



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Walsall Black Sisters Collective



Charity No: 1009687



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Charity No: 1009687



Introduction

WBSC is a registered charity established July 1986. Our main aim is to provide a community-based provision for the deprived BME and wider communities within the borough of Walsall.

Having been established for over 30 years now, we have a proven track record and play an integral role in meeting the health and social needs of local people, ensuring that services are appropriate and sensitive in meeting their identified needs.

We work in partnership with statutory agencies and voluntary organisations; ensuring that the services we provide demonstrate equality and that cultural needs are being met.

We are an organisation that is led by the community for the community. We advocate and ensure that local people are directly involved in decision-making processes which affect their lives.

U.S.P.

WBSC provides community activities to empower and develop deprived BME communities from various ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds in Walsall, addressing inequality and bringing long-lasting change to encourage community cohesion, cultural respect and a diverse community we can all be proud of.



Our Vision

A Walsall that values diversity, is caring, supporting and addresses the needs of communities

Mission Statement

To successfully provide an open quality service to the wider community of Walsall, enabling a better quality of life.



“Making a difference in Walsall”

Chair's Report



Maureen Scott-Douglas

I would like to welcome you to this AGM of 2019. This year to date has been really good, although we know we have challenges ahead.

We are in the final year of our main source of funding, which is coming to an end July 2020. As time goes by it becomes increasingly difficult to identify funding for an organisation to run. On the bright side we still have a lot of opportunities, which we are seeking. We still haven't fully utilised the newly arrived communities, especially the women. However, through projects like our Sister-to-Sister Women's Support Group and Victims Survival Project, some of these community members have been supported, have engaged in the activities of the organisation and have volunteered.

Our older people's service has been going really well and is supporting itself, as is our young people and after-school service. 2019 has seen a large increase of awareness with Windrush. We held our own celebration during the Summer. Sadly, we weren't given any money for the application to the Home Office. However, Walsall Council stepped in and filled the gap.

I still believe that our organisation is changing and we have to continue to stay ahead, especially around issues of social media. I think it may be a good idea if the organisation elected someone with a responsibility for social media. We still have opportunity around issues of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. I have previously outlined some of the areas that I think that we could go

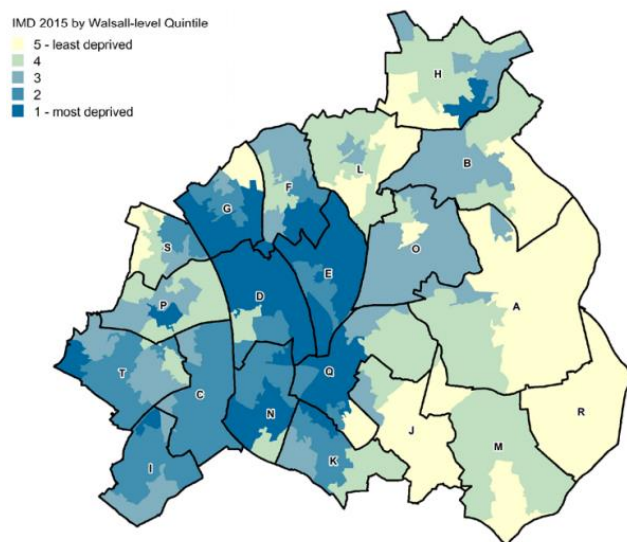
into around social enterprise. I believe the time has come where we have to think a little bit more strategically to secure our future.

I would like to thank the staff who have been extremely loyal to the organisation for their continued work and effort. We have been able to examine some of our policies this year and as a result we've been able to extend annual leave and also give a little something back within a very tight budget. I hope the organisation is able to continue with the work that's been going on over the past 30 plus years. We are hoping to celebrate our anniversary at some point in the future. My hope also is that WBSC continues to move from strength to strength.

Deprivation in Walsall

Deprivation is deeply entrenched in Walsall and had worsened during the recession, although this has recently improved.

The following map groups the LSOAs into quintiles ranking them from most to least deprived. This also displays the gulf in deprivation geographically, between east & west.



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With deprivation the way it is, the work of WBSC and other voluntary sector groups are crucial in Walsall.

Chief Officer's Report



Maureen Lewis

2018-19 has been a very busy year. This has only been made possible with an excellent staff team. Thanks to our staff, who have worked extremely hard in promoting the work of the organisation, developing

existing services as well as developing new areas of work. They have definitely worked extremely hard, which has got the organisation “out there” in a more positive and professional light.

With that said this year we launched our new website www.walsallbsc.co.uk.



rebranded our logo and are making plans for the long-term sustainability and rebranding of the organisation.

This year has seen some new areas of work:

Victims Survival Project – with funds secured from the Police Crime Commissioner

The Victims Survival Project was a great success exceeding targets and meeting outcomes set. It provided support, advice and guidance to victims of crime within the priority categories of domestic abuse, sexual abuse, hate crimes, forced marriages and Modern-Day Slavery.

The project supported victims by providing free one-to-one counselling sessions, therapeutic support to assist clients to refocus and move on with their lives, mentoring, and group work through the Women Empowerment Workshops. The project also supported victims to engage in society by encouraging them to volunteer or attend support **groups** and other local activities.

The cases dealt with have been very complex particularly those around sexual abuse and Modern-Day Slavery. The trauma experienced by victims requires a lot of time and resources because of the emotional and psychological trauma. We can say the work done by the organisation has been phenomenal. The women who were victims in this area, showed vast improvements, expressing deeply their thanks and gratitude for the support given. They showed improved confidence and self-esteem, learning to trust again in society, moving on to have a more fulfilled life.

It has been a time of great learning for the organisation, dealing with areas we have never had to deal with in the past. However, we have learnt the importance of multidisciplinary working, because no single organisation has all the tools and expertise to fully support individuals' needs. The holistic approach working with partner organisations has made this so much easier.

The project was very successful in engaging with partner organisations. They included:

- Changing Lives

- Black Country Women's Aid
- Department of Work & Pensions (DWP)
- WM Police
- Fountain Solicitors
- Aven House Women's Refuge
- Aaina Community Hub

One Love Event was an event put on in partnership by WBSC, Walsall for All, Walsall Housing Group, One Walsall and the Community, Equality and Cohesion Team at Walsall Council.

It took place in Walsall town centre on Saturday, August 10, bringing different communities together to celebrate the work and contributions of the African-Caribbean communities in the town.



Despite poor weather throughout the day, the event was well attended, with those attending also enjoying traditional food and refreshments. Richard Clarke from One Love Community Music and Arts was the compere for the day. Thanks to Moses Whyte who was on hand to give a talk on being an active Black member in Walsall and making a difference in your community.

There were performances from groups such as Evan & IWAY Reggae band, Mighty Jamma Steel

Band, Brum Dynasty Knights (BDK), DJ Phil, Malachi Edwards, Black Country Community Choir, Jeremy Grant and Aston Performing Arts Academy, with APAA closing the event with a lively performance.



The event forms part of Walsall for All's vision to create integrated, empowered and inclusive communities where people from all backgrounds come together to celebrate what they have in common.





Women Empowerment Workshops

"I feel inspired and motivated to do more and chase my dreams, as I have realised there is so much more to discover about me."

"The programme has been interesting and I have enjoyed meeting new people."

"It has been inspirational and encouraging."

The above quotes were written by some of the women who took part in the Walsall Empowering Women Workshop in May 2019 which were held over five days at Walsall College – The Hub.

Women from different areas of the borough came together at the workshops to learn how to build self-confidence and self-esteem, recognise existing skills, identify personal and career aspirations and explore entrepreneurial opportunities.

On the last day, the women celebrated their progress and received certificates to recognise what they had achieved. They also heard from Inspirational Speakers who encouraged the women to move forward in confidence more than ever before, to take on new challenges and opportunities for the development of their long-term future.

The Empowering Women Workshops related to the Walsall for All priority area **Working and Contributing Together**. WBSC in partnership with Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) and Aaina Community Hub came together as partners to support women desiring to access employment, education and training opportunities, in the local community and to better understand their specific needs.



The workshops were delivered by our Social Development & Training Officer, Sharron Thompson and have proven a great success. There are another four planned up to January 2020.



- ◆ Sister to Sister Women's Support Group
- ◆ Health & Wellbeing Conference
- ◆ SEED500Soup Kitchen for Homeless
- ◆ Volunteering
- ◆ Afro's Windrush Day Celebration Event
- ◆ One Love Community Caribbean Event
- ◆ Walsall Women Empowerment Workshops
- ◆ Taste the Cultures of Walsall

Soup Kitchen

The soup kitchen is a regular feature and is held every last Friday of the month, manned totally by dedicated volunteers from WBSC, Bethel Lighthouse, West Bromwich Seven Day Adventists Church and others. It has certainly been a life-line to those who are homeless or in low income families.

We receive regular donations from our local Tesco Store, who provides fruit, vegetables and bakery items; as well as items donated by members of the public and our volunteers



Services & Projects delivered over the year include:

- ◆ BME Housing Floating Support Project
- ◆ Older Peoples' Day Care
- ◆ Mental Health & Wellbeing Support Group.
- ◆ Counselling
- ◆ After School Provision
- ◆ Victims Survival Project
- ◆ Community Day Trip to Bournemouth.

Future Plans

With our main funding source coming to an end in 2020, I am working with Evadne Lewin, Project Co-ordinator to evaluate our existing Big Lottery funded project, as well as carrying out a feasibility study on future needs within health and social care.

One of the main areas of concern is around befriending, tackling loneliness and isolation, which has been reported as a national epidemic. The results of both the evaluation event and feasibility study will form part of the evidence of need for our next funded project.

We are still in the process of becoming a Community Interest Company (CIC) which brings protection to the organisation and scope to be more creative in our development. Our long-term plan is to develop services that are chargeable; increasing our self-generated income to become self-sufficient and not be reliant on grants.

Housing Floating Support Project Report



Eve Lewin,

Housing Floating Support Officer



Elderly Day Care & Mental Health Service

The Tree of Life Elderly Day Care and Mental Health Service has grown in membership, and service users enjoy the wide range of holistic activities they engage in. Over the year we have delivered the following activities:

- Carers awareness event
- Visit to Akamba Heritage centre
- Bring back memories event
- Visit to Holly Bush Garden centre
- Visit to Birmingham Botanical garden
- Cervical Cancer awareness
- Black History celebration
- Exchange visits at centres in Birmingham and Wolverhampton
- Annual Christmas celebration
- Brain Health workshop
- Memory project
- Vegan healthy eating workshop
- Dementia awareness day
- Falls prevention exercise sessions
- Healthy eating cooking session
- Music therapy workshop

Project Progress

The Housing Floating Support Project has continued to grow from strength to strength, supporting the health and social care needs of the community. Over the year we have consistently outreached and raised the profile of WBSC through events, conferences and general publications. We have learnt the importance of multidisciplinary working, because no single organisation has all the tools and expertise to fully support individuals and community needs.

Our service users, staff and volunteers were saddened by the sudden death of Tony Flash, who was a committed and reliable worker, who always gave 100% in all aspects of his work. As a mark of respect to Tony we held a memorial service at the Elderly Day Care to allow our service users to express thoughts, feelings and reflect on the good memories.





Sister-to-Sister Women's Group

Our women's support group 'Sister-to-Sister' continues to grow and develop, enabling women of all ages to meet on a monthly basis to support and encourage each other in whatever situation they are facing. The women engage in activities such as yoga sessions, bowling, healthy eating and going out for meals in order to forge friendships. We have a trained counsellor attached to the project, and to date five women have benefitted from the counselling service provided.

Befriending Service

The project has progressed extremely well. It was a little slow during year one. However, due to constant promotion at community events and reinforcing the fact that WBSC is an inclusive organisation, we are now receiving a greater number of referrals from MCW Hubs and other organisations. These include: Old Hall People's Partnership, Manor Farm Community Association, One Walsall, Bloxwich Community Partnership and the Blind centre. We have reached out to a wide range of people and communities that are desperately in need.

The number of people requiring the service has exceeded our expectation. During 2018-19 we befriended over 100 people who have experienced loneliness and isolation. With this demand we have had to recruit additional

sessional workers and volunteers. Each worker provides face-to-face befriending visits to two individuals per day, three times a week. The work is very taxing because each befriender spends at least one hour with each client. It has been difficult to provide regular weekly visits to every individual client on our register; we work to accommodate fortnightly visits, while some receive a ring-around telephone service, either through us or linking into other partner organisations.

The feedback from beneficiaries has been positive, with many requesting more regular visits, which currently is not possible due to lack of resources. Overall, the service users really enjoy and appreciate the effort befrienders make to make them feel valued and less lonely.

Partnerships

We hosted a very successful Older People's Health and Community Safety Conference on 20th June, with the aim of raising awareness of the all the health and community safety services available in Walsall. We had keynote speakers from various organisation as well as information stalls with lots of relevant information. Approximately 70 people attended, and feedback received was very positive.

Partnership working is key to meeting the changing needs of the communities in which we serve. Our relationship with partners has strengthened due to our reputation for delivering effective and efficient services over the many years our organisation has been active.



Challenges

The challenges we faced over the year were trying to cope with the number of face-to-face befriending visits that were required, and the lack of consistency from volunteers. However, we persevered, and recruited more workers and volunteers, providing training and mentoring support.

We also faced the challenge of changing people's perception that WBSC was not a service primarily for Black people. This barrier began to break down through consistent attendance at meetings and highlighting the ethos of the organisation as being inclusive and which can be accessed by all. Our close working relationship with Ahmadiyya Muslim Association has also helped to break down cultural barriers and encourage cohesive working.

Our new website now portrays an inclusive image of our organisation and our promotional material also reflects inclusivity.

Learning

WBSC has been running for over 33 years so we must be doing something right. However, there is always room for improvement. We possess a wealth of knowledge and expertise which can be

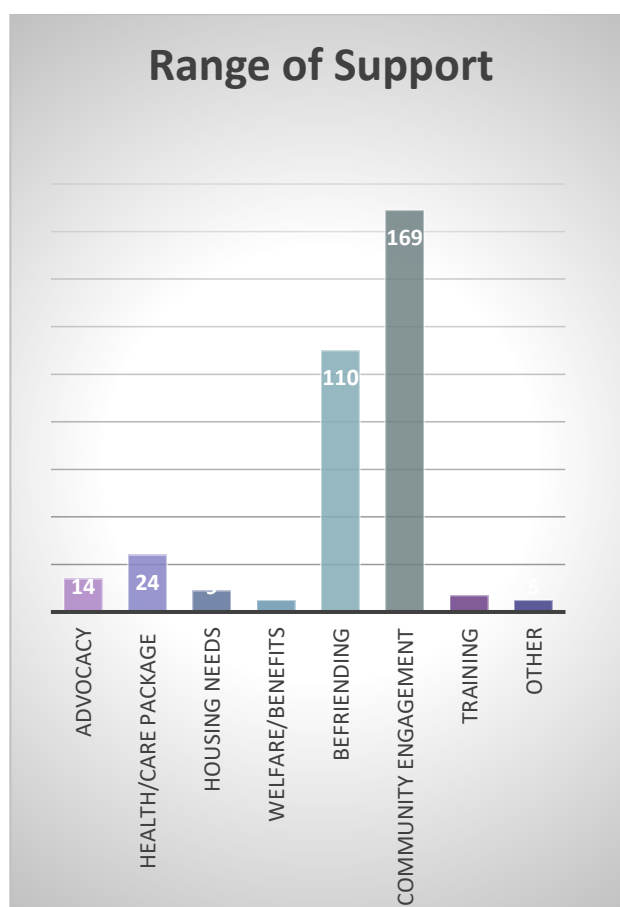
used to support other groups in their development; therefore, partnership working is the key.

Changes in the social and economic climate will see many essential services disappear and as a result we may receive more referrals to support more complex needs, therefore as a community organisation we have to be prepared for the future and put mechanisms in place to cope with the demand, also knowing our limitations.

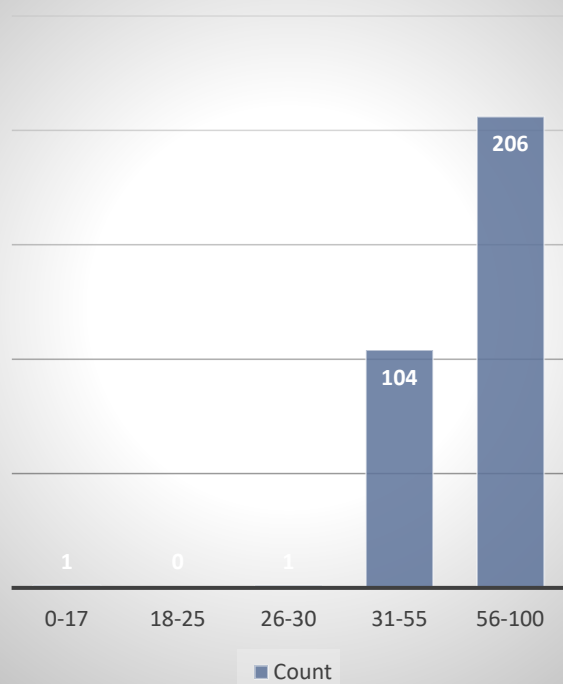
Way forward

The Housing Floating Support Project is in its final year and our Evaluation event will enable us to explore the differences/impact the project has made to people's lives and decide together the way forward.

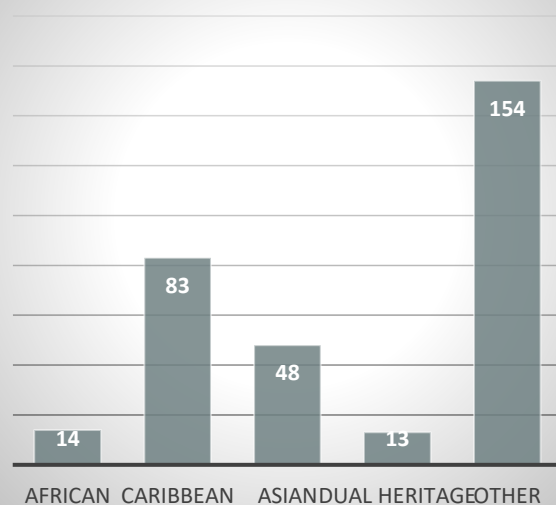
Evidence Impact



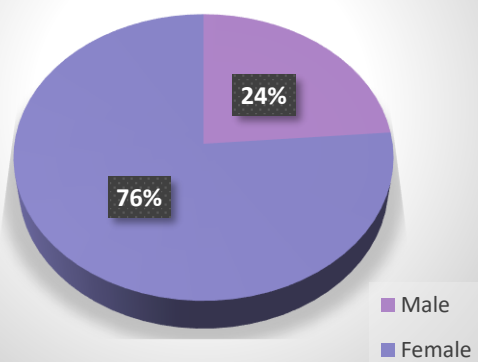
Age Range



Ethnic Origins



Percentage by Gender



After School Project Report



Kamilah Maynard

Project Co-ordinator

Since last year the number of children attending the After-School Club has remained the same. Previous years

has seen an increase, but although we did lose some, these have been replaced with new children. The increase in the number of schools we now collect from has contributed to the steady numbers. New schools we now collect from include Caldmore Primary and Palfrey Primary.

We recognized the need to expand our radius last year, using another transport service to meet their requests. The requirements have been met and the service is running fluently.



During this academic year we applied and were awarded a grant to do a healthy living program with the children. This involved healthy cooking classes, exercise, and educating the children

through play. We hosted a cooking class once a week, encouraging the children to participate in the process.



The children helped prepare the food and we did taster sessions increasing their confidence and developing knowledge of different ways to eat healthily. The children also took part in light exercise sessions, where they would take it in turns to lead the session if they desired to. One child who was taking karate lessons wanted to show the skills she gained each week, and the other children wanted to learn the moves, which was great for the program.



Throughout the programme we also took the children to the local parks each week for play exercise and physical activities.

This year we said goodbye to four children who have been attending the service since they were

in Infants, and have now transitioned to Secondary School and starting their new journey.

The drop off service continues, but there seems to be even less requirement for this service at present. A few parents are still enquiring regarding a breakfast club with morning school drop offs and holiday club services. We will continue to look into how this could be cost effective and benefit the business.

Prices

Our prices at the ASC will remain the same. We had a price increase last year September 2018 increasing the prices by 50p per hour. At the moment we have no interest in changing the prices.

Our initial registration fee is £10 for new customers and £5 for existing customers re-registering for the new academic year.

Drop offs =£6.50 (within the first hour)

3-4pm =£6.50

3-5pm =£7.50

3-6pm =£8.50

Late pick up =50p/min

New Term September 2019

This academic term we are now collecting from nine different schools, three of them being out of our normal service radius. With that we welcome back Abu Bakr and Whitehall Infants.

The main intake remains to be from Bluecoat Juniors, previously it was at Whitehall Juniors and Butts Primary.

Staff and volunteers

There is myself, Kamilah Maynard, Co-ordinator/Manager, Sabina Masih, Playworker, and our new team member Hezron Lewis, our Assistant Playworker, after the departure of Demari Roberts who worked with us from October 2018 until September 2019.

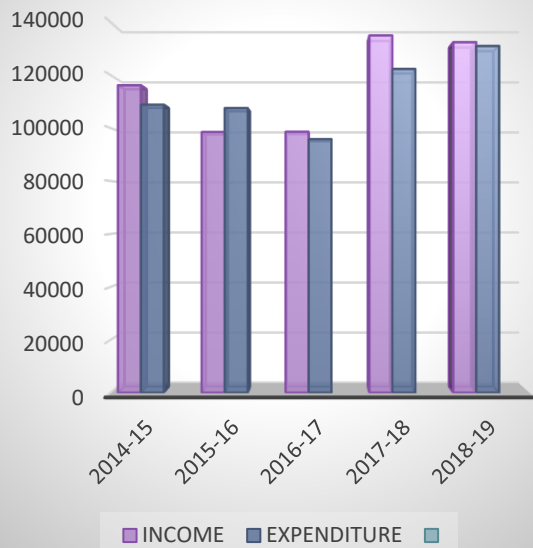
With the staff changes, the children are still settled in nicely, and the children demonstrate they feel safe and have built up positive relationships with all the staff. The staff team has also built positive relationships between them, which clearly reflects on the service provided.

We appointed a new mini bus driver Jim Davis, in October 2019 after the unfortunate recent passing of our driver Anthony Flash who will be sorely missed. Jim Davis is known to Black Sisters Collective and was already driving the mini bus for the day care service. We are happy to be able to fill this position promptly with a reliable familiar face to ensure we can still meet the standards of the pick-up and drop-off service relating to child safety, and how behaviour is managed on the mini bus.

WBSC's After School Club always welcomes volunteers and students to help develop work experience and/or childcare skills.

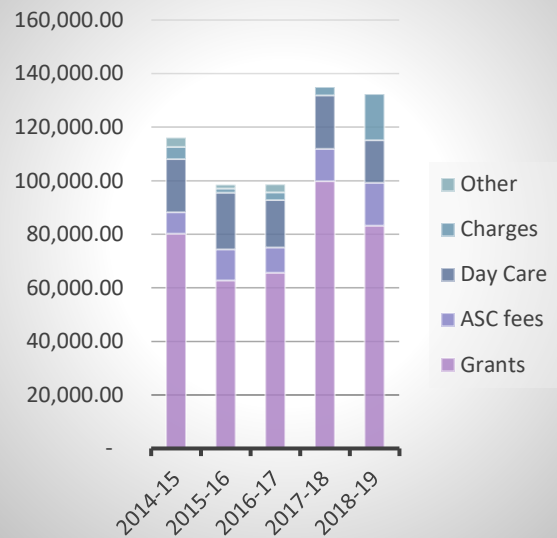
Financial Report 2018-19

Financial Report over 5 years

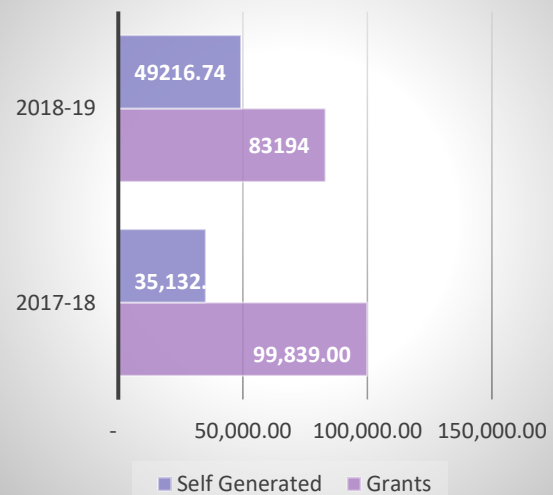


This year you will see that our overall income was down slightly. However, we have seen an increase to our self-generated income, this is a trend we want to work on so we are not totally reliant on grants for the long-term sustainable future of the organisation.

Types of Income



level of Income Generated



INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT April - March 2019

Income / receipts current accounting year	Balance brought forward 2018-19	
WBSA Accumulated Fund	-£10,810.20	£17,311.71
ASC fees	£0.00	£15,992.81
Day Care- Elderly	£3,285.99	£15,912.03
Making Connections Walsall	£230.00	£1,875.00
BIG Lottery	£5,195.66	£56,615.34
Safer Walsall Partnership	£325.00	£0.00
Public Health	£0.00	£2,691.56
Building Capabilities	£13,215.50	£4,026.45
Awards for All	£6,851.78	£0.00
Near Neighbours	£1,470.00	£0.00
Walsall Council	£0.00	£3,333.32
Victim Fund	£0.00	£14,653.08
Sub total	£19,763.73	£132,411.30

EXPENDITURE

Payroll	£89,777.99
Heat & Light	£809.23
Stationery	£1,853.53
Insurance	£4,037.48
Transport & Travel	£3,527.95
Repairs & Maintenance	£2,839.83
Recruitment	£56.00
Events	£4,522.59
Postage	£497.29
Professional fees	£5,419.30
Telephone	£2,166.77
Training	£2,568.02
Health and Safety	£1,657.61
Food	£4,170.81
Materials & Resource	£972.59
Volunteers Expenses	£1,581.74
Sundries/Misc.	£0.00
Marketing	£9.60
Printing	£403.36
Lease agreement	£543.72
Building - Maintenance/Utilities	£2,200.00
T.V Licence	£150.50
Room Hire	£500.00
Activities	£68.56
Cleaning/Maintenance	£123.66
Capital	£532.50
Sub total	£130,990.63

Surplus

£21,184.40

