a sensory area.

We currently have free spaces available for local families, including those on low income. Please contact us at chicksandmanager@wit.org.uk or on 020 73750488 for more information and an application pack.



Morpeth School Community Engagement

Our partnership at Morpeth School successfully fostered community engagement through events held, where the Somali community showcased homemade dishes, demonstrating high demand for cultural cuisine. Over the academic year, we supported 48 pupils and their families, organised coffee mornings attended by an increasing number of parents each term, and facilitated various meetings between the school and families, thus strengthening community ties.



Maangaar

The Maangaar Community Project launched with workshops, support groups, and activities, engaging dozens of families and fostering a strong network for those with SEND needs in Tower Hamlets. Highlights included a December taster session distributing free bikes and toys, SEND sports sessions, coffee mornings at local schools to gather parent feedback, and a self-care day for mothers. These initiatives have strengthened community ties and provided essential resources for families.



Hiddo Youth Provision

The Hiddo Youth Provision successfully engaged with 100+ young people through a range of workshops, events, and outings aimed at personal development, community safety, and creative expression. Feedback showed increased knowledge, personal growth, and enjoyment among participants, solidifying the group's positive impact on youth empowerment and community engagement.



Summer Programme

We successfully connected with 42 young people over six weeks, offering workshops and trips that focused on personal development, safety, and cultural education. Feedback was highly positive, with many participants expressing how much they valued the sessions and asking for more summer programmes in the future.



“Coming to the session is the highlight of the week for me,,



“I liked the sessions,,

Mayfield Well-being Hub



Advice & Guidance

Our Information, Advice, and Guidance service supports housing, financial, and health needs in English, Somali, and Sylheti, offering vital access for language-barriered residents.

Thanks to Propel and LBTH Funding and collaboration with a local legal advice centre, we also have an in-house trainee solicitor to better address clients' legal needs.

This partnership has significantly enhanced our ability to provide targeted, comprehensive support to the community.

Haawa

The project successfully engaged over 800 individuals from Somali and BME (Black & Ethnic Minority) communities in Tower Hamlets through outreach events, direct support services, and champion training. The project's culturally sensitive approach and strong community partnerships have made a significant impact in addressing domestic abuse and supporting vulnerable women.

“This is great, a lot of the women in our communities suffer in silence, so accessing this service would really help them”

Haawa

Community Connectors

The Community Connectors initiative effectively supports individuals with a range of mental health conditions, working collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams that include consultants, occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, and

third-sector charities. Overall, the Community Connectors project has fostered a compassionate and responsive environment, significantly enhancing the well-being and support for those with mental health needs in Tower Hamlets.



ESOL Programme

The ESOL Programme successfully engaged and delivered classes, with the attendees showing a strong commitment to improving their English language skills. Overall, the programme has fostered a supportive learning environment that empowers women to improve their language skills for personal and professional growth.

Flourishing Communities

This project has made a significant impact by addressing key health issues identified by the community, including cervical screening, maternity, and menopause. Through the creation of learning sets and a dedicated Health Literacy Programme, we have empowered individuals with the knowledge to make informed health decisions.

“Thank you for this, I know someone who might need this information”

Haawa Event

Hooyo East Community Kitchen

Hooyo East, a social enterprise aimed at tackling food inequalities while supporting the charity's long-term sustainability, operates as a community-driven catering service, offering traditional Somali cuisine for events, food delivery, and in-house catering. The initiative has been instrumental in funding our community kitchen and food bank, while also providing valuable training and

employment opportunities for women in the borough. Having passed a successful food inspection in September 2023, Hooyo East is now set to become an independent entity, central to WIT's five-year strategic plan, ensuring scalability and continued financial sustainability.

If you are interested in our catering service then please contact us on hooyoeast@wit.org.uk



“The takeaway that gives back”

Fuul Baaskeelkaaga - Get on your Bike Cycling & Walking Project

The project lead has been carefully designing safe and accessible routes for participants, while actively engaging local women as volunteers and advocates. These women serve as ambassadors, raising awareness and encouraging wider community involvement.

“The cycling class was fantastic! I never thought I'd learn how to ride a bike so quickly, but within the first lesson, I was already cycling... The instructors were lovely, and the entire experience was comfortable and uplifting. I look forward to every session.”





Tower Hamlets Housing

WIT collaborates with Tower Hamlets Housing to provide vital support to local tenants, particularly Somali families facing language barriers.

With two housing advisors, WIT offers face-to-face services at Tower Hamlets Town Hall and Mayfield Centre, assisting with tenancy issues, rent inquiries, repairs, and more.



“Women Inclusive Team is a God sent organisation with highly supportive staff. May Allah (God) bless Safia and her team for dedicating themselves in assisting the vulnerable residents. I do not think I will ever get to resolve the issues I had with my home and council tax if it wasn't for WIT. Thank you, you always work tirelessly to support us.”

Case Study

Supporting a Vulnerable Tenant Through Council Tax Issues

S (real name not provided for confidentiality), a Somali elderly woman with limited English proficiency, faced significant challenges in resolving an issue related to her Council Tax. Following a separation from her husband, S continued to live in their shared home while her ex-husband moved out. Despite this, his name remained on the tenancy agreement as a joint tenant and on the Voting Register at the property. As a result, S was unable to secure a Council Tax reduction, as the records indicated that her ex-husband was still residing at the address.

For months, S made repeated attempts to resolve the issue by contacting the Council Tax department, with support from her family and neighbours. However, these efforts were unsuccessful due to the outdated information held by the Council.

During an appointment with our organization to address a separate issue concerning a window repair, S mentioned her ongoing difficulties with securing a Council Tax reduction. She expressed frustration and exhaustion, feeling unsure of how to proceed. Recognizing her situation, I advised S that she would need to update her tenancy records with her Housing Officer (HO) to reflect her change in circumstances before the Council Tax department could reassess her eligibility.



At her request, I contacted the Housing Officer on her behalf, explaining her situation. The Housing Officer promptly arranged a tenancy review, visiting S at her home to confirm her current living arrangements. After confirming the details with her ex-husband, the Housing Officer removed his name from the tenancy agreement. I also assisted S in updating her household information with the Voting Registration Office.

With the tenancy and registration details corrected, S was finally able to submit a successful claim for Council Tax reduction, which was granted shortly after. She expressed immense relief and gratitude for the support provided, acknowledging the positive impact of our services.

This case highlights the importance of personalized support for vulnerable individuals navigating complex administrative systems. By providing tailored advice and direct assistance, we were able to help S resolve her issue, improving her financial stability and peace of mind.



Trustees



Amina Abdi



Emily Xiao-Fang Teh



Natasha Hankel Spice



Richa Ellis



Sabaad Hassan



Sado Omer (Chair)



Sara Custer



Zaynab Ali

Our Funders

Our sincere thanks to all our funders and partners.

Ashaadibi Centre

Barnardo's Health Alliance

Barts Charity

Buzzacott

Broadgate

Canal River Trust

Charitable Giving Benevity

Canal River Trust

Canary Wharf Group

City Of London

Clarion Housing/Futures

Compass Wellbeing

East End Community

Foundation (EECF)

East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT)

Family Hubs

Ethnicity Minority Network

GP Care Group

Good Things Foundation

Groundworks

HAF fund (LBTH)

HATs Group

Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation (IICF)

Foundation

Limehouse Project

Lloyds Bank Foundation

London Borough of TowerHamlets

Maryam Muslim Centre

Mayor's Fund

Metropolitan Police

Morpeth school

MOPAC

Numbi Arts

Peabody Housing

Poplar Harca

Public Health

RSPH

Solace

SENDIASS

THCVS

Tower Hamlets GP Care Group

Tower Hamlets Early Years

Tower Hamlets Schools

TikTok

Transport for London

UBELE



“

“Hashu Waa Halbowlaha Dalka”

“The she-camel is the heart of the land”

In Memory of Mohamed Ibrahim Warsame
(Hadraawi) (1943-2022)

”



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Support Women's Inclusive Team

Your generous support plays a vital role in enabling our charity to carry out essential services.