

BOOK OF CONDOLENCE



In Loving Memory of Our Beloved Sister,

Bana Gora

1973 – 2026

Co-Founder and Former CEO of the Muslim Women's Council

"To God we belong and to Him we return."

— Qur'an 2:156



TRIBUTES TO BANA GORA



Remembering Bana

This book brings together heartfelt tributes, prayers, memories and reflections in loving memory of Bana Gora, co-founder and former CEO of the Muslim Women's Council.

Bana was a visionary leader, a dear sister, mentor, friend and tireless advocate for women, justice, compassion and community. May Allah SWT grant her the highest place in Jannatul Firdaus. Ameen.

Tributes from MWC Trustees

✉ **Fatima Ayub** — *MWC Trustee*

“To God we belong and to Him we return.”(Quran 2:156)

“I shed tears, my heart aches, but I only utter what is pleasing to my Lord. I surrender to the will of God.”

It is with a deeply heavy heart, yet immense gratitude, that we remember a life that gave so much, and a woman who gave even more. Bana Gora was not simply a leader; she was a force of goodness within our community. As the CEO of the Muslim Women’s Council, she did not merely hold a position, she carried a mission. A mission to uplift, to serve selflessly, to empower, and to ensure that Muslim women were seen, heard, and valued. She spoke truth to power with courage and conviction, never shying away from challenging barriers or standing firmly for fairness, justice and inclusion.

But her true impact cannot be measured by titles or achievements alone. Her legacy lives on in the women she mentored, taught and guided, the confidence she nurtured, and the countless doors she quietly opened for others, often without recognition, and always without seeking praise. Her kindness and compassion touched so many lives across Bradford.

Her smile, her empathy, her humanity, her humbleness. Her gentle and generous soul impacted so many. She established a movement of women who felt inspired, passionate, and motivated to make a difference in their communities. The Muslim Women's Council became a family of women where everyone felt connected, supported, uplifted and loved. A true ambassador and advocate of women's issues. So many of us can say: she believed in me before I believed in myself.

She possessed a rare gift, the ability to see potential where others may not have, and then to nurture it with sincerity, wisdom, and strength. She reminded women that their voices mattered, that their contributions were essential, and that their faith and ambitions could walk hand in hand. An advocate for women and policy reforms and instrumental in driving meaningful change for women. And she did all of this with grace, integrity, and dignity.

She led with conviction and passion, yet always with compassion. She spoke with strength, yet always with purpose. She stood firm in her Islamic values, while remaining deeply humble.

In Islam, we are reminded that when a person passes away, their deeds come to an end except for three: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, and the prayers of righteous people left behind. Bana Gora leaves behind all three. Her work lives on in the initiatives and projects she built, the lives she transformed, and the ripple effect of every woman she empowered, women who will now go on to empower others in turn. That is her sadaqah jariyah (charity). That is her living legacy.

Today, I do not only mourn the CEO of the Muslim Women's Council. I mourn a dear friend, a beautiful sister in Islam, and a beloved colleague.

She made extraordinary strides in breaking barriers and championing inclusion, leaving behind an enduring and powerful legacy. She was bold. She was visionary. She was a mover and shaker within our community whose powerful impact transformed the lives of countless women across our city. Her passing leaves behind an immense void. She was truly a giant among us, and it will be incredibly difficult for any of us to fill the space she occupied. But we honour her best by carrying forward what she stood for. Let us not allow her work to end with her. Let us continue it with the same courage, the same sincerity, and the same unwavering belief in our community and in one another.

May Allah SWT grant her the highest place in Jannatul Firdaus, expand and illuminate her grave, forgive her shortcomings, and accept every ounce of good she brought into this world. May Allah swt envelop her in His infinite mercy, light, and protection always. And may we be among those who continue her goodness and promote the common good long after her return to Him. Ameen.



 **Selina Ullah** — *MWC Trustee*

My Bana.

Bana and I have been friends and sisters for over two and a half decades. Writing in the past tense about her is very hard.

When I first met Bana, she was working for the Keighley Domestic Violence Service. Her remit was to work with Asian women, mainly Muslim women. This experience shaped her passion for social justice and equality. Leading the Joseph Rowntree 10 Year Programme to understand communities experiencing poverty and exclusion in Bradford honed her skills in policy work and strategy. It grounded her sense of the social injustice experienced by those without a voice. She brought all of that experience, sense of justice, and passion together and founded the Muslim Women's Council with myself, Nuzhat Ali, Wahida Shaffi and Fatima Ayub.

Bana was tenacious, fearless, visionary, and relentless in her belief that Muslim women should have an equal voice at decision-making tables, and she worked tirelessly to make that happen.

One thing she was always clear about was that we do it on our terms without compromise, fear, or favour, even if that meant it would take us longer to achieve our vision.

She was a humanitarian in every sense of the word. She set up the Curry Circle after witnessing a man scavenging for food in a bin from her office window. The Curry Circle, in partnership with My Lahore, provides a hot meal with water

every week, to anyone in need. She arranged for medical care, advice work, and even barbers to come to the sessions. Many of those using this service are individuals with mental health and addiction issues, ex offenders as well as those who have fallen on hard times. She would speak to every one of them every Thursday evening. Bana made sure every single person felt seen, heard, and cared for. The service has been running for over 12 years. She created a family.

Her next passion was the Women's Building; a community facility open to all. Bana secured the money to buy the building, but it was a long and arduous journey. It took her all over the world meeting with diplomats in the UAE, the daughters of President Erdogan in Turkey, leaders in Bosnia, America, and Egypt. She created a global family of supporters, as well as a family of supporters across the UK.

Our MWC service users have provided the most beautiful testimonials of Bana's goodness, kindness, generosity, and selfless support of them and her friendship. The genuine goodwill and condolences shown towards her colleagues and friends have been overwhelming.

Bana was my heart friend. She meant so much that it is very hard to put into words. I am still processing her loss. Bana touched my heart and my life, and has left an indelible print on both. She leaves another family of friends who will remember her



smile, her likes, dislikes, her foibles, and her humour. Bana's gentle, protective presence will be missed beyond words. For our part, we will keep her legacy and vision alive.

 **Kehkshan Ahmed** — *MWC Trustee*

To Allah Almighty we belong and onto Him is our return. We lost more than a leader; we lost a light.

Bana was a friend, a sister, a mentor, and a visionary CEO who carried all of us with her. As the youngest member on the board of the Muslim Women's Council, I was shaped by her in ways I will carry for the rest of my life. She made space for me, believed in me, and showed me what it truly means to lead with sincerity and purpose.

Her laughter was contagious, the kind that filled a room and made everyone feel at ease. We didn't just hear it; we felt it. And somehow, no matter the weight she carried, she gave that lightness to others.

She lived a life of khidma (servitude), always putting others before herself, always thinking of who she could help next. Her selflessness wasn't occasional; it was who she was. She gave without expecting, uplifted without hesitation, and loved without limit.

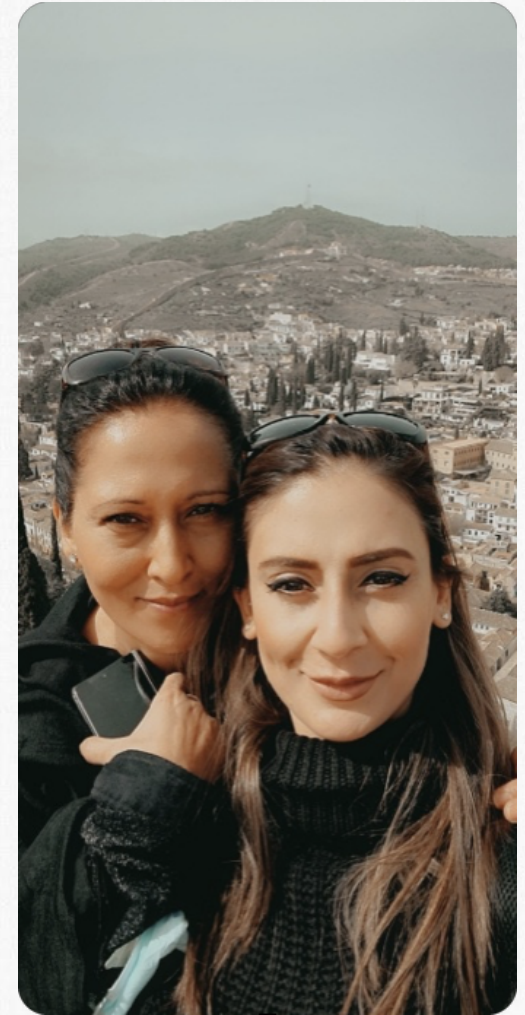
She has left behind a legacy that cannot be measured in titles or roles, but in hearts changed, lives uplifted, and a community strengthened. We will carry that legacy forward, in her name, with the same sincerity she taught us, and we will strive to make her proud.

My heart aches, but it is also full — full of love for her, full of gratitude that I knew her, full of pride to call her my sister and full of hope in the promise of our Lord that we will be with those we love in Jannah (paradise). I pray we are reunited in Jannah (paradise).

May Allah Almighty grant her a lofty place in the highest of Jannah (paradise), expand her grave with light and make it a garden from the gardens of Jannah (paradise). May her good deeds continue to weigh heavily on her scale, and may every life she touched be a source of ongoing reward for her.

She may have returned to her Lord, but she remains with us in every act of service, every moment of compassion, and every smile she inspired.

We love you Bana, forever in our hearts.



Tributes from the MWC Team

 **Saadia Mushtaq** — *MWC Office Manager*

Bana was much more than my boss. She was a dear friend, a life coach, a mentor, and the life of the party on our many trips abroad!

It feels impossible to sum up the 13 years of knowing her, working together, the laughs, the tears, the ups & downs we experienced...Bana's sudden passing has left me devastated & contemplating life & its lessons. Bana had a strong connection with our faith, inspiring us all to do more. She was an utter professional & uniquely adept at taking the bull by the horns! When I applied for this role at MWC, I recall the recruitment agency manager telling me "Bana is a formidable boss". And I certainly got to know that pretty fast! Yet I'm still here at this organisation after so many years, having learnt and dealt with so much. Under her strong leadership, MWC has flourished and become a force for good in the community. Bana strongly believed in empowering women and young people, and helping people from all walks of life.

Bana's favourite project at MWC was our hot food initiative, the Curry Circle; it was extremely close to her heart and she passionately believed we should do all we can to support those in need across our city. We began the project shortly after I started working for MWC, and I witnessed her contacting all those that she thought could help us with it. I never

imagined I would get to explore so many different parts of the world through our MWC trips and retreats, spearheaded by Bana, and have fond memories of amazing countries like Bosnia, Morocco, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Spain and of course Palestine. Witnessing Bana expertly guiding us out of there last year, despite missile attacks and constant sirens, is something I will never forget.

I had the privilege of spending a lot of time with her alone, at work & otherwise, and saw her kindness and generosity with others firsthand, as well as her reflections on life. It was an honour to be able to share life issues, talking about the good, the bad & the ugly. She formed special relationships with children wherever we travelled, leaving an impression on those who met her, even if it was just one occasion. I pray we are able to continue Bana's legacy and good deeds. Bana, you will be missed more than you can imagine. We will hold you in our hearts forever.

Rest now my dear sister 💔



✉ **Leila Taha** — *MWC Administrator*

Bana was not only my boss, but my dear friend.

Everyone who had the privilege of knowing Bana will carry memories of her for a lifetime, her beautiful smile, her infectious giggles, and the warmth she brought into every room.

She dedicated her life to helping others, supporting and uplifting women not only in Bradford, but across the world. She was a true fighter, for rights, for justice, and for women everywhere.

Bana also had a gentle, caring soul. She fed animals daily in her garden, a place that was her sanctuary and brought her so much peace. She leaves behind a powerful legacy through her work with the Muslim Women's Council and through the countless lives she touched.

May Allah grant her the highest place in Jannah. Life will never be the same. You will be deeply missed my Banana.



 **Taslima Sheikh** — *MWC Project Coordinator*

For a beautiful and inspiring woman, Bana Gora whose memory lingers gently, as I try to steady my heart and make sense of a loss that still feels so sudden. She wasn't just the CEO of the Muslim Women's Council. She was my teacher, my friend, and someone who always had my back. No matter the time, she was there making you feel seen, valued, and truly special.

What she taught me in three years, I couldn't teach myself in twenty. She had a unique presence, one that meant even if you met her just once, you would never forget her. I remember the first time I met her, sitting across from me in an interview with her high bun and black folder. There was an aura about her, like she could see right through you. She sensed energy, she understood intention. I walked in thinking I'd just "try it out," but walking out, something had already shifted.

And when I had the chance to work with her, I understood why. The way she walked and carried herself, the way she spoke, the way she lived her life was a lesson. She taught me confidence, gave me courage, and helped me step beyond my fears to see the world differently. Her kindness reached far beyond people. She cared deeply for everything around her; the animals, the environment, every living soul. She lived with sincerity, compassion, and a quiet strength that inspired everyone she met.

She was like a candle, illuminating countless lives without ever seeking recognition. Even through life's trials, her light never dimmed. At a time known only to Allah (SWT), her soul returned to Him so quietly, yet leaving behind a silence deeply felt by all who knew her.

She may be replaced, but the space she filled never will be. My dear Bana, your kindness, love, and light will never fade from our hearts. Gone from sight, but never from memory.

May Allah (SWT) envelop her in His mercy and grant her the highest place in Jannatul Firdaus. Ameen.



 **Parvaze Ghani** — *Curry Circle Manager*

Not many people know this, but I first met Bana several years before the Muslim Womens Council and the Curry Circle were established. We were both attending a meeting focused on partnership working with Calderdale Council. I was immediately drawn to her because she was driven, passionate and full of vision. I remember thinking at the time, this woman is going to go far and she certainly did.

Bana went on to co-found the Muslim Womens Council and became a powerful force for change, making a lasting impact on the lives of women at every level of society, not only locally but across the world.

Several years on from that initial meet, our paths crossed again when I came down, somewhat speculatively to volunteer at a newly established soup kitchen that had been set up to support people experiencing homelessness and hardship. It was only the second week after opening. Thirteen years later. I'm still here!

Bana welcomed me into both her professional and personal circle. Through the years I witnessed her remarkable leadership qualities, her determination and above all her kind and compassionate heart. She has a unique ability to make life easier for others, myself included.

She affectionately called me her 'big brother' and in doing so proved that sisters do always look out for their brothers.

The gift Bana left me is priceless. She entrusted me with managing the Curry Circle, a responsibility I have carried with passion, integrity and commitment every single week. The opportunity she gave me put my life back on track and gave

me purpose, perspective and introduced me to some truly remarkable people. I always knew how much the Curry Circle meant to her and she always knew it was in safe, strong and trusted hands. I never wanted to let her down.

As the dust settles and I slowly come to terms with the fact that Bana is no longer with us, I make dua that the Almighty grants her a beautiful and peaceful place in Jannah. Perhaps a one-acre farm with a horse peacefully grazing nearby, something I know would make her smile. Oh and a good gardener!

When I look back and reflect on our friendship. I am filled with warmth and gratitude that I was blessed to be part of Bana's life. Her legacy lives through the countless lives she has touched, the communities she has strengthened and the opportunities she created for others.

And B, you got the last laugh – passing away on my birthday. Somehow, that feels like a very Bana thing to do.

May Allah grant you the highest ranks in Jannah and eternal peace. You will be deeply missed, fondly remembered and forever loved. Ameen.



 **Amena Dakhil** — *MWC Walks Coordinator*

My sister and I are deeply deeply saddened by the news of Bana passing. It's such a sad and tragic loss and we are heartbroken. She was the nicest and kindest of people. We loved her very deeply. She always always had a smile on her face. We ask Allah swt to grant her the highest of jannah and may she continue to sit the gardens of jannah eating her favourite sweets. May Allah swt grant you all sabr ameen and her family.



 **Khaled Mdlel** — *MWC Social Media Coordinator*

Really sad news. I've known Bana for many years, and we had the honour of working together. She was deeply dedicated to supporting Muslim women in Bradford, UK. We will carry your legacy forward, insha'Allah. May Allah grant you peace, mercy and the highest place in Jannah.

Community, Civic and Faith Tributes

 **Alina Khan** — *Vice Principal (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion), Bradford College*

Bradford lost one of the most formidable and influential women leaders in our community's history. Bana's impact on this city will be felt and remembered for generations to come. I was lucky enough to have been one of Bana's closest friends – truly one of my best friends. I first met her around 17 years ago, when my manager at the time encouraged my involvement in the Muslim Women's Council, believing it would be beneficial not only for my career but also as part of something that could be genuinely transformative for our city. I became involved in early focus groups, as the new charity undertook its selection process for its Board of Trustees.

I vividly remember feeling intimidated the first time I encountered Bana's sheer presence. I had never met anyone so young and yet so utterly certain about her purpose – about giving women a voice in Bradford. I remember thinking, wow, people who look like me can actually make a difference. It wasn't long before we became more than collaborative Trustees; we became true friends. The intimidation I once felt soon gave way to laughter, mischief, and countless conversations about how we might change the world around us.

Bana was a visionary leader, defined by her dedication, compassion, and unwavering commitment to serving her community. To many, she was not just a leader but a symbol of inclusion – particularly for women forging paths in spaces and societies traditionally dominated by men.

She had a long-standing relationship with the College, and in recognition of her remarkable contribution, we were proud to award her an Honorary Fellowship in November 2022. Her journey with us, however, began much earlier. In the early 1990s, Bana completed a BTEC National in Business Studies here, before going on to spend more than two decades campaigning for and supporting women's rights across the charitable and not-for-profit sectors. This included vital work within domestic violence services in Keighley.

In August 2004, she joined the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Policy and Research department, where she led a ten-year programme seeking to expand and influence social policy across a range of critical issues. By 2009, Bana had co-founded the Muslim Women's Council – an independent charity based in Bradford, led by Muslim women for Muslim women in Britain. The Council listens, engages, and formulates ideas through meaningful, respectful dialogue, creating space for voices too often unheard. In 2015, Bana announced the Muslim Women's Council's intention to build the UK's first female-led mosque. The announcement made headlines around the world, capturing an aspiration for a space that would be more than a place of worship – a community hub offering advice, support, and standing as a powerful symbol of inclusion for all women.

As Chief Executive of the Muslim Women's Council, Bana sought not only to understand and respond to the challenges women faced, but also to celebrate their strengths. After witnessing people searching through bins outside her office for food, she founded a weekly food initiative known as the Curry Circle. Through this initiative, she supported those most in need, including the homeless, the destitute, and those suffering from loneliness.

In 2019, Vogue named Bana as one of the top 25 women shaping Britain's future, alongside figures such as Naomi Campbell, The Duchess of Sussex, and Phoebe Waller-Bridge. In 2021, she became the first Muslim woman to receive the Peacemaker Award, recognising her tireless efforts to improve the lives of those marginalised by society. The award was presented by the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of Peace, who travelled from New York to honour Bana at Bradford City Hall in front of gathered dignitaries.

Bana inspired countless women through her work – from chairing diversity conferences and participating in national panel discussions on equality, to speaking at smaller, more intimate legal-advice seminars and female-only bereavement support groups. She was deeply committed to ensuring that Bradford thrived as a vibrant, inclusive city by understanding and responding to the complex realities faced by its people.

But to me, she was my dear friend. The kind of friend you could drop in on for a cuppa without calling first, who made you feel so at home you knew exactly which cupboard to head to for the best snacks! She stood by me through some of the most difficult moments of my life and shared in many of the happiest ones too. We travelled the world together, and my children adored her just as much as she adored them.

Her absence is profound, but so is her legacy. May you rest in peace, my beautiful sister.



 Fabbeh Husein

Bana was a force of life who sadly left us prematurely. She will be missed dearly. Her vision and legend must be sustained by any means, by all of us who valued and advocated her concerns and aspirations for the disenfranchised. She lives in our thoughts. RIP. Bless her soul.



 Dr Wajid Akhter — *Secretary General, Muslim Council of Britain*

We were desperately saddened to hear about the passing of Bana Gora. I'm reaching out to share my personal condolences on behalf of the Muslim Council of Britain and offer any support or help that the team at the Muslim Women's Council may require at this difficult time. Bana's support for MCB programmes and initiatives over the years like the Women in Mosques Development Programme have been greatly appreciated and will not be forgotten. Hassan Joudi, our Membership Co-ordinator, had met with Bana in Bradford only last summer and my predecessor Zara Mohammed had many positive engagements with her too.

We have no doubt that the alliances she built and the projects she founded will continue to inspire many across the British Muslim community in Bradford and nationwide. We offer our support in whatever way you feel is most suitable to help the next generation of British Muslims take inspiration from Bana's work and building on her legacy.

Ishtiaq Ahmed

Bradford's own Bana Gora has returned to her Creator. انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

This is a deeply tragic loss for our city and for all who knew her. Friends, colleagues and community members alike are shocked and saddened by her sudden and unexpected passing. Bana was a woman of extraordinary presence, a visionary, courageous and unapologetically honest. She never shied away from speaking truth, even when it was difficult to hear. We did not always agree, but there was always mutual respect and genuine affection. Today, I mourn not only a remarkable community figure, but an irreplaceable friend.

The Muslim community has lost a passionate leader. Muslim women have lost a powerful and fearless voice. Bradford has lost a true champion. And I have lost someone I valued deeply. May her legacy continue to inspire, and may her soul be granted eternal peace.

Bana co-founded the Muslim Women's Council in 2009 and went on to serve as its CEO. With more than thirty years of dedicated work in the charitable and not-for-profit sector, including roles in domestic violence services in Keighley and with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, she shaped conversations around social policy and community engagement both locally and nationally. She was always visionary, often controversial, but above all, driven by a determination to create lasting change.

Through the Muslim Women's Council, Bana championed the establishment of Britain's first female-managed mosque, a bold and groundbreaking initiative to create a safe, inclusive space for women to worship and access vital support

services. The idea faced significant resistance and scrutiny from more conservative quarters, but Bana was never one to be deterred. True to her nature, she stood firm, refusing to be sidelined.

She believed deeply that our communities are stronger when women are fully involved in shaping faith and civic institutions. The Female-Managed Mosque Project, her brainchild, was envisioned as a centre of excellence for women. Despite criticism, she persevered and ultimately shifted the conversation, encouraging many Muslim faith institutions to rethink women's inclusion. This will undoubtedly stand as one of her most enduring legacies.

Bana also went on to found the "Curry Circle," another of her grassroots initiative providing meals and support to those facing homelessness and poverty in Bradford, alongside advocacy for women navigating complex and difficult circumstances.

She was a widely respected voice in the community and was recognised as a finalist for the 2025 Inspiring Women Awards.

Bana Gora's impact, both locally and nationally, has been profound. She dedicated her life to ensuring that women's voices were heard, valued and empowered.

Her legacy will live on through the lives she touched, the barriers she challenged, and the path she carved for others to follow, defined by vision, courage and an unwavering commitment to justice. The city should formally honour her legacy.

 **Zara Mohammed** — *former Secretary General of MCB*

Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon. I was deeply shocked and profoundly saddened to learn of the passing of Bana Gora. It is difficult to comprehend this loss, especially as we had only just scheduled a meeting to connect. The news feels all the more sudden and heartbreaking. Bana was a remarkable and visionary leader, and a truly pivotal figure in advancing the voice and representation of women. Through her dedication and courage, she made significant strides in challenging barriers and championing inclusion, leaving behind an enduring and powerful legacy. I had the privilege of spending time with her in Istanbul last year at a conference, and I will always remember her warmth, insight, and unwavering commitment to the communities she served. She was an inspiring presence whose impact will be felt for many years to come.

My heart shares in the pain of the many who are grieving her loss. Please convey my sincere condolences and prayers to all her colleagues, friends, and the wider network. May Allah grant her the highest abode in Jannah and grant strength and patience to all who mourn her loss. Ameen. With deepest sympathy, Zara

Shaykh Osman

I am deeply saddened to learn of Bana Gora leaving us behind to be with our Creator. I have been trying to write about Bana to help me process the shock. Aptly, verse 69 of Surah An-Nisaa gave me inspiration to pen the following words;

A candle that illuminated the lives of many in so many ways.

Shone brightly based on Quran & Sunnah,

at times against harsh winds.

Her restless soul flickered yet withstood.

At her appointed time silently ceased.

To be re-kindled again without doubt,

Among the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the pious.

What bliss it will be for us to witness her gathered among such noble companions in Jannah.

May Allah SWT make us all worthy of being near her there as we were in this world. Aameen.

Amongst many other great achievements, she initiated the Muslim Women's Council. May her legacy continue to benefit society. May Allah SWT accept her in His infinite mercy with forgiveness and honour. A great loss for the ummah and for

our ladies in particular. May Allah SWT grant sabrun jameel to all those connected to her and grant taufeeq and fortitude to continue with her mission.

 Amina MWRC — *Glasgow*

We were deeply saddened and heartbroken to hear of the passing of Bana Gora, My Allah grant her the highest station in paradise. On behalf of everyone at Amina MWRC, including our Board and Senior Management Team, I want to extend our heartfelt condolences to you all, and to her family and loved ones. She was an extraordinary woman and a truly visionary leader whose passion for women's rights and the empowerment of Muslim women shone through everything she did this was evident in our first meeting in Glasgow.

Her strength, warmth, determination, and unwavering commitment to advancing Muslim women's rights was inspiring especially hearing about the work she had done in Bradford and her vision for the future, including creating a safe space for women. I found her drive and passion incredibly inspiring. Her voice, leadership, and presence will be greatly missed, but the impact of her work and the legacy she leaves behind will continue for many years to come.

Please know that our thoughts are with you all during this difficult time. With deepest sympathy and solidarity.



 Sister Catherine McCormack

My very sincere sympathy and Prayers to you all on the death of our dear Bana. May she now rest in God's Peace. I am still trying to come to terms with the news. What a shock!

Assuring you of my thoughts and Prayers for Bana's mother, the members of her family and the ladies of the Muslims Women's Council. May God comfort you all.

Blessings of Peace, Sr. Catherine



 **Jacqueline Hughes-Lundy** — *Founder of Inspiring Women Awards*

I am so deeply saddened by the news of Bana's sudden death. In 2025, she received the 'Here Come The Girls' award at the Inspiring Women Awards, for championing Muslim women's voices and vision. With roots in domestic violence services, her career was built on trust, compassion, and relentless advocacy. Respected across faiths, Bana's work has created ripple effects nationally and internationally. Her drive, integrity and impact suggest she was only just getting started. You all must be devastated and my thoughts are with you all.



 **Zlakha Khan** — *Apna Haq*

It was with great sadness that I learnt about the passing of Bana, May Allah swt grant her Janat Al Firdous and give her family and all of you sabre. Ameen.



 **Imran Hussain** — *MP Bradford East*

I had known Bana for over two decades. She was a kind, principled and deeply committed person whose charitable work touched so many lives across Bradford and beyond. Through her work with the Muslim Women's Council and many other causes, she gave a voice to women, supported those in need and served our community with real dignity

and compassion. My thoughts and prayers are with her family, friends and all those who loved her. She will be greatly missed.



 **Susan Hinchcliffe** — *Bradford Council Leader*

I've known Bana for many years and considered her a strong, confident, articulate leader who had vision and ambition, not for herself, but for others. I've had lots of Labour councillor colleagues ringing me, expressing how sorry they are to hear this news. People like Bana are hard to find. I know she will be a huge loss to her family and friends but also to the Muslim Women's Council which she has so ably led for many years. Condolences.



 **Naz Shah** — *MP Bradford West*

I had the privilege of knowing Bana for decades, and her passing is a great loss to Bradford.

From her work with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to her more recent leadership of the Muslim Women's Council, she made an immense and lasting contribution to the city and its people. She was a compassionate and determined leader who worked tirelessly to uplift others and strengthen our communities. Her legacy will continue to be felt across Bradford for many years to come. She will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her and working alongside her. My thoughts and prayers are with her family, friends, and everyone at the Muslim Women's Council during this difficult time.



 Councillor Muhammed Ali Islam — *Manningham*

Bana's death is a tragic loss for the city, it's an absolute loss for the community. Bana was an activist, and she highlighted many concerns, particularly the issues facing ethnic minority women. My sincere, sincere condolences are with her family, with her loved ones, with her friends, and with anyone who knew her.



 Kirk McRae — *City of Counterculture 2026*

We would like to send our heartfelt condolences to Bana Gora's family friends and to the Muslim women of Bradford that she helped.



 Councillor Fozia Shaheen

Bradford has lost one of its most powerful and compassionate voices. Bana Gora was not just a leader in our community she was a force. A woman who stood firm in her beliefs, who spoke with honesty and courage, and who created space for others to do the same. I first met Bana in 2010 while volunteering with a women's group during the Day of Green Ribbons in the city a campaign centred on peace and harmony, values that were very close to her heart and stayed in contact ever since. Even then, it was clear she carried a rare energy. She had presence, purpose, and a determination that inspired those around her.

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 **Dr Anas AlShaykh** — *Turkey*

I heard that dear Bana has returned to her Lord. I'm really sorry for your loss. She was a wonderful person. I'm still in shock, but we belong to Allah and to Him we return. May Allah (swt) envelop her in His rahma, forgive her shortcomings, expand her grave, and fill it with nur. May He grant sabr Jamil to you and her loved ones, ameen.

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 **Shaykha Saleha Bukhari**

I was deeply saddened by the news. إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون. It was such a shock. May Allah ﷻ grant Bana the highest ranks of Jannatul Firdaus, expand and illuminate her grave, accept all the khayr she brought into the lives of others, and make her legacy a source of ongoing reward for her. Āmīn. She and all of the team remain very much in my du'ās during this difficult time.

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 **Sofia Buncy** — *Muslim Women in Prison Project*

Bana's passing is a real loss for the women's sector, particularly Muslim women. May Allah swt have mercy on her and grant a jannath. إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون.

I cannot begin to imagine your hurt and pain, may Allah swt make it easy for you all and also grant Bana magfirath.

Partner Organisations and Friends

✉ **Francesca Humi** — *Civic Power Fund*

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the MWC team from the Civic Power Fund. Bana was a force of nature, and it was a privilege to get to know her over the past year.

I can only imagine how overwhelming and difficult this time must be. Thinking of you, the MWC team, and the community you have built.

✉ **Abdou Sidibe** — *Paul Hamlyn Foundation*

I recently found out about the devastating news that Bana had passed away. I only visited her a few days before she passed. Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un. I simply wanted to pass on my condolences on behalf of our team. Our thoughts are with Bana's family and all her colleagues, friends. As you expressed so beautifully on your website, we were also touched by her leadership and determination to create better futures for Muslim women. I feel blessed to have met her. With deepest sympathy.

 Meheen Rangoonwala — *Rangoonwala Foundation*

I was just shocked to read on your website about the tragic passing of Bana. Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un. Such a horrifically sad loss - I'm so so sorry. She seemed like an absolutely incredible woman. So sorry again for your devastating loss.



 Islamic Relief UK

We are deeply saddened by the passing of Bana Gora, a valued member of our community and a long-term supporter of Islamic Relief. Her dedication, kindness, and commitment to our cause made a lasting impact and she will be greatly missed by all who knew her. Our thoughts and du'as are with her family, friends, and loved ones during this time - may Allah SWT grant her the highest of Jannah, ameen.



 Eden's Tearoom & Patisserie

We are deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Bana Gora. Bana was not only an inspiring leader, co-founding the Muslim Women's Council and dedicating her life to community, women's inclusion, and social change, but also a valued and long-standing customer of Eden's. Her impact across Bradford and beyond will be felt for years to come. Her work, her voice, and her commitment to others is her true legacy. We are truly proud to have known her. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and loved ones at this time.



The Beehive

To all at MWC, We are so sorry to hear the news of Bana's passing. Know that our thoughts are with you. On behalf of the entire team, please accept our deepest sympathies.



WomenZone Community Centre

WomenZone are deeply saddened by the sudden loss of Bana Gora. Her unwavering dedication to our community and charitable work has touched countless lives. Bana was a true leader and a source of inspiration for us all. As we grieve, let us honour her legacy by continuing her mission of kindness and support. Our thoughts are with her family, friends and our colleagues at Muslim Women's Council during this difficult time.



Gareth Pierce — *CEO, Forget Me Not Children's Hospice*

Dear Colleagues and Friends at the Muslim Women's Council, I offer my sincere condolences on the passing of Bana. I was deeply saddened to read this devastating news a few days ago.

I know how much of a difference Bana's vision, leadership, and drive have made - not only through the work of the Muslim Women's Council, but also through tireless service to the wider community. Bana will be deeply missed, yet leaves a lasting legacy that will continue well into the future.

Everyone at Forget Me Not Children's Hospice is thinking of you during this extremely difficult and sad time.



 Migrant Power Project

Bana was an incredible leader. In 2025, she received an award at the Inspiring Women Awards. She also gained recognition for her campaign to establish a women-managed mosque in Bradford, ten years ago. She was a tireless advocate for her community. Her loss will be felt incredibly deeply at her organisation, in Bradford, and beyond.



 Helen Watson — *The National Lottery Community Fund*

On behalf of us all at The National Lottery Community Fund, I am reaching out to offer my warmest condolences to you, your colleagues and everyone whose life was touched by the incredible person Bana was. We were all so incredibly saddened to hear of the tragic news of Bana's passing. I know you will only just be beginning to process what has happened. If there is anything we can do to support you at this incredibly difficult time, please do not hesitate to reach out to us for support. Take care of each other and please reach out for support if you need it.



 Letizia Gambacorta — *The Clothworkers' Foundation*

We are deeply saddened to hear the terrible news about Bana's passing. We can only imagine how hard this might be for you all. We are privileged to have committee funding to the Women's Building Project. We were so impressed with

Bana's vision for the project, and the energy she put into it. We are sure her dream will be realised but for now, we wish you comfort in this sad time. Please accept sincere condolences to the entire team at MWC. With all our best wishes, the Team and Trustees at The Clothworker's Foundation.



 **Daniel Seifu** — *Tudor Trust*

I'm so incredibly sorry to hear this news. All of us at Tudor Trust send our condolences to Bana's family and team. May she rest in peace.



 **Hanif Alli** — *BASE X LTD*

I was truly saddened and deeply shocked at hearing this devastating news, Bana was a great comrade.

She was inspiring and genuinely cared for the community and Muslim women in particular. Her legacy will never be forgotten and she will always continue to be in our prayers. May Almighty Allah forgive all her sins and grant her a lofty place in Jannah. Ameen



 **Paulette** — *Baobab Foundation*

I'm sorry that you are all suffering this loss of your colleague and sister Bana. I am grateful that your faith continues to hold you all. Sending love to your team and all of Bana's loved ones. May her soul rest in perfect peace.



 **Aisha Rimi** — *Hyphen Magazine*

I wanted to offer my sincere condolences to everyone at the Muslim Women's Council following the passing of Bana Gora. I had the privilege of speaking to Bana a couple of years ago for a piece I wrote for Hyphen on the Curry Circle, and she was incredibly generous with her time and insight. Her passion for Bradford and for serving the community came across so clearly in our conversation, and I am sure the impact of her work will continue to be felt by so many.



 **PA to Jon Snow** — *ex-Channel 4 News*

I am so saddened to hear this news of dear Bana's passing; she truly was a force of nature and a gorgeous person inside and out. I can still hear her voice in my head, despite having spoken on the phone over a year ago. She was so kind and sympathetic to Jon's advancing age and more limited availability. With sincerest condolences to all who knew and were close to Bana.



 **Najma Esmail** — *Sunehra Women's Group*

On behalf of myself and Sunehra Women's Group Management Committee. We are all so saddened and in total shock to hear of Sister Bana's passing...Heartfelt sincere condolences to all. May Allah swt open the doors of endless mercy, magfirah and elevate marhums status in Jannatul Firdaus grant her sukoon and roshni in her final resting place.

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 **Ubaid Ahmed** — *Islamic Relief*

Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon

Sorry to hear about the loss of Auntie Bana. May Allah have mercy on her, accept her efforts and grant her the highest of ranks in Jannah. May Allah give you all sabr and allow you to continue her legacy and be a sadaqah jariyah for her.

Ameen

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 **Mel Steventon** — *Due North Events*

I am so so sorry to hear about Bana. You must all be heartbroken. I've thought about her all day and all of you who were in her life. She was such an important part of the community. I can't believe it. I'm feeling so sad. Sending all my love.

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 **Fatima Mejbil** — *Faum Architecture*

إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون

So deeply saddened and heartbroken to hear about Bana. May Allah grant her Jannatul Firdaus and surround her with his mercy. May Allah give you and her family and loved ones sabr and strength. Keeping you in my du'as. It's truly devastating and she'll be deeply missed...Yarab, make her steadfast when she is questioned, and make her final abode a garden from the gardens of Paradise.

Personal Messages and Duas

Hibah Aburwein

I am deeply saddened by the passing of such a wonderful person. May Allah have mercy on her, forgive her shortcomings, accept all her efforts in serving and empowering women as sadaqah jariyah, and grant her the highest ranks of Jannah. Her kindness, peaceful presence, and sincere care for others will never be forgotten. May Allah give patience and strength to her family and all who loved her. Please keep her in your du'a. Ameen.

Liz Firth

Dear Selina, Saadia, Fatima and the team at the Muslim Women's Council,

I am so sorry to hear of Bana's death. She was such a remarkable woman, such a combination of courage, compassion, humour and determination. I have really fond memories of her and can't quite believe that she won't be around to keep striving and challenging us all going forward. I can't imagine the depth of the loss you must all be feeling. You're all in my prayers, along with Bana's family and friends.

Look after each other. With much love, Liz

 **Nadia Sethi** — *Rosebuds Sisters*

Assalam o alaikum. I hope you are all keeping well during what must be an incredibly difficult time. I was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Bana Gora. Please accept my sincere condolences. Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un. May Allah grant her the highest ranks in Jannah and give strength and sabr to everyone at the Muslim Women's Council and to her loved ones.



 **Adrian Farley**

Bana was an inspirational figure and worked tirelessly across Keighley and Bradford. Thoughts and prayers with her family at this difficult time.



 **Samrah Khaliq**

It was a pleasure meeting Bana at a work event many years ago. Bana held deep and very thoughtful views about the experiences of women in our society and related social issues, speaking about these topics with great passion and conviction. May she rest in peace.



✉ **Sehjia Dedovic** — *Nahla (Center for Education & Research, Bosnia)*

Our dear and beloved Bana Gora, may Allah forgive her all sins and prepare for her nice place just as it was her soul. We witness that she has been loving every khair, promoting always khair, connecting between people in khair and we only witness khair from her!

We wish for her soul, hereafter nice place and acceptance in Jennetul Firsews. Our hearts are sad and our eyes are crying but we do not say anything what does not please Allah. Inna lillahi we inna ileyhi ragiuun!



✉ **Yasmin Amin**

I heard about Bana and I am still in shock. I cannot imagine how you all must feel. You are in my thoughts and insha Allah jannat for Bana, an incredible woman, Allah yerhamha. If there is anything I can do other than dua let me know. She was such an amazing woman and a lovely soul. I will need a long time for it to sink in, still in utter disbelief because she was so lively and young.

Fatima Rasool

Dear team at MWC, I am still in shock with a heavy heart as I write this message, I cannot even begin to understand how you all must be feeling. Bana's passing is a great loss in so many ways, my sincere condolences to you all. Surely, a stark reminder of the reality and fragility of this dunya.

Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to spend as much time with Bana but whatever little time I did, her passion, energy and warmth always shone through. She had a mission and that was evident in all that she did. And I can never forget her beautiful beaming smile which captivated anyone in her presence.

May Allah(swt) bless her with the best of abodes in the best of company, ameen.

I still cannot believe it. Nothing I can say can ease your pain but I pray Allah(swt) gives you the sabr and strength to deal with this very difficult test. May He grant Bana the best of abodes in the best of company and allow you to continue the beautiful work and vision she worked so hard towards, Ameen. I am sure she would have wanted that from you all. You are truly amazing women as was Bana, and I am confident you will continue on her beautiful legacy. My thoughts and dua's are with you all.



 **Numayar Gazi** — *Zaarvel Travel*

Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi rajiun. Heartbroken to hear about dear Bana. We shared Umrah, travelled together to Al Aqsa, and had many more plans ahead. She was warm, genuine, full of energy, and the kind of person who brought people together naturally.

She truly believed in us at Zaarvel and always pushed for us to work together because she saw something special in the connection we had built. That belief meant a lot.

Some people leave memories, others leave a feeling that stays with you. Bana did both.

May Allah forgive her, fill her grave with light, grant her Jannah, and give strength to all who loved her. You will be remembered fondly and missed deeply.

 **Cathryn** — *Cortijo La Presa Farmhouse, Andalucia (Spain)*

She was the kind of woman who left quiet, lasting change wherever she went. The kind who lifted others without needing recognition, who gave her time, her heart, and her strength when no one was watching. Her impact was never about noise, but about the countless lives she touched, the kindness she shared, and the resilience she carried so gracefully. Though she has now passed, nothing can take away what she gave to this world. No misunderstanding, no harsh words, no fleeting opinions can ever erase the good she did or the love she left behind. That kind of legacy doesn't disappear, it lives on in the people she helped, the hearts she softened, and the memories that will continue to speak her name. Her character will always speak louder than anything else. And those who truly knew her, who felt her warmth and her sincerity, will carry that with them forever. She may no longer be here in person, but her light hasn't gone anywhere. It lives on, steady and undeniable, in everything she was and everything she gave.

✉ **Jamie** — *Cortijo La Presa Farmhouse, Andalucia (Spain)*

Just trying to process the situation we find ourselves in. We are trying to take all the positive and wonderful aspects of life that Bana gave us in the four years we had the privilege of knowing her, but we are sure like all of you she will serve the universe from a different way that was intended for her. Right now we are consumed by grief and have spent the day looking through photos and happy memories, but always thinking could we have given more to prevent this. Bana will live on with us as a family and her legacy will not be forgotten, a truly special, wonderful woman who we dearly respected, appreciated and later loved. Only now she's not here we can't tell her, but through your organisation please let it be known. I can only imagine your grief as a group, as Bana touched the lives of so many without expectations or bias. Just genuine love and kindness which you could witness every day. Take comfort in that and from the deep country of southern Spain we grieve with you. The world has lost a very special person, but heaven has gained a force of an Angel. Please share our love with all of MWC and we are thinking about all of you.



✉ **Almaz Yunis**

Inna lilahi wa Inna ilaihi rajioon, this is so sudden and very sad news, I really feel for her family and friends. Sister Bana was a very special and amazing person, may Allah accept her in the best way, may her dedication & commitment for Allah continue to be a source of sadaqa jariya for her, may her enthusiasm and legacy live on, may Allah grant her Jannah tul Firdause and her family lots of sabr and strength in this difficult time, ameen. A huge loss to the community. She will be sorely missed.



Maillam

Inna lilah wa inna ilayhi rajiun I'm so sorry for your loss. It was such a shock hearing this news. May Allah swt receive Bana with His Rahma and grant her Jannatul Firdous. This must be such a difficult time for you all. May Allah swt grant her family and all of the sisters at MWC strength and patience during this difficult time. Please pass my deepest condolences to the family and let them know that even though I met her only a few times I had a deep respect for her and could feel her genuine intentions and passion for the work she did. May Allah swt accept all of her efforts and raise in the highest stations in the akhira.



Bahar Ahmed

We're all shocked about this devastating news. It's very hard to believe, but it's all Allah's plan. May Allah SWT grant our beloved sister Bana forgiveness for her shortcomings, make her journey easy and comfortable, and grant her an abode place in Jaanaha-tul ferdos. May the Almighty give you and everyone who knew her, especially her family the strength and Sabar- E Jamil, to cope with the loss of this special, kind, and generous person. Sister Bana is always in my duas, and so is everyone special to her. Inna lilahi wa inna ilayhi rajioon.



 Faisal Riaz

I'm deeply saddened to learn of Bana's passing. May Allah ﷻ grant her forgiveness, grant her the Intercession of the Prophet ﷺ, make easy upon her each stage of her return to Allah ﷻ, may Allah ﷻ raise her ranks in Jannah Al Firdaus... Ameen.

May Allah ﷻ grant you, her family and friends, Sabar, Ameen.



 Shaista Ali

Heartbreaking news. She was so young and vibrant and gave so much to the community. So inspirational and a real go getter.



 Ami La

An absolute gem and a loss to the community. Bana worked quietly and confidently to make real change for those around her. Allah bless her with the highest ranks in Jannah and make her next life one of ease and tranquility. Love and duas to her family.



 Qasim Khan

I had a few brief encounters with her in professional gatherings. She was a wonderful person, trailblazer in her field and a champion for women's rights. May Allah (swt) forgive all her shortcomings and give her loved ones the strength to overcome this huge loss. Ameen!



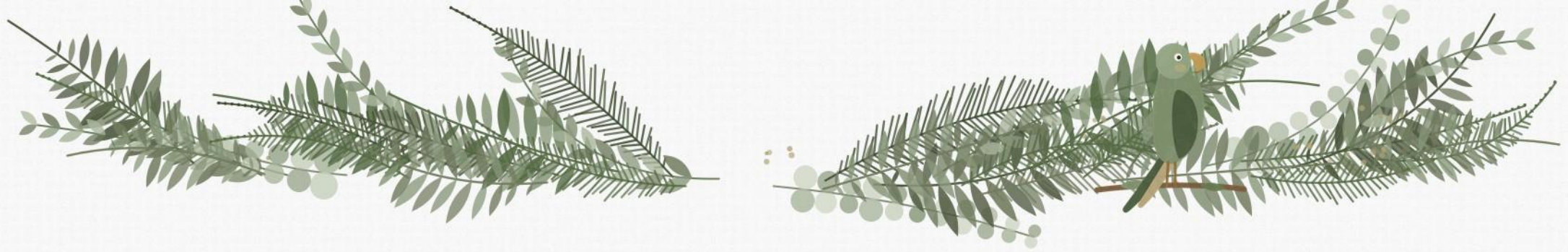
 Kirb Hutton

Such a lovely woman. What a pleasure to have crossed paths over the last few years. Such an inspirational woman with a big heart.



 Liz Dunn

Just heard this sad news, may she be placed high amongst the blessed. Bana was one of the first women who befriended me after I converted, a time when we are confused with identity and there she was, a great example of a modern woman, not only strong in her faith, but understood her faith and shared it. We have lost one of earth's angels, may she rest in a beautiful garden in Jannah. Prayers for peace of heart to her family.



Forever in Our Hearts



May Allah, the Most Merciful, forgive her, have mercy upon her,
illuminate her resting place, and grant her the highest station
in Jannatul Firdaus. Ameen.

With love and gratitude, from all whose lives she touched

