



**Annual Report**  
April 2022 – March 2023



# Sufra: A definition (Pronounced 'Sof-rah')

An Arabic word for a spread that is laid on the ground for serving a meal to family and friends. The word embodies the spirit of sharing, hospitality and community, which is at the heart of all we do at Sufra NW London.

## Guest: Our definition

The term we use to describe our 'service users' or 'beneficiaries'.

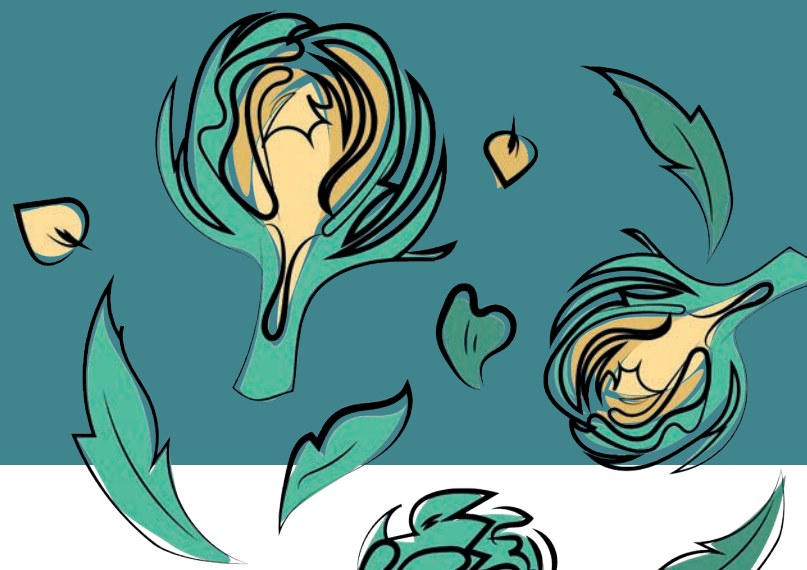
## About Sufra NW London

Sufra is a community food and support hub that provides a life-line to people in crisis – including families living in poverty, people seeking asylum or with refugee status, and people experiencing homelessness or social isolation. We provide them with the emergency aid and professional advice they need to survive, empower them to learn new skills and improve their wellbeing, and help them to find work and become financially stable.

Our core work focuses on providing emergency food aid through our network of Food Banks and Community Kitchens, yet these are gateway services that enable our guests to access a wider programme of support at Sufra that address the causes of poverty. The holistic support that we offer ranges from horticultural therapy in our Community Garden, to English classes and coffee mornings for recently arrived asylum seekers. Together, our services go beyond charitable food aid by leading vulnerable people on a personal journey from crisis to social inclusion and financial independence.

Sufra has Trusted Charity accreditation at Level 2 as well as the Advice Quality Standard (AQS). We are an active member of the Independent Food Aid Network, which advocates for an end to food banks on behalf of over 2,000 food aid providers across the UK. Sufra is also a member of the Feeding Britain network and the Brent Food Aid Network.

To find out more or support our work,  
please visit [www.sufra-nwlondon.org.uk](http://www.sufra-nwlondon.org.uk)



# Contents

<a href="#">A Message from The Chair of Trustees</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Executive Director's Statement</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Our Vision, Mission &amp; Principles</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">Emergency Aid: Food Bank, Clothing Drives and Essential Support</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Community Kitchen</a>	<a href="#">9</a>
<a href="#">Community Wellbeing Project</a>	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">Welfare Advice &amp; OpenARMS</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">St Raphael's Edible Garden</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Get Involved</a>	<a href="#">14</a>
<a href="#">Volunteering</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Finances</a>	<a href="#">16</a>
<a href="#">Thank You!</a>	<a href="#">18</a>
<a href="#">Meet Team Sufra</a>	<a href="#">19</a>

# A Message from The Chair of Trustees

**I am very pleased to present this year's review of Sufra's wide-ranging work across Brent, which is made even more impactful given the increasingly challenging landscape of rising poverty levels in which the charity operates.**

This year concluded our ambitious three-year strategy. In year one, 2020-21, we rapidly adapted to the Covid-19 pandemic, whilst responding to a massive 332% increase in demand for food. Year two, 2021-22, focused on consolidation following the expansion of staffing and services the previous year. In the final year, 2022-23, Sufra again had to adapt to increased demand as the cost-of-living crisis, combined with food price inflation, worsened.

We are now larger, more effective and increasingly influential, but our work remains deeply rooted in the community. The year ahead will be our most exciting to date, with a new long-term strategy and an innovative programme of work to support thousands of Brent residents every month.

Sufra will continue providing access to emergency food aid, whilst building the social and financial resilience of our guests through our interconnected, holistic services. We will also step up our efforts to influence the policies that cause and perpetuate poverty.

Sadly, the Board mourns the loss of one of our Trustees, Jacqueline Carr, who passed away in October 2023. She was revered in Brent as the long-time director of Citizens Advice Brent and was influential in guiding changes to Sufra's advice work. We will miss her greatly.

**Susan Crane**  
Chair, Sufra NW London



# Executive Director's Statement

**In the shadow of an unprecedented cost-of-living crisis that crippled the finances of our guests, this was a year of bold innovation and long-term planning, alongside a further scaling up of our services to meet ever-increasing demand.**

With over a thousand people a week now being supported by Sufra, we were forced to ask ourselves some challenging questions: how do we sustain our services in the face of exacerbated levels of deprivation? What can we do to ensure that we address the causes, and not just the consequences, of poverty?

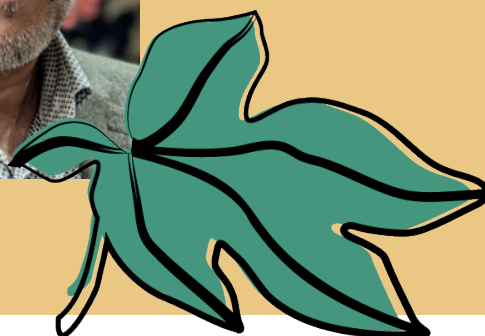
Sufra's Strategy Day, attended by a cross-section of our stakeholders, helped to shape our new strategy to 2030, and plot an ambitious course for the charity. We are now committed to a renewed focus on community development, campaigning, and establishing more dignified forms of emergency aid that go beyond the food bank model, not to mention expanding both our food growing initiatives and the support we provide asylum seekers and refugees.

In line with these commitments, we successfully established a groundbreaking new Community Wellbeing Project, alongside new Community Kitchens and a course to train Sufra's future advice staff. Working with the Brent Right to Food Campaign, we helped

convince Brent Council to declare itself a Right to Food Borough.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of a huge team of inspiring volunteers, our brilliant members of staff, and our talented trustees. I sincerely thank them all for their hard work and look forward to what we will achieve in the years ahead.

**Rajesh Makwana BEM**  
Executive Director, Sufra



# Our Vision, Mission & Principles

## Our Vision:

A community united to address the causes and consequences of poverty.

## Our Mission:

We provide food aid, welfare advice and training to people in crisis, whilst working with the wider community to campaign for an end to poverty.



## Statement of Principles and Values

### 1. We take a holistic approach, based on human rights:

- Food aid is essential – but it is not the solution to food poverty.

Access to nutritious food is a human right and it is the responsibility of governments, not charities, to create the conditions needed to uphold these rights. To enable all people to meet their basic needs and live in dignity, the UK government needs to pursue policies that ensure wealth, power and resources are shared more equally between all people.

- Our approach is holistic and designed to reduce dependency on food aid.

Our services have developed in response to the underlying needs of guests. We are committed to providing a range of services and programmes that can help address the root causes of financial crisis, and so reduce the need for food aid.

- We recognise that there are different approaches to reducing food poverty.

We embrace a culture of critical reflection on the nature and effectiveness of our food bank and other services. We are committed to innovating and experimenting with new approaches to meeting our core objectives.



# Our Vision, Mission & Principles



## 2. We are embedded in the local community:

### – We are a grassroots charity embedded in the local community.

As we evolve, we are committed to remaining responsive to the changing needs of those we serve, representing their voices and engaging them in making the decisions that affect them. We seek to maintain a close relationship between our guests, volunteers, staff and trustees.

### – We are more effective when we collaborate with others.

We are committed to working in partnership with all our stakeholders: from our supporters and volunteers; to voluntary sector organisations; businesses; and other food banks in northwest London.



### – We employ and serve people of all and no faiths without discrimination.

Our roots lie in the Muslim community, which provided the funding and support needed to establish the charity. We continue to work closely with this community as well as a very wide range of other faith-based and secular organisations. Our staff, trustees and volunteers are from a multitude of backgrounds (both faith and non-faith based), our values are universal and humanitarian, and we serve everyone in need without discrimination.

## 3. We respect the dignity of our guests and the needs of the planet:

### – We are committed to upholding and enhancing the dignity of our guests.

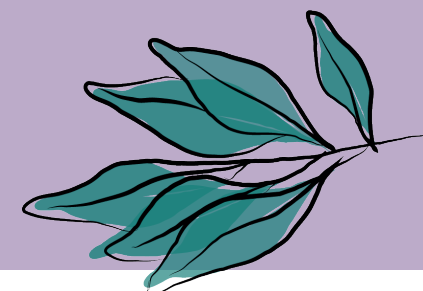
We do not want to turn people away when they are in need. Our emergency aid services provide a gateway to accessing other services designed to empower guests, improve their wellbeing and reduce their dependency on food aid.

### – We value the wellbeing and development of staff, volunteers and trustees.

We aim to provide everyone working at Sufra with the opportunity to learn and develop new skills, so they can grow both personally and professionally. We also work hard to proactively support the mental health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers.

### – We are committed to environmental sustainability.

We recognise the importance of caring for our environment. We make use of food that would otherwise go to landfill, grow fruit and vegetables without the use of chemical pesticides/fertilisers, and compost our food waste. We also use solar panels to generate energy in our main building and reuse, upcycle and recycle our waste.



# Emergency Aid: Food Bank, Clothing Drives and Essential Support



This year, due to the cost-of-living crisis and the associated food price inflation, Sufra distributed more food than ever before – even compared to the height of the pandemic. We ended our financial year distributing a huge 305 weekly food parcels per week, double the number compared to the start of the year. Even during the summer months, normally a quiet time for the food bank, demand continued to soar.



## How We've Helped

- **7,297** unique guests supported with emergency food aid
- **37,645** total food aid recipients (including those attending several times over the year)
- **318** young people received uniforms, backpacks, and stationery in our Uniform Drive (thanks to our partnership with Hand on Heart!)
- **200** referral agencies referred guests to Sufra's Food Bank.
- **14,000** nutritious meals distributed via our Community Kitchens and Fresh Meal delivery service
- **1,406** guests provided with school uniforms and winter coats
- **30** Winter Warmer goodie bags with blankets, hot water bottles and vouchers distributed

- **2** Winter Warmer Workshops about energy saving tips and energy bill support (thanks to our partnership with Green Doctors, Groundwork and Advice for Renters!)

## Who we have helped

- **59%** of Food Bank voucher holders are women
- **44%** are under the age of 18
- **57%** are from a BAME background
- **10%** are refugees, asylum seekers or migrants
- **28%** are claiming benefits



# Community Kitchen

This year, we launched a new weekly Community Kitchen in partnership with the Raheem Sterling Foundation and Ark Elvin Academy. Within the first few weeks, we had served over 100 guests per session! We are now hosting a Community Kitchen session each weekday.



Our Christmas Dinner was another successful event. A huge team of volunteers made it all possible for our 200 guests: collecting them; serving dinner with all the trimmings; then taking them home again.



## Christmas Dinner

- **300** festive hampers for food bank guests
- **200** guests at our Christmas day dinner
- **3** festive musicians
- **2** Santas
- And a partridge in a pear tree!

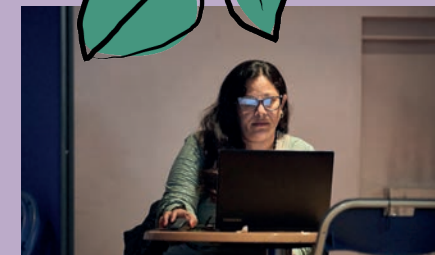


## 5 Community Kitchen sessions a week

- **Monday:** Bridge Park Leisure Centre
- **Tuesday:** Bridge Park Leisure Centre
- **Wednesday:** Ark Elvin Academy
- **Thursday:** Laurence's Larder
- **Friday:** Granville Community Kitchen
- **+2** Community Cafe sessions a week at Bridge Park

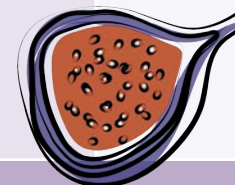
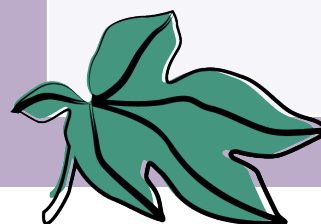
# Community Wellbeing Project

In line with our new 2030 Strategy, we were keen to explore innovative poverty-prevention models that provide a more dignified, effective, and efficient service for our guests.



In February 2023, we established the Community Wellbeing Project in partnership with Brent Council, Feeding Britain, the Greater London Authority and local organisations. Based on a membership model designed to support local families in employment and in receipt of means tested benefits, members paid £3.50 a week for full access to the leisure centre including gym memberships and children's activities, and all of the services listed below. The project operates from Bridge Park Leisure Centre twice a week, has over 200 members and focuses on 4 main elements:

Community Shop	Community Café	Community Kitchen	Advice and Support
Once a week, members can access the shop and collect groceries worth approximately £25.	The Community Café is open alongside the Community Shop and members can access refreshments, lunch and snacks at no cost for them and their families.	The Community Kitchen is open to the whole community and not just those with a membership. Attendees enjoy a hot 3 course meal freshly prepared on site.	Members are paired with a Brent Hubs advisor to attend an initial in-depth assessment. During this session, a Personal Development Plan is devised, outlining specific goals that they will achieve during their membership. Members also have access to a variety of workshops and drop-in support services.



# Welfare Advice & OpenARMs

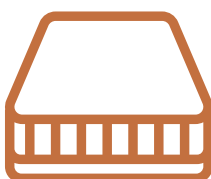


## Advice

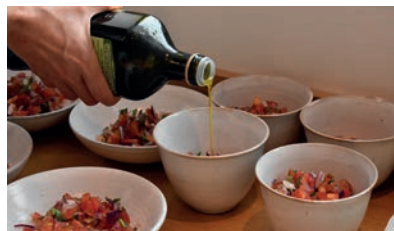
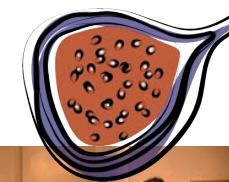
The unprecedented demand for our advice service has led to an increase of urgent and complex issues. Through our in-person advice service, our advisors supported those in need of emergency food aid to address the problems that lead them to seek help from Sufra – such as benefit disruptions, housing problems, debt, utilities, crisis support and other financial difficulties. The support we provide is ongoing and tailored to the needs of the individual and the service.

Having launched an Advice Trainee programme towards the end of 2022, we now run signposting sessions where guests are referred to voluntary organisations that provide tailored and specialist support.

- **342** people benefitted from our Advice Services
- **£66,215** additional income gained for our guests through benefits, grants, vouchers and emergency aid purchases
- **79%** of cases were completed successfully, with an additional 25% resulting in financial gain



# Welfare Advice & OpenARMs



## OpenARMs

In April, we launched our OpenARMs programme which restructured our existing refugee programme to incorporate specialist services tailored to **asylum seekers, refugees and migrants** with no recourse to public funds. We now run weekly coffee mornings and English classes for our OpenARMs guests, where guests get to share treats such as Yemeni tea and Palestinian Musakhan. We also provide cultural integration trips, such as our recent trip to the Science Museum and the London Eye.

Sufra hosted two Sufra Supper Clubs to honour our OpenARMs guests and raise awareness of all the issues on issues faced by asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. For each event, guests curated the menu, cooked the food, and organised the evening's activities. The Supper Clubs allow guests to share their culture, food and experiences with Sufra's supporters. Our first event was held during Refugee Week and our second had a Yalda Night theme (based on the traditions of the Persian celebration) – both were hugely successful.

## Case study: Proving Your Worth

### Case study:

Omar had only been in the UK a few years. He was a refugee from Iran and was sleeping on a friend's couch whilst looking for a job. Unfortunately, his friend eventually asked him to leave, and within a week he was homeless and sleeping on the street.

Omar suffered from a degenerative mobility illness and had severe mental health needs, which limited his ability to find stable employment. Fortunately, he visited Sufra's Advice Drop-In and spoke with one of our advisors.

In order to receive Universal Credit, Omar had to provide a letter from his GP every month explaining why his disability was preventing him from looking for work. Our Advice Team housed him in emergency accommodation and made a successful Low Capability for Work application, which meant that his disposable income increased and he no longer had to prove that he was disabled every month in order to receive financial support.



# St Raphael's Edible Garden

St Raphael's Edible Garden is an award-winning community food growing project. The garden supports environmental sustainability, improves local food security, promotes wellbeing and offers access to learning opportunities – all whilst bringing together one of Brent most marginalised communities.

## ST. RAPH'S GARDEN IN NUMBERS

**887**kg

of CO2 were removed  
from the atmosphere

**745**kg

of organic produce  
was harvested

**38**

students received  
receiving AQA certificates  
from garden courses



### Summer Garden Party

Celebrating our  
partnership with  
Metroland Cultures  
for the 2022 Brent  
Biennial.



### Summer Activities Programme

Young people in  
Brent going to  
summer camp at  
Sufra and honing  
their entrepreneurial  
skills at the  
smoothie stall.



### Winter Fair

Wreathmaking and  
hot chocolates at  
our snowy garden.



### Christmas Holiday Activities Programme

With a free  
nutritional lunch  
for every child that  
took part, relieving  
financial stress for  
their parents



**Goodbye Tipi,  
Hello Yurt!**



### HelloFresh Partnership

In 2022, HelloFresh (of recipe box fame) and Social Farms & Gardens (a UK-wide charity) selected St. Raphael's Edible Garden to be a London representative of their joint campaign. The partnership was designed to encourage local communities to grow their own vegetables, reduce their carbon footprint and enjoy the benefits of being in nature.

# Get Involved

## Donate Money

You can make a regular or one-off contribution to our Charity Aid Foundation (CAF) page. The link can be found on our website (hint: it's the big button that says 'Donate Now!'). You can also set up a regular donation through your bank account or donate using PayPal at [bit.ly/sufra-paypal-donation](https://bit.ly/sufra-paypal-donation)



If you'd like to donate via bank transfer, our bank details are:

Name of Bank: **HSBC**  
Name on Account: **Sufra NW London**  
Account Number: **01537873**  
Sort Code: **40-46-10**

Make sure to tick the Gift Aid box when donating to allow us to claim an extra 25p of tax for every £1 you donate.



## Donate Food

Food donations can be dropped off to our main premises at 160 Pitfield Way, Stonebridge, London, NW10 0PW on Mondays to Fridays from 10am to 5pm. Outside of these hours, food donations can be left in our yellow bins outside of the building. Please note, we can only accept non-perishable food.

For those unable to drop-off their donations, you can purchase your donation via online retailers such as Amazon, Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Ocado by setting Sufra's address as the delivery address.

You can also contact us to become a Community Food Champion and have one of our yellow bins at your workplace, community centre or place of worship, which we would collect weekly (or whenever it's full).

# Volunteering

We are incredibly grateful to our phenomenal volunteers, who come in each week to support us in providing the services we provide. Their dedication is inspirational, and they embody the true meaning of community spirit.



**This year, 198 volunteers provided over 13,328 hours of support across a wide range of activities – plus there were an additional 116 volunteers from our corporate partners.**

Our volunteers are usually the first people who our guests meet: at the door of our food bank session, on the telephone, or delivering food to their doorstep.

They have been a significant help behind the scenes too – creating graphics, gathering statistics and supporting with website development.



Sufra welcome volunteers from all backgrounds – the more the merrier! You can sign up to be a volunteer via the our form on our website. Our roles include:

- Fresh Food Packing
- Food Hosting
- Storeroom Packing
- Community Shop and Café
- Community Kitchen
- Food Delivery
- Telephone Volunteers
- Garden Volunteers
- Signposting Volunteers
- Translation Volunteers
- Community Food Champions

# Finances

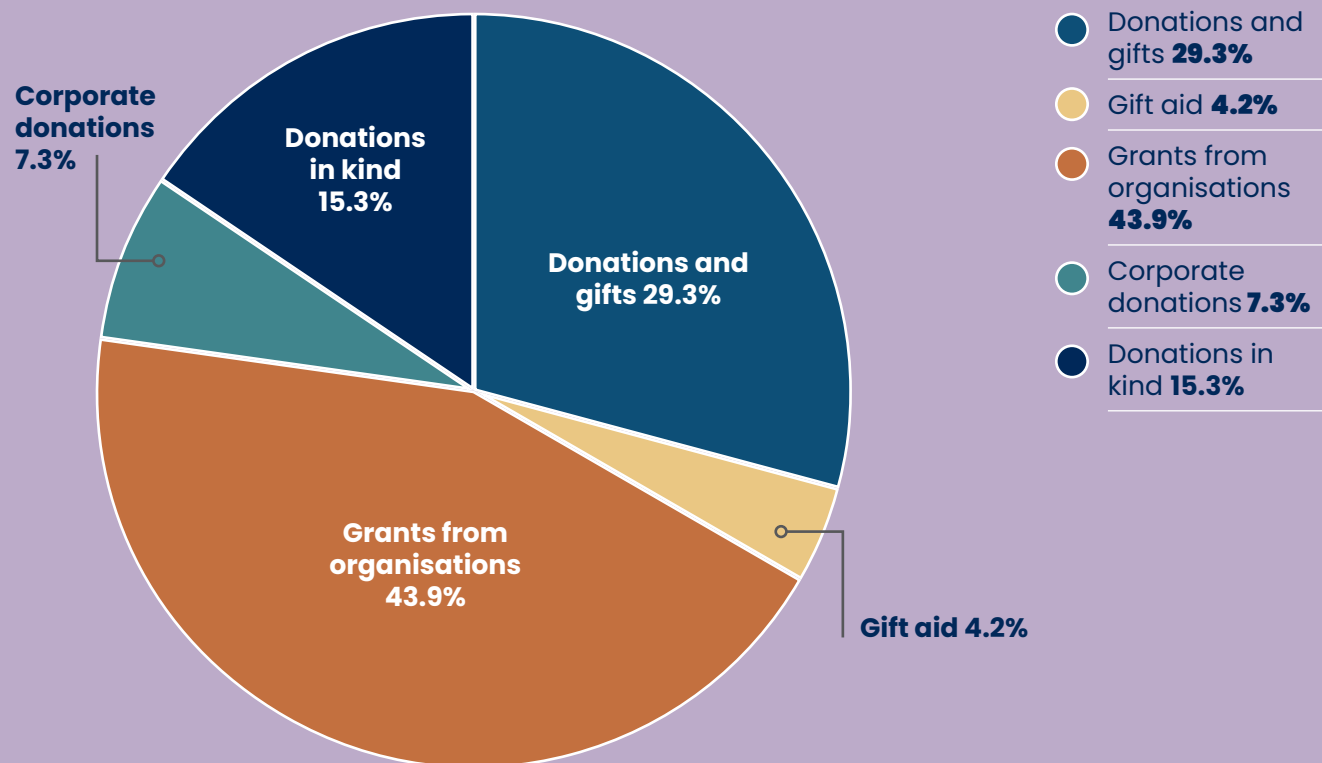
The cost-of-living crisis placed significant pressure on our finances this year because it not only increased demand for our services, it also increased the cost of delivering services – especially the price of the food for our guests. Fortunately, we successfully managed to raise new funds and further diversify our income in response to these pressures.

Total income for the year was £1.143m, with almost half from Trusts and Foundations and a third from individual donations.

Expenditure for the year was £891k, three quarters of which was spent on delivering a range of food aid services, including our Food Banks, Community Kitchens and our Community Wellbeing Project pilot.

Our surplus (£252k) will help ensure Sufra has sufficient reserves in place for the year ahead, as we further expand our team and our services.

## Income 2022–23



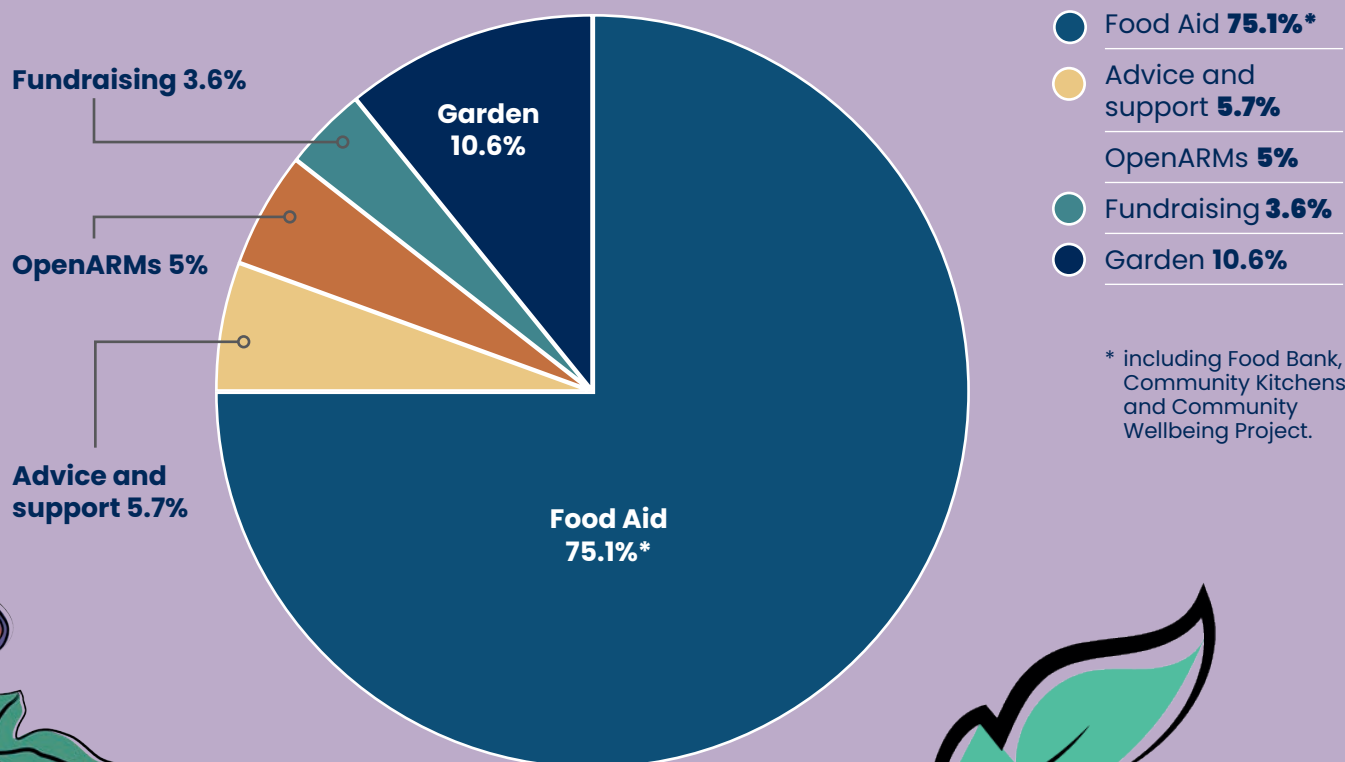
# Finances

The majority of expenditure, 96p in every pound, was spent on achieving our charitable objectives. Fundraising costs were only 3.6% of total expenditure, representing an excellent return on investment.

Approximately 62.6% of our income remains unrestricted. The unrestricted/restricted mix continues to support the organisation's financial agility and enables Sufra to be responsive to the ever-changing demand for services.

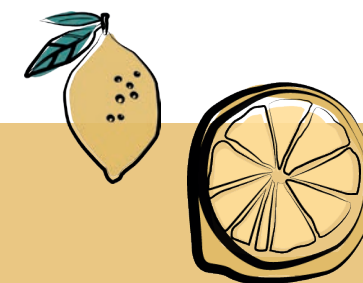
In line with our fundraising strategy, the team was particularly successful in gaining funding from Trusts, Foundations and Corporates during the year, including several new multi-year commitments. Our two annual digital appeals (Ramadan and Winter) were also successful, demonstrating continued goodwill across our supporter base.

## Expenditure 2022-23



# Thank You!

During this most challenging of years, we were privileged to have the support of some amazing organisations. So, we wanted to say a huge THANK YOU to the funders, donors, companies and partners who have supported us, including (but not limited to)



- |                                |                                    |                                       |   |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. 9Kitchens                   | 23. Charity Aid Foundation (CAF)   | 45. HelloFresh                        | 67. Refugee Action                        |
| 2. Ace Café London LTD         | 24. Chipsy                         | 46. Social Farms & Gardens            | 68. Rogers Stirk Harbour                  |
| 3. Advice For Renters          | 25. Cheniere Energy Trust          | 47. Hewlett Packard Enterprise        | 69. Partners Charitable Foundation        |
| 4. Amazon Web Services         | 26. Crisis Skylight                | 48. Islamic Relief                    | 70. Santander                             |
| 5. AMEX                        | 27. CVS Brent                      | 49. Julia and Hans Rausing Trust      | 71. Hirdi Sai Baba Temple                 |
| 6. Anglo American              | 28. David Cock Foundation          | 50. Kensal Tri                        | 72. Tesco Community Grant                 |
| 7. Arcus Infrastructure        | 29. Dr. Vanita Rattan              | 51. Kusama Trust                      | 73. The Headley Trust                     |
| 8. Ares Management             | 30. Ernest Cook Trust              | 52. Lady Fatemah Trust                | 74. Sainsbury Family Charitable Trust     |
| 9. Ark Elvin Academy           | 31. Feeding Britain                | 53. Laurence's Larder                 | 75. Shaw Trust                            |
| 10. Arnold House School        | 32. The Felix Project              | 54. Lawstop                           | 76. St. Raphael's Family Wellbeing Centre |
| 11. Axia                       | 33. Financial Harmony              | 55. Maria Marina Foundation           | 77. St. Raphael's Voice                   |
| 12. Aziz Foundation            | 34. Food Bank Aid                  | 56. Masonic Charitable Trust          | 78. The Hearth                            |
| 13. Beezee Bodies              | 35. Garfield Weston Foundation     | 57. Metroland Cultures                | 79. The Maqam Centre                      |
| 14. Beta Charitable Trust      | 36. Gladstone Park Primary School  | 58. M&S Brent Cross                   | 80. Tudor Trust                           |
| 15. Betty Messenger Foundation | 37. Granville Community Kitchen    | 59. Mutual Aid Food Willesden         | 81. Veolia Sustainability Fund            |
| 16. Brent Council              | 38. Greater London Authority (GLA) | 60. Oriental Chinese Community        | 82. Wates Group                           |
| 17. Bridge Park Leisure Centre | 39. Green Doctors                  | 61. Pakistan Community Centre         | 83. Waitrose                              |
| 18. Cadent Gas                 | 40. Greenwood Place                | 62. Pilotlight                        | 84. WF Aid                                |
| 19. Morrison Energy Services   | 41. The Hampstead Kitchen          | 63. Propel                            | 85. Wolsey Charitable Trust               |
| 20. CAH Philanthropy           | 42. Hand on Heart                  | 64. Public Health England             | 86. XPO Logistics                         |
| 21. Citizen's Advice Brent     | 43. Harlesden Mutual Aid           | 65. National Lottery Communities Fund | 87. Zahra Trust                           |
| 22. City Harvest               | 44. Headley Trust                  | 66. Raheem Sterling Foundation        |   |



# Meet Team Sufra 2022-23

## Staff:

**Rajesh Makwana BEM** – Executive Director  
**Fahim Dahya** – Logistics and Facilities Manager  
**Laura York** – Finance and Operations Manager  
**Jo Kay** – Programmes Manager  
**Nina Parmar** – Food Aid and Volunteer Manager  
**Jasvinder Singh** – Community Chef  
**Mohamed Osman** – Facilities Assistant  
**Anaam Hussein** – Administrative Officer  
**Sabina Lichacz** – Fundraising and Communications Assistant  
**Nicholas Smith** – Community Food Grower  
**Zena Kazeme** – Refugee Resettlement Officer  
**Abbas Dhalla** – Senior Finance Consultant  
**Ali Yawar** – Driver/Stock Coordinator  
**Sarah Abbas** – Advice Trainee  
**Amina Fiaz** – Advice Trainee  
**Haydar Al Dabagh** – Driver/Logistics Officer  
**Louis Barrett** – Project Assistant



## Board of Trustees:

**Susan Crane** – Chair  
**Helena Krawitz** – Deputy Chair  
**Rosemary Heaney** – Secretary

**Pankaj Shah** – Treasurer  
**Aaseem Mulji**  
**Krysia Kozniewska**

**Asad Abdullah**  
**Lucy Bannister**  
**Aliya Al-Yassin**

**Nirmean Sawi**  
**Jacqueline Carr**  
(Rest in Peace)





FIGHT  
POVERTY  
LOVE  
COMMUNITY

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 [twitter.com/SufraNWLondon](https://twitter.com/SufraNWLondon)

 [facebook.com/SufraNWLondon](https://www.facebook.com/SufraNWLondon)

 [linkedin.com/company/sufra-nw-london/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/sufra-nw-london/)

In memory of our much-loved  
Trustee, Jacqueline Carr, who sadly  
passed away in October 2023.

Design by: [www.wearegravity.co.uk](http://www.wearegravity.co.uk)

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