

NILAARI



a g e n c y

Annual Report 2024-25

Nilaari means to have self-worth and value

Delivering Hope

Nilaari is an African word which means to have self-value

Current Staff Team

Beverley Forbes - Community Research Coordinator

Christopher Bezzina - Recovery Navigator (based in North Bristol Hub)

Clare Mustafa - Client Allocation/Administration Officer

Ingrid Sinclair - Office Assistant (Volunteer)

Janice Traille - Mental Health Practitioner

Jean Smith MBE - Chief Executive Officer

Lavi Virk - Mental Health Practitioner

Michael Earle - Mental Health Practitioner

Okera Stevenson - Recovery Navigator (based Central Bristol Hub)

Ruby Osunolo - Operations Manager

Sophy Wynne - Senior Recovery Navigator (based in South Bristol Hub)

Zara Barnett - Mental Health Practitioner

Therapists

Addam Merali-Younger

Ailsa Fineron

Azim Noorani

Azmeena Haq

Bex Onaraye

Celena Lewis

Dan Li Dunford

Dee McKenzie

Ester Kelly Levy

Isla Chan

Jessica Onono

Kila Konje

Lynn Mareno

Mansher Singh

Michael Francis

Nikki Gooden

Ranjit Kaur

Yasmin Ali

Nilaari uses the terms racially minoritised communities to refer to groups who experience discrimination and are assigned a lower social status than a dominant group on the basis of race, culture, colour, or nationality not solely skin colour.

Our mission is to provide timely high quality and culturally responsive mental health interventions to racially minoritised communities

Our vision is that racially minoritised communities will have timely and equitable mental health support and treatment

A message from the Chair

This has been a year of significant achievement and progress. As I reflect on the past year, one moment stands out in particular: successfully securing the prestigious GSK award. We were honoured to be selected as one of only 10 organisations from over 600 applications across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

During the year, the Board has remained mindful of the challenges presented by the current operating environment. In response to ongoing financial uncertainty, changes in NHS policy, and wider system transitions, we have taken deliberate and considered steps to ensure the organisation remains resilient, adaptable, and well-positioned to continue delivering high-quality services.

In particular, we remain steadfast in our commitment to addressing the inequalities experienced by racially minoritised communities in relation to mental health, ensuring this remains central to our purpose and decision-making.

To support this, we worked with an external consultant to develop a new three-year strategic plan. While this provides a clear direction, we recognise the need for flexibility given the pace of change. As such, the plan is reviewed regularly as part of our ongoing Board discussions, with formal quarterly reviews to ensure it remains relevant and responsive.

This year has also seen growth within our staff team, including the appointment of a new Operations Manager. They bring a strong commitment to addressing inequalities and are a passionate advocate for improving outcomes for individuals with neurodivergence.

It is remarkable to reflect that, less than two years ago, we began to engage more actively with universities in the field of research. Since the

recruitment of our Community Research Coordinator, this work has expanded significantly, far beyond initial expectations. Through creative, inclusive, and community-led approaches, we are now capturing the voices of individuals who are too often excluded from research and policy development.

The insights generated are already demonstrating clear value and will play a critical role in shaping more equitable policies and practice aimed at reducing mental health inequalities and improving outcomes for marginalised communities.

Over the past year, we have seen our small charity step confidently into significant opportunities and thrive. This success is a testament to the dedication of both our paid staff and volunteers, and it is a source of great pride for the Board.

While we are proud of what has been achieved, we remain committed to building on this momentum and continuing to grow our impact.

It is vitally important that I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all our funders, to those who have made one-off donations, and to those who have supported the organisation in many other ways beyond financial contribution. Your support is invaluable, and we are deeply appreciative of the trust and belief you place in our work.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my vibrant and committed Board colleagues for their consistent, thoughtful, and vital contributions throughout the year. Their leadership, challenge, and support continue to strengthen the organisation and our impact.

Georgia Ramsay

Chair



Chief Executive Report

I begin by reflecting on what has been a remarkable year for the organisation. Winning the GSK award has been truly transformative, propelling us into new and exciting spaces. This recognition has significantly increased interest from organisations seeking to work with us, and the opportunities that have followed have been both energising and affirming.

It has also been a pleasure to settle into our newly refurbished and redesigned ground floor space, made possible through funding from the Community Resilience Fund. This enhanced environment is already strengthening how we deliver our work and engage with the communities we serve.

This year has delivered substantial progress, with measurable impact across research, community engagement, and service development. As a partner led by Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust, we contribute to the delivery of services supporting people with mental health needs across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire.

We remain committed to the principle that addressing health inequalities cannot be achieved in isolation. Our long-standing partnerships with trusted community organisations including the Somali Resource Centre, Dehk Hall, the Chinese Wellbeing Centre, and a range of local faith-based groups continue to be central to our approach. These partnerships ensure that engagement is rooted in trust, cultural understanding, and lived experience.

In response to the well-documented reality that adults living with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) are significantly more likely to die prematurely and to

the deeply concerning local deaths of racially minoritised males with SMI we have strengthened our partnerships with local NHS services. This work directly addresses persistent inequalities and aims to improve both access to care and health outcomes.

Our collaborations with universities, both locally and nationally, have further expanded our reach, supporting the mental health and wellbeing of students and staff of colour.

Just under two years ago, we took a significant step into the research field. Our research programme, funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research through the Research Engagement Network initiative, centres the voices of racially minoritised communities. This year, we led and completed three key pieces of research: Experiences of Caribbean & South Asian living with Chronic Pain, African Caribbean men and health-seeking behaviour; and the impact of sudden death on Black communities.

These studies provide compelling evidence of persistent inequalities in mental health services and set clear priorities for action. Their findings are already shaping service design and strengthening the training of GPs and other health professionals across BNSSG, with plans to expand this work into Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon, and Wiltshire.

By combining research, lived experience, and strategic partnerships, we are developing scalable, community-led approaches that improve access, build trust, and strengthen long-term wellbeing outcomes.

Our online and in-person peer group initiatives continue to demonstrate strong reach and impact, including Black Women Pause, Exhale Creative

Wellbeing, and Black Men Talk Health. This year, with funding from the ICB, we launched the Women of Colour Talk Health initiative. The programme delivered five culturally responsive sessions that went beyond physical health, challenging taboos, addressing myths, and creating space to explore spiritual wellbeing. All sessions were delivered by qualified Black female health professionals.

Each of the stand alone sessions were consistently well attended by women of all ages. Participants reported increased confidence to ask questions, greater understanding of their bodies, and a stronger willingness to seek support.

The Board's continued investment in workforce wellbeing and development including regular external supervision, training delivered by St Mungo's and

the Training Exchange, alongside wellbeing initiatives such as group singing sessions has played a vital role in nurturing a team that feels supported, valued, and able to bring their best to the work. These are not simply activities, but expressions of care for those of us that hold this work together day in, day out.

It is also important to recognise, with real gratitude, that none of this would be possible without the commitment, compassion, and resilience of my exceptional paid and unpaid staff colleagues. Their dedication continues to be the heartbeat of everything we achieve.

Jean Smith



Annual Review

Across the 2024–2025 period, Nilaari Agency continued to strengthen its position as a trusted provider of timely culturally responsive mental health support.

Operationally, this period has centred on consolidating and enhancing our internal digital infrastructure, enabling the delivery of high-quality, person-

centred services while expanding our reach and deepening insight across communities, localities, and systems.

The past 12 months have been defined by a clear focus on strengthening wellbeing, amplifying voices, and driving change.

At a Glance

1766

Requests for support across phone, drop-in, email, and website

1378+

Individuals supported through referrals

31+

Workshops and peer support sessions delivered

419+

People attended one or more groups or workshops

Our Impact

We continue to aim to deliver timely, meaningful, person-centred support that empowers individuals and strengthens communities.

87%

Felt more empowered and better able to cope

81%

Reported improved wellbeing

74%

Gained confidence in managing their own wellbeing

86%

Felt more confident accessing support services

This means our services are not only reaching racially minoritised people in need they are creating lasting change:

- Individuals are developing resilience and independence
- Barriers to accessing support are being reduced
- Communities are becoming more informed and connected

This year, we placed community insight at the heart of our work:

- Delivered 3 in-depth research projects
- Engaged racially minoritised communities to better understand their experiences
- Amplified underrepresented voices in health and wellbeing conversations

This strategic investment has strengthened our ability to:

- Deliver efficient, responsive, and data-informed services
- Improve access, engagement, and outcomes for the communities we serve
- Maintain strong governance, accountability, and resilience

As a result, Nilaari remains well-positioned to adapt to sector changes, scale impact, and continue delivering inclusive, community-informed support.

Ruby Osunsola
Operations Manager

Treasurer's Report For the Year Ended 31 March 2025

I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The charity recorded total income of £602,926 (2024: £745,118) and total expenditure of £480,901 (2024: £558,415), resulting in a net surplus of £122,025. While income decreased compared to the previous year, careful financial management ensured the organisation remained stable and sustainable.

Income was generated from a range of sources, including grants (£309,319), service level agreements (£169,173), and earned income (£72,998), demonstrating a diversified funding base.

Expenditure remained focused on delivering our charitable objectives, with the majority spent on staff costs (£354,649) and programme delivery, supported by essential operational costs.

The charity's total funds increased to £1,101,585, with unrestricted reserves of £712,414, strengthening financial resilience. This is well above the reserves policy target of approximately six months of operating costs (£240,450), providing a strong buffer against uncertainty.

Cash balances improved to £684,370, reflecting positive cash flow and effective financial management during the year.

In conclusion, despite a challenging financial environment, the charity remains in a strong financial position, with healthy reserves and sufficient resources to support ongoing operations and future growth.

Kingsley Ujah
Treasurer

Statement of Financial Activities

Income & Expenditure Account

Year ended 31st March 2025

			2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Income from:				
Donations & Legacies	48,536	-	48,536	1,666
Charitable activities				
Grants	2,500	306,819	309,319	448,721
Service level agreements	-	169,173	169,173	217,841
Earned income	72,998	-	72,998	75,300
Other Income	2,901	-	2,901	1,590
Total Income & Endowments	126,935	475,992	602,926	745,118
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	45,081	435,820	480,901	558,415
Total Expenditure	45,081	435,820	480,901	558,415
Net Income / (Expenditure)	81,853	40,172	122,025	186,703
Gains on revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Total funds at 1st April	872,273	107,287	979,560	792,857
Total funds at 31st March	954,126	147,460	1,101,585	979,560

INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

			2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Service Level Agreements:				
Bristol Mental Health	-	169,173	169,173	217,841
Second Steps	-	-	-	-
	-	169,173	169,173	217,841

	£	£	£	£
Earned Income:				
Professional services	69,618	-	69,618	116,524
Provision of Training	-	-	-	2,130
Room hire	3,380	-	3,380	7,820
	72,998	-	72,998	126,474

INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES continues

			2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Grants:				
Second Steps	-	5,000	5,000	-
Bristol City Council - Advice & Mental Health	-	-	-	29,000
Age UK Wazee Project	-	-	-	29,075
Barton Hill Project	-	-	-	50,000
Quartet Foundation DAWTA Project	-	-	-	4,940
NHS ICB Community Workers Partnership	-	138,793	138,793	160,264
NHS ICB SMI Project	-	100,797	100,797	50,312
DMCS - Lloyds Foundation	2,500	-	2,500	25,000
Missing Link	-	50,184	50,184	62,730
REND - Research	-	-	-	20,000
National MIND	-	445	445	-
CRF Capital Funding	-	11,600	11,600	17,400
	2,500	306,819	309,319	448,721



DIRECT CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE

			2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Charitable Activities:				
REND - Research costs	-	358	358	-
NHS ICB Community Link Workers Costs	-	60,000	60,000	60,000
Quartet Foundation DAWTA Project costs	-	2,985	2,985	800
Barton Hill Project costs	-	4,216	4,216	15,000
Wazee Project costs	-	-	-	25
National MIND costs	-	400	400	-
CRF Capital costs	-	5,412	5,412	93,249
Salaries & wages	1,432	346,908	348,340	333,862
Pension costs	-	7,742	7,742	7,056
Recruitment costs	145	-	145	407
Staff supervision and training	1,869	7,800	9,669	7,632
Volunteer expenses	1,079	-	1,079	1,398
Donations paid to clients	500	-	500	200
Support Costs				
Premises, rent and utilities	4,018	-	4,018	3,847
Book keeping	3,192	-	3,192	3,183
Repairs & renewals	2,379	-	2,379	4,944
Stationery, print, post, IT	11,586	-	11,586	7,230
Subscriptions	35	-	35	160
Travel expenses	1,777	-	1,777	2,432
Staff entertainment	-	-	-	310
HR Support	-	-	-	-
Legal & professional fees	120	-	120	88
Bank Charges	151	-	151	151
Bad debt written off	780	-	780	(831)
Depreciation	11,293	-	11,293	11,014
Sundries	696	-	696	2,318
Insurance	3,249	-	3,249	3,057
Governance Costs	780	-	780	883
	45,081	435,820	480,901	558,415



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Trustees in office during the year:

G Ramsey - Chair
E Wride – Vice Chair
K Ujah - Treasurer
N Pascal
R Veira
V Watkis

Book Keepers

Mendip Accounting Solution Ltd
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187 Mendip Road
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Independent Examiner

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Linden Accountants
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Patrons

Roger Griffith MBE, Sherry Eugene
Hart and Peaches Golding OBE

Bankers

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